Christians in the first century had a strange custom. When one of their fellow Christians would die, they would march in procession to the graveyards, singing joyous hymns, and then they would place laurel wreaths on the graves, the same wreaths that the Greeks would use to crown the victors of athletic contests. Why did they do this? Because they believed that through Christ Jesus, all his followers have received victory over the power of death!

We see this same idea when we hear the resurrectional hymns of Pascha. In one such hymn, Hades is crying out in despair: “I wish I had not received Jesus, for He has broken my power. Christ has shattered the gates of hell, and He has raised up the souls which I have held captive!”

This is what we celebrate on Pascha! The day of Resurrection! The day of Salvation! The day of ultimate victory of good over evil, hope over despair, light over darkness, joy over sadness, life over death! Pascha is a day for new beginnings! For the good news of our Lord’s glorious Resurrection offers each one of us an opportunity to see life from a fundamentally new perspective, to begin life with a fresh and new start!

Archbishop Anastasios of Albania has written, “With Christ’s Resurrection everything was made new again; everything was restored! From that point on, the question posed for every human being has been whether or not to participate in this restoration.”

If we choose to participate, really take part, in Christ’s Resurrection, our perspective on life radically changes! We can never remain discouraged, we can never lose hope, we can never despair, for we know that Christ is Risen and He has defeated evil. He has overcome sin. He has annihilated death itself! Through His resurrection, He has given us new, eternal life.

Another hymn has Hades groaning, “My authority has been broken down. The Shepherd who was crucified has raised Adam, and I have been deprived of all those whom I held captive. He who was crucified has cleared the tombs!”

These hymns emphasize the common theme of ultimate victory. Evil and sin, pain and suffering, sorrow and death may threaten us, and even darken our perspective in life. But if we can remember that the overall war has already been won, we will not dwell in despair. Yes, everyday battles...
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The mission of Sts. Constantine and Helen Church is to proclaim the Good News of Salvation through the Orthodox Christian Faith for the glory of our Triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We are a community of believers who journey towards our Lord Jesus Christ and one another through our WORSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, SPIRITUAL GROWTH, WITNESS, and SERVICE. We invite all people to join us on this journey in the Kingdom of Heaven.

We are under the jurisdiction of
His Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew
His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios of America
His Eminence, Metropolitan Methodios of Boston

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continue in this life, and we may be wounded many times until the 2nd coming of Christ, but we can rest assured of the outcome of the overall war.

Christ is Risen and good shall prevail over evil. Christ is Risen, and hope shall prevail over despair! Christ is Risen and light shall prevail over darkness. Christ is Risen and joy shall prevail over sadness. Christ is Risen and life shall prevail over death! This is why, if we choose to participate in this resurrection, we enter into a new beginning and a victorious life!

Think of a few examples we will hear during Holy Week of people entering into the new life that resurrection brings. Among the apostles of Christ, Judas betrayed Jesus, and because he didn’t stay around to see the resurrection, he fell into despair and committed suicide. In contrast, although the other apostles all abandoned Christ and felt shame and despair, they did not give up. Even Peter, the head of the apostles, denied knowing Christ three times, yet after he witnessed the Resurrection, he became a new person. From a fearful coward into a bold preacher, living a life in Christ and ultimately dying for His Master! Peter and the apostles became new creations in Christ!

Think of the thieves crucified on either side of our Lord. One rejected any possibility of resurrection, and died in anger, bitterness and hatred. The other, although he accepted that he was receiving a just punishment for his crime, still looked at Christ with hope, crying out, “Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” Even though this condemned man lived an evil life, in his last moment he longed to participate in our Lord’s Resurrection and with the cry, “Remember me in your kingdom,” discovers paradise.

Mary Magdalene was a broken woman the Gospels describe as being possessed with seven demons. Her love and faithfulness for our Lord, however, transformed her life from one of wretchedness into one of meaning. She was the first to see the Risen Lord, and became an apostle to the apostles, sharing the joy of resurrection with others!

Even the Roman Centurian, who actually participated in Christ’s crucifixion, came to believe and partake of the Resurrection, thus ending his life not as an anonymous Roman soldier in history, but as St. Longinos, a saint of the Church!

Here lies the central message of Pascha and Christ’s Resurrection! No matter who we are or what we have done in life, no matter how many times we’ve denied Christ or even rejected Him, no matter how many times we’ve fallen into our common sins or even serious transgressions, Pascha Sunday commands us never to despair, for our Lord’s Resurrection gives us hope for a new life and a fresh start!!!

We can’t stay hopeless when we know that we have a God who loves us so much that He willingly dies in our place for us! We have a God who not only endured betrayal, denial, humiliation, rejection, and a cruel form of death on the Cross, but a God who willingly descended into the deepest darkness of Hades to wrestle with the Evil One and break His bonds over us, destroying his power of sin, evil and death!

For those of us who choose to participate in this restoration of life, in this resurrection from the dead, than joy and peace and hope will be ours. We will live abundant lives in the power of Christ and in the victory of His Resurrection!

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

With love in our Risen and Victorious Lord,

+Luke

**Invite Your Friends to Easter Services!**

*(And to a Holy Week Service!)*

This year, invite a friend, co-worker, or neighbor to attend some Holy Week Service, our Resurrection Service Saturday evening (10:00pm), or our Sunday Agape Service of Love (12:00 noon)! We all know plenty of friends and acquaintances who are not connected to any Church, and who may not be planning to go to any Christian service during this holiest time of the year. Invite them to experience the warmth of our Church Family and our beautiful worship services! You don’t have to say much, just tell them to “Come and See!”
ATTENTIVENESS AND DIGITAL CULTURE
By Fr. Maximos Constas

THE DISTRACTED LIFE
Having promised us a technological utopia, our ubiquitous and intrusive cyberculture has instead precipitated a spiritual crisis in which human experience has been systematically fragmented and the coherence of the self increasingly threatened. Living in a culture of organized distractions, our thoughts are isolated and disconnected, preventing us from seeing and experiencing the wholeness of life. Distraction and fragmentation have negative consequences for the organization of knowledge; they prevent us from engaging our spiritual depth, and render us incapable of engaging the spiritual depth of others, for having lost touch with our own personhood, we can receive neither the personhood of our neighbor nor of God.

Beginning in 2009, the New York Times ran a series of articles called “Driven to Distraction,” focusing on accidents and fatalities involving distracted drivers. The series expanded to include “Distracted Doctoring,” reporting on the large number of surgeons who are placing personal calls during surgery; on medical technicians who are texting while running cardio-pulmonary bypass machines; and anesthesiologists who are shopping online for airline tickets.

Distractions created by social media in the work place cost the American economy $650 billion per year, with social media interruptions occurring every ten minutes, and with workers spending 41% of their time on Facebook. In the US alone, over 12 billion collective hours are spent browsing on social networks every day. The average college student spends 3 hours a day checking social sites, but only 2 hours a day studying.

Alongside the official statistics, there is an abundance of anecdotal evidence, such as the September, 2013 report concerning train passengers in San Francisco who were too distracted by their smartphones and tablet computers to notice the presence of an armed gunman, who had been brandishing his weapon in plain view for several minutes before he shot and killed a 20-year old commuter (the entire episode was caught on the train’s surveillance camera).

In addition to the financial costs and loss of human life, there are spiritual costs that the New York Times and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are not competent to diagnose, namely, the loss of human agency, the fragmentation of human subjectivity, and the growing incoherence of the self. In his recent book, The World Beyond Your Head, Matthew Crawford has referred to this situation as a “crisis of self ownership,” arguing that we are now living in an “attentional economy” in which “our attention is not simply ours to direct where we will,” making “the effort to be fully present” an intractable struggle. Crawford claims that our insatiable need for endless distractions means that the content of our distractions has become largely irrelevant, revealing a deeper crisis of values. According to Crawford, we have become “agnostic” on the question of what to pay attention to, which means we no longer know what to value. As a result, our inner lives become “shapeless,” and we become susceptible to what is presented to us by powerful commercial forces that have taken the place of traditional cultural authorities. To be attentive, on the other hand, is the first step in claiming our humanity, our agency and self-determination as human beings. We choose what to pay attention to, and, in a very real sense, this determines what is real for us; what is actually present to our consciousness. By contrast, distraction and fragmentation reveal an ethical void at the center of our existence, prompting Crawford to call for an “ethics” and “ascetics” of attention for our time, grounded in a realistic account of the human mind.

Crawford’s previous book was an essay on the importance of labor, lamenting the loss of manual competence in digital cultures, which, he believes, have distanced human beings from actual tools and the physical world those tools were designed to engage. Unsurprisingly, his proposal for an “ethics” and “ascetics” of attention is similarly focused on participation in a skilled craft or practice, an activity that requires the craftsman to grapple directly and attentively with, and thus to be fully present to, objective reality.

BEING ATTENTIVE
Without wishing to minimize the importance of skilled craftsmanship (which the Holy Mountain has been practicing and supporting throughout its long history), I would like to focus on the logical-
ly prior moment of “attentiveness” itself, independent of any (logically sequent) activity for which it might be deemed necessary or useful. As we shall see, attentiveness offers us a profound and effective response to our modern culture of organized distractions. To be sure, the “ethics and ascetics of attention” that Crawford is seeking are central to Orthodox anthropology and moral psychology, namely: the practice of “attentiveness” or “attending (or giving heed) to thyself.”

This phrase, which is only superficially related to the Socratic injunction to “know thyself,” occurs in various forms in the New Testament, but is in fact derived from Deuteronomy 4:9: “Attend (or Give heed) to thyself, and keep thy heart diligently,” or alternately, from Deuteronomy 15:9: “Attend to thyself, that there be no hidden, iniquitous word in your heart.” The phrase, which is an ethical imperative, has a long and rich history, from which only a few examples can be cited here.

In the fourth-century Life of Antony, we are told that Antony’s first ascetic practice, which he undertook before entering the desert, was to “attend to himself.” Antony’s younger contemporary, Basil of Caesarea, wrote what is likely the first homily devoted exclusively to Deuteronomy 15:9 (“On the Words, Give Heed to Thyself”). Though the Life of Antony does not describe the practice of attentiveness in any detail, Basil describes it at length. Far from mere external “self observation,” and having nothing to do with any kind of solipsistic self-absorption, attentiveness is comprehensive in scope, being at once: (1) the awakening of the rational principles that God has placed in the soul; (2) vigilant stewardship over the movements of the mind, which govern the movements of the body and society as a whole; (3) the awareness of the mind’s (or soul’s) priority over the body, and of the beauty of God over sensory pleasure; (4) an engagement with reality and a rejection of mental fantasies; (5) self-examination and the refusal to meddle in the affairs of others; and (6), not least, the very knowledge of God, insofar as the “self” is the image of God, a connection with which Basil concludes the entire sermon: “Give heed, therefore, to thyself, that you may give heed to God.”

The extraordinary emphasis given to attentiveness is explained, not simply because the human mind is prone to distraction, but because the disintegration of our inner life began precisely with the fall, when humanity separated itself from God. “Distraction,” has rightly been called “the original sin of the mind.”

The notion of the primal transgression as a fall from attentiveness into distractions is a central element in the theology of the fifth-century writer, St. Diadochos of Photiki: “Divine knowledge teaches us that our natural perceptive faculty is single, but that it split into two different modes of operation as a result of Adam’s disobedience.” Created with a single, simple, and undivided consciousness, the fall shattered the integrity of the self into two conflicting activities, one drawn to divine realities, and the other dragged outward into the surface appearances of the visible world through sense perception, and subject to a process of ongoing fragmentation.
ATTENTIVENESS & DIGITAL CULTURE

Continued from page 3

We find similar views in the writings of St. Gregory of Sinai, who argues that the human mind, created in a state of rest, became agitated and distracted when it fell from grace by choosing corporeal sensation over God, and subsequently found itself lost and wandering among the things of the world. St. Gregory Palamas, perhaps alluding to teaching of St. Gregory of Sinai, states that: “A great teacher has said that after the fall, our inner being naturally adapts itself to outward forms,” and urges the reader to “attend to himself,” citing Deuteronomy 15:9 directly.

Forgetting God and grasping at the world, we become subject to unhealthy desires and addictive behaviors, driven by a continuous preoccupation with and pursuit of nothing. Being fixated on the superficial appearances of things, we have no awareness of their deeper meanings or mutual relatedness, but seek only that part of an object or person that can temporarily satisfy our desire for pleasure. Habitually surrendering to our irrational drives and impulses, the mind becomes enslaved to sensations (bodily or psychological); we splinter into isolated fragments, leading double and triple lives, being self-divided into numberless, unrelated acts, so that our pursuit of pleasure contributes, not to the unity of the self and the world, but to the disintegration and disorganization of both. Divided into unrelated acts of irrational sensation, the mind receives only the fleeting impression of something finite and isolated from everything else.

This condition has been diagnosed and described by Orthodox spiritual and ascetic writers, who call it the “scattering” or “dispersal” of the mind. For example, Niketas Stethatos, the disciple of St. Symeon the New Theologian, contends that: “To the extent that our inner life is in a state of discord and dispersed among many contrary things, we are unable to participate in the life of God. We desire opposing and contrary things, and we are torn apart by the relentless warfare between them, and this is called the ‘discord’ of the mind, a condition that divides and destroys the soul. As long as we are afflicted by the turmoil of our thoughts, and as long are we ruled and constrained by our passions, we are self-fragmented and cut off from the divine Unity.”

Yet, if attentiveness is the answer to the dilemma of human fragmentation and disintegration, the aim is not a return to a presumed Edenic form of consciousness, but rather to the grace of the Holy Spirit, placed in our hearts at the time of our baptism. This sacramental focus is central to the spiritual theology of Diadochos, for whom healing begins with the gift of the Holy Spirit, while the duality of the fallen self is unified through the invocation of the Jesus Prayer. It follows that the primary motivation for the practice of inner attention, the purpose of turning inward and entering the heart, is to encounter the indwelling Holy Spirit, a principle that was consistently and indeed systematically reaffirmed by the later Byzantine Hesychasts.

We find essentially the same teaching in Scripture. The Prodigal Son left his home and went into a faraway place, where the Gospel says he “dispersed” (or “scattered”) his “substance” (Lk 15:13). On one level this means that he squandered all his money, but the deeper meaning is the wealth of the soul, our spiritual inheritance, since our “substance” is the spirit that God has placed within us, and in which, through Holy Baptism, He has planted His own grace, clothing us in “our original garment of glory” (cf. Lk 15:22), and “sending forth His own Spirit into our hearts” (Gal 4:6). But when we separate ourselves from this grace, we lose our spiritual unity and become fragmented.

CONCLUSION

The fallen human mind is fragmented, prone unceasingly to distractions, and scattered across a troubled infinity of disconnected thoughts and sensations. Our minds are always elsewhere than our bodies. Rather than working to alleviate this constitutive weakness, we have built a culture of organized distractions, aiding and abetting the mind in its fallen condition. It can be argued that the computer itself is a fallen mind, a powerful extension of our own dubious desires, created after our own image. Lingering unregenerately in a realm of illusions; mesmerized by the images flitting about on our computer screens, we become “dull, predatory flies buzzing on the chamber window,” desperate to consume all the futility of the world.
Yet we are not the predators, but the prey. We are not the users of information technologies and social media, but rather are being used, manipulated, and exploited by them. In our culture of distractions, public and private spaces are saturated with technologies designed to arrest and appropriate our attention; our interior mental lives, like our bodies, are merely resources to be harvested by powerful economic interests. (Crawford suggests that distractibility is to the mind what obesity is to the body.) Our focus, then, should not be on technology and digital culture alone, but on the interests and motivations that guide their design and promote their dissemination into every aspect of our life.

Throughout its long history, Christianity has often been subservient to the prevailing political and economic structures, forgetting that the Gospel is not derivative of human culture, but generative of a new way of life. We need to recover the power of the Gospel as a countercultural force, not with the aim of destabilizing society, but in order to create life-affirming communities. We need to rediscover, not simply that our faith and vocation to holiness set us apart from the world, but that they also engender a new, alternative world; not a virtual reality, but the reality of virtue.

In order to realize our calling, attentiveness must be our fundamental attitude and ethos. Without attentiveness there is no prayer, and without prayer, there is no communion with God, no participation in divine life. The practice of inner attention, of descending with the mind into the heart, is both an activity and a way of life that locates us in authentic existence, that is, in our relationship to God. This is why attentiveness is so often said to be equivalent to the recollection of God, the conscious awareness of the grace of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. Taking heed of, and attending to, ourselves is the most effective method for reclaiming ownership of our self-determination from those who wish to take it from us. Transfigured by grace, attention will discover new objects of attention, because it will have its source in a new subject, no longer conformed to the form of the world, but transformed in the renewal of its mind (Rom 12:2), possessing and possessed by the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16).

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**St John Chrysostom’s Paschal Homily**

Let no one fear death, for the Savior's death has set us free. He that was held prisoner of it, has annihilated it. By descending into Hell, He made Hell captive. He angered it when it tasted of his flesh.

And Isaiah, foretelling this, did cry: Hell was angered, when it encountered you in the lower regions.

It was angered, for it was abolished.

It was angered, for it was mocked.

It was angered, for it was slain.

It was angered, for it was overthrown.

It was angered, for it was fettered in chains.

It took a body, and met God face to face.

It took earth, and encountered Heaven.

It took that which was seen, and fell upon the unseen.

O Death, where is your sting?

O hell, where is your victory?

Christ is risen, and you are overthrown.

Christ is risen, and the demons have fallen.

Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice.

Christ is risen, and life is liberated.

Christ is risen, and not one dead remains in the grave.

For Christ, having risen from the dead, becomes the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

To him be glory and dominion unto ages of ages. Amen.
The services of Holy Week transform us into eyewitnesses and direct participants in the awesome events of the Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In readings taken from both Old and New Testaments, in hymns, processions, and liturgical commemoration, we see the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies, and the mighty acts by which God Himself, in the person of Jesus Christ, grants us forgiveness for our sins, and rescues us from the pain of eternal death.

**PALM SUNDAY EVENING** - Matthew 21:18-43. *This evening's service calls to mind the beginning of Jesus' suffering.* The gospel describes the plotting of the priests and elders to trap Jesus into convicting Himself as a religious heretic. Through parables, Jesus tells us of His coming betrayal, trial, conviction and execution by crucifixion. *The hymns of this service commemorate two things; the first, the prophetic figure of Joseph, who, while virtuous, nonetheless suffered unjustly at the hands of his brothers before being greatly rewarded, and the second, the parable of the fig tree, which in failing to bear fruit, became a symbol of fallen creation, and of our own lives, in which we also have failed to bear spiritual fruit.*

**HOLY MONDAY EVENING** - Matthew 22:15-46; 23:1-39. *This evening's theme is the need for watchfulness and preparation, lest we be called unprepared before the awesome judgment seat of Christ to render an account of ourselves.* The gospel reading contrasts the efforts of the Pharisees to trick and discredit Jesus, with the forceful resistance which Christ mounts against their evil. The hymns remind us of the parable of the Ten Virgins, in which the faithful Christian is exhorted to vigilance.

**HOLY TUESDAY EVENING** - John 12:17-50. *The need for true repentance is the concern of Tuesday evening's service.* This transformation from the life of sin to a life of faith and obedience is exemplified for us in the person of the sinful woman who received the gift of forgiveness when she anointed Jesus with myrrh and washed His feet. The highlight of the service is the hymn written in honor of this woman by St. Kassian. The Gospel meditation foretells of the coming suffering of Christ and recalls His inner struggles and agony.

**HOLY WEDNESDAY EVENING** - James 5:10 -16, Luke 10:25-37. *The primary theme of Holy Wednesday is our human need for the healing and forgiveness that comes into our lives when we establish a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.* We are reminded that the way to this relationship is to be found, above all else, through the life of prayer. In the Sacrament of Holy Unction, the faithful are anointed and thus, healed both physically and spiritually. They are also reconciled to God and one another so that they might receive the gift of the Holy Eucharist instituted by Christ at the Last Supper.

**HOLY THURSDAY MORNING** - Matthew 26:2-27:2, John 13:3-17. On Holy Thursday morning, we ascend Mt. Zion with Christ and the Twelve, and enter into the upper room. Once there, *we witness the awesome moment when, at the Last Supper, Christ abolishes the ritual practice of sacrifice in the Old Covenant and establishes the ritual of the New Covenant, prophesied by Jeremiah, through the Sacrament of Holy Communion.* The faithful receive Holy Communion at this Liturgy.

**HOLY THURSDAY EVENING** - In this service, *we re-live the undeserved suffering of Jesus Christ, endured for our sake, so that we*
might be reconciled anew to God our Father. The 12 Gospel readings (Luke 22:1-39) witness for us the betrayal and arrest of Jesus, his trial and conviction, and finally his torture, crucifixion and death at the hands of a sinful humanity. This evening's service also includes the procession representing Christ carrying His own cross along the Via Dolorosa, and ends when we see the King of Glory crucified.

**HOLY FRIDAY AFTERNOON** - I Corinthians 1:18-2:2, Matthew 27:1-61, Luke 23:39-43, John 19:31-37. In this service, we are once again reverent witnesses to the undeserved suffering of Christ, to his terrible passion and death. What is remembered in a special way through liturgical commemoration and procession, is the faithfulness and love of Joseph of Arimathea who tenderly removed Christ's body from the cross, wrapped it in clean linen, and carried it to his own unused tomb for burial.

**HOLY FRIDAY EVENING** - Ezekiel 37:1-14, I Corinthians 5:6-8, Galatians 3:13-14, Matthew 27:62-66. On Good Friday evening, the theme is Christ's descent into Hades during which the Gospel of repentance and reconciliation with God is shared with those who died before Christ's saving dispensation in the flesh. The service begins with lamentations sung as we stand before the tomb of Christ commemorating His unjust punishment and the shedding of His innocent blood. But the service ends on a note of joy and hope, with the reading of the Prophet Ezekiel in which he describes his vision of our resurrection yet to come; in the midst of despair, we are told there is hope, for not even death can separate us from the unfailing love and power of God. Death is about to be conquered and faithfulness rewarded.

**HOLY SATURDAY MORNING** - Romans 6:3-11, Matthew 28:1-20. On Holy Saturday morning we celebrate the theme of faithfulness receiving its reward. The crucifixion is over, Christ is buried, the twelve apostles and other disciples are scattered and defeated. And yet, three myrrh-bearing women come in faithfulness to perform the last act of love - to anoint Jesus according to the Jewish burial custom. Their unwavering devotion is rewarded - they are the first to share in Christ's triumph over evil and death. They are the first witnesses to the Resurrection. This joy is commemorated through the scattering of bay leaves and rose petals by the priest.

**HOLY SATURDAY EVENING & PASCHA SUNDAY MORNING**

Mark 16:1-8. The lamentations of the previous night are repeated and the church is plunged into darkness to symbolize the despair and defeat experienced before the dawn of Christ's victory over the Enemy of our salvation. Precisely at midnight, a single light emerges from the altar representing the victory of Christ over death, the defeat of the Prince of Darkness by Jesus, the Light of the World. As the light is passed from person to person, it pushes back the darkness of the church and defeats it completely. The Resurrection is proclaimed in song and triumphant procession, and after the Liturgy, its light is carried into our homes so that they too might be filled with its light and warmth and triumph.

**EASTER SUNDAY MORNING** - John 20:19-25. Christ's Resurrection and victory is affirmed in this morning's theme. The Gospel is read in numerous languages to illustrate the universality of the Good News of the Resurrection and its proclamation to the very ends of the earth. Love, forgiveness, reconciliation, triumph and joy—these are the gifts which we receive because Christ lived and died and triumphed for our sake.

**GLORY BE TO HIM FOR ALL THINGS, AND MAY YOUR PASCHA BE BLESSED!**

**CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN!**

**CHRISTOS ANESTI! ALITHOS ANESTI!**
It is the day of Resurrection, let us be radiant for the feast, and let us embrace one another. Let us call even those that hate us our brothers and sisters, and let us forgive all things in the Resurrection, thus crying out: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and on those in the tombs bestowing life.

Christ’s resurrection is all about life over death, about light over darkness, about goodness over evil, about joy over sorrow, about new beginnings over dead ends. Jesus confronted all forms of darkness and evil – betrayal, denial, rejection, ridicule, persecution, torture, and even unjust and cruel death. He confronted each form of evil by not giving in to it; he didn’t allow the evil to lead Him to respond in an evil way. Instead, he responded to every form of evil with divine love.

Although Christ was unjustly arrested, tortured, and mocked while he was being brutally killed, He didn’t lower himself to his antagonists’ level and allow hatred and revenge fill his mind. Instead, He responded to evil with good, to hatred with love and mercy and grace. “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing” He said to those who were killing him. To Peter who denied him three times, He gave the Apostle a new chance by asking him three times, “Peter, do you love me?” He didn’t even call His legions of angels to come and save Him from death, instead he embraced death, and then overcame it, turning death itself into nothing more than a pathway into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Pascha, and Christ’s victory is all about conquering Satan, sin and death with love. And He set an example and a path for all His followers to imitate. When we are confronted with evil, and tempted to return evil for evil, we remember Jesus praying for his persecutors with the words, “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.”

Forgiveness is much harder, and greater, than hatred and revenge.

Christ shows that His divine love far exceeds any darkness or evil. No matter what others do to Him, he will not allow himself to be pulled down to their level. And that is our call as His followers. Don’t return evil for evil, overcome evil with goodness and love.

Christ is Risen! and death is defeated!

Christ is Risen! and fear is vanquished!

Christ is Risen! and suffering takes on new meaning!

Christ is Risen! and the doors of paradise are opened for all who believe!

Christ is Risen! and the devil and sin itself will not have the last say!

Christ is Risen! and we become conquerors together with Jesus over all that is dark and evil!

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!
HOLY WEEK SERVICES

LAZARUS SATURDAY - APRIL 8
  Divine Liturgy 9:30, followed by a Pancake Breakfast, Making Palm Crosses & Stuffing of Plastic Eggs for Easter Egg Hunt. Come and Help!!!

PALM SUNDAY - APRIL 9
  Divine Liturgy 9:30
  Community Fish Luncheon 11:15 in our Church Hall
  Bridegroom Service 6:30 pm

HOLY MONDAY - APRIL 10
  Bridegroom Service 6:30 pm

HOLY TUESDAY - APRIL 11
  Bridegroom Service 6:30 pm with the Hymn of Kassiani

HOLY WEDNESDAY - APRIL 12
  Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 9:30am
  Holy Unction Service 6:30 pm

HOLY THURSDAY - APRIL 13
  Divine Liturgy 9:30 am
  SERVICE OF THE 12 GOSPELS 6:30pm

HOLY AND GOOD FRIDAY - APRIL 14
  Philoptochos Decorating the Epitaphio 9:00 am
  Service of the Royal Hours 9:00am
  Children’s (ages 5-12) Retreat 12:00-1:45
  Vespers - Taking Christ Down from Cross 2:00 pm
  LAMENTATIONS SERVICE 6:30pm

HOLY SATURDAY - APRIL 15
  1st Resurrection Divine Liturgy 9:30am
  RESURRECTION SERVICE 10:00 pm

PASCHA SUNDAY - APRIL 16
  Children’s Easter Egg Hunt 11:00am
  “Service of Love” Easter Vespers 12:00
  Paschal Lamb Luncheon 1:00
Come and Join Us!!!
All Parishioners and Friends are invited to our

PALM SUNDAY
Family Fish Luncheon

Palm Sunday, April 9 following the Divine Liturgy in our Church Hall!!!

$12.00 for adult meals; Children under 12 for Free

Let our Church family come together in fellowship and love as we prepare for Holy Week and Pascha!

We THANK John & Eleni Sgouritsas and Lake Pizza for offering the fish meal in memory of his beloved father GEORGE SGOURITSAS.!!
Celebrate our Lord’s Resurrection on PASCHA DAY, APRIL 16 with our Church Family

“PASCHA LAMB” & a POT-LUCK MEAL!

11:00 am - Easter Egg Hunt for Children
12:00 Agape Vespers Service
1:00 Potluck Easter Lunch

If you are interested in coming, please contact Mary Seferi or our Church Office so we know how many are coming and can arrange the pot-luck meals.

“How to Paint Icons”
A Presentation with Iconographer Olga Poloukhine

Sunday, April 2 Following the Coffee Fellowship
LAZARUS SATURDAY
April 8

9:30 Divine Liturgy
10:30 Pancake Breakfast.
Making Palm Crosses and
Stuffing Plastic Easter Egg

We need a LOT OF HELP to
stuff 1000 plastic Easter eggs for
the annual Easter Egg Hunt.

For families whose children
will participate in the Easter
Egg Hunt, please bring a bag
or two of candy on or
before this day.

GOOD FRIDAY
RETREAT
April 14

Youth Retreat (ages 5-12)
12:00-1:30
Come All Ages!

Philoptochos Ladies
Decorate Christ’s
Tomb &
Wrap Easter Eggs
9:00 am, GOOD FRIDAY
April 14

GOOD FRIDAY
MYRRH-BEARING
GIRLS
For all girls from ages
3 to 18 years old

6:00pm
GOOD FRIDAY PROCESSION
To Dress Up and Sing the
Lamentations

Contact Nike Beaudry
(508) 864-4955
For your girls to participate

JOY EASTER
EGG HUNT!!!

EASTER DAY
April 16, 11:00 am
followed by the
AGAPE VESPERS
of Pascha 12:00 noon
**President’s Message**

When Fr Luke originally asked me to write the "President's Message" I wasn't really sure what my messages should be. Each month I would randomly pick a topic of something that struck me as inspiring. I am not a writer, nor do I have nearly as many experiences as most you. I believe that we all have a story to tell which has made us stronger, or made us think about growing in our Faith. If anyone would like to share a story, I would love to include it in my message.

I recently had the opportunity to go to Moscow, Russia to visit my son who is studying there, and meet his girlfriend's parents. At one of our dinners, Katya's mother and father talked about the years when they were dating and newly married. This was during the Soviet Union. They spoke about religion being "hush hush". If there was a baptism, it would have to be done quietly. The famous Cathedral of Christ the Savior was torn down and a swimming pool was installed where Orthodox Christians used to worship. Can you imagine that? I realize many countries have experienced the same restrictions on religion. It just never ceases to amaze me how fortunate we are to live in a country with religious freedom.

Unfortunately I didn't get an opportunity to visit inside the newly constructed Cathedral of Christ the Savior or St Basil's Cathedral. However I was able to visit some of the smaller, much older, churches in the Kremlin where the feeling of God was so present.

My prayers for all of you in our Church community and may we continue to pray for peace in our world.

To those celebrating a special occasion, may God bless you with years of good health and happiness. And may we all journey through the Passion of Christ during Holy Week and experience the joy of Christ’s Resurrection on Pascha!

Christ is Risen!

Lisa Healy
Parish Council President

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**Philoptochos News**

On March 6th we had a very good meeting! It was well attended and a lot of good ideas. April will be a very busy month for us! On Tuesday April 4th Eleni and her crew will make Easter breads. We thank her and all the women for all their work in volunteering to make our delicious breads every year! She will make a double recipe because Orthodox and Western Easter are the same this year. I will advertise on the access channels and facebook and flyers, so put your orders in early. All ingredients are donated due to the generosity of our women! See one of the officers or call the church and give us your order and spread the word. We will be selling them on Saturday April 8th from 9 to 12 and on Palm Sunday the 9th.

On Good Friday come join us to decorate the epitaphion with Leslie and Laurie Manthos. They volunteer their time every year with the other women to make our epitaphion a beautiful display. We will also be wrapping the eggs for Easter. Please don't forget to donate your eggs and come help.

On April 29th we will have our 5th annual Spaghetti Supper. We have had a great success in this fundraiser! Last year we sold out of everything!!! John Sgouritsas very generously is donating the meatballs and sauce . We are planning on 180 people this year. We have most of the donations but if anyone would like to add to the donations please let me know. Also don't forget the center table raffle. Please bring your prizes. Let's make this years' pasta dinner another huge success! We again will have the placemat ad so I will start making the calls. If anyone would like to donate a $25 ad please let me know.

On April 3rd at 6:00 we will be having our next meeting to discuss everything in length on these various events. Please attend. We need all of you to get involved.

I wish you all a wonderful Pascha. Christos Anesti!

With love and appreciation,

Evelyn Pappas
Philoptochos President
Dear Beloved Parishioners

Our Church will once again sponsor a MISSIONS TEAM TO MEXICO to serve our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church in a cross-cultural setting.

This will be the SIXTH TIME our Church will send such a group. We have 25 people participating in this exciting mission (and more on our waiting list):

The Veronis Family, Neal/Olivia/John Nesluson, Steve/Louisa Foisy, Kara Bilis, Jaime, Gabriella, Gideon, Grady Ross Tony/Maia Beaudry, Smaranda Cojocaru, Sophia Georges Matvey Zhuk, Bill Thompson, Nick Kiritsis Please keep our team in your prayers!
(There are THREE OPEN SPOTS. See Fr. Luke if you are interested in coming)

As in past years, we will travel to Mexico and work with the PROJECT MEXICO, while staying at the St. Innocent Orphanage. We will go from July 21-27, 2017.

Our primary goal will be to help construct a home for a needy family in Rosarito. The week we are there, we will work with 125 Orthodox Christians from around the country, and will build FIVE SIMPLE HOMES. We will also spend time with the teenage orphans at the St. Innocent home, as well as share our faith and spend time with the local people we meet.

In order for our group to participate in this mission trip, WE ARE RAISING $25,000, which will pay for the supplies and materials needed to build the house, our food and lodging at the orphanage, our flights to San Diego and the van we must rent for Mexico.

Would you prayerfully consider becoming a spiritual and financial partner with us on our mission?

As a financial partner, you can send a tax-deductible donation to Sts. Constantine and Helen Church. Please write Project Mexico in the memo line of the check. You can learn more about Project Mexico on their website www.projectmexico.org.

Thank you for helping our Church fulfill its part in our Lord’s global mission and outreach!!

In Christ’s love,

+Luke
NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

It’s Been FIVE years since we did our last church directory. Since then we have had new families join our church, as well as some beloved members pass away. So it’s time for an update.

LifeTouch will put together our new 2017 Church Directory. We will be scheduling appointments to get your picture taken in May. Please respond to us when we contact you about coming in for an appointment to get your picture taken.

We want to get as many families as possible in our Church directory.

MAKE A SPECIAL DONATION DURING LENT IN HONOR OR MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE

Thank You to Everyone Who has already made Easter donations!

REMAINING ITEMS
Send to our Church Office or Treasurers to dedicate your offering to someone.

- Lenten Altar Flowers - $40/week
- Fri Salutations Flowers - $30/week
- Cross Sunday Flowers - $75
- Charcoal (for a year) - $150
- Altar Candles (for a year) - $100
- Garlands at Entry of Church - $40
- Palm Sunday Palms & Trees - $200
- Bridegroom Icon Flowers - $40
- Holy Thur Flower Crown - $100
- Holy Saturday Rose Pedals - $75
- Holy Altar Flowers - $200
- Easter Pew Flowers - $130
- 12 Easter Lilies - $40/each

Activities Committee Meeting and Festival Meeting

All chairpeople of the festival should attend this meeting

6:00pm April 6
**USHERS & GREETERS SCHEDULE**

**Apr 2** Arthur Bilis, Del Monroe, Chris Geotis, Thomai Gatsogianis, Trish Lareau  
Palm Sunday, Apr 9 Marie McNally, Matt Benoit, Lisa Healy, Nick Seferi  
Holy Wednesday, Apr 12 Neal Neslusan, Mary Papageorge, Jimmy Karapanos, Cindy Johnson  
Holy Thursday, Apr 19 Nicoleta Cojocaru, Zach Gianaris, Garry Ross, Jared Quill, George Kerbici  
Good Friday, Apr 14 Arthur Bilis, Del Monroe, Chris Geotis, Thomai Gatsogianis, Trish Lareau  
**PASCHA EVENING, Apr 15** Marie McNally, Matt Benoit, Lisa Healy, Nick Seferi  
**PASCHA DAY, Apr 16** Neal Neslusan, Mary Papageorge, Jimmy Karapanos, Cindy Johnson  
**Apr 23** Nicoleta Cojocaru, Zach Gianaris, Garry Ross, Jared Quill, George Kerbici  
**Apr 30** Arthur Bilis, Del Monroe, Chris Geotis, Thomai Gatsogianis,  

**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP:**  
**Apr 2** - Kathy Bilis, Sara Darligianis, Marie Monroe, Charlotte Neslusan, Carolyn Niemeck, Stephanie Quill,  
**Apr 9** - Thomai Gatsogiannis, Trish Lareau, Irini Costomiris Deb Raymond, Evangeline Wilson  
**Apr 23** - Donna Cooney, Athena Cooney, Leah Didonato, Jaime Ross, Betty Tonna  
**Apr 30** Marie McNally, Christa Benoit, Sandi Kunkel, Mary Seferi  

**YOUTH EPISTLE READERS**  
April 2 - Panayiota Veronis  
April 9 - Olivia Neslusan  
April 16 - Zach Beaudry March  
April 23 - Gabriella Ross  
April 30 - Gabriella Ross  
May 7 - Lily Mueller  
May 14 - Theodora Veronis  

**WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY**  
10:00-11:00am  
Every Wednesday  
All Are Welcome!  

**EARLY RISERS BIBLE STUDY**  
7:00 am - 8:00 am  
Saturday, April 22, 29  
Come and Join Us.
**WEEKDAY SERVICES**

**GREAT COMPLINE**  
Monday April 3rd

**PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY**  
(with a Pot-Luck Dinner)  
Wednesday, 6:00 pm  
April 5th

**AKATHIST SERVICE TO THE VIRGIN MARY**  
Friday, 6:30pm  
April 7th

*See page 9 for Holy Week Services*

**Life-Giving Fount Liturgy**  
9:30 am April 21  
St George  
9:30am April 23

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**SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION**

The Sacrament of Confession has always been a central part of an Orthodox Christian’s journey in Great Lent and the preparation for Pascha. Anyone interested in participating in this Sacrament of Confession and Reconciliation can plan on doing it after any Lenten Service, or make set a time with Fr. Luke.

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**NEW YOUNG ADULT GATHERING**

Everyone ages 18-30 come and join us for an evening of faith and fellowship.  
7:30pm Thursday, April 27

Look for our safe and convenient online giving at bottom left of Church webpage at [www.schwebster.org](http://www.schwebster.org)

Learn more about your Orthodox Faith.

Listen to Orthodox podcasts, music and interesting teachings:

[www.myocn.net](http://www.myocn.net)

Remembering Our Church Family

Important Dates in APRIL:

Make a visit, give a call, or express your congratulations to members of our Church family who celebrate special days during this month.

**BIRTHDAYS:**

April 3  Lex Pappas
April 4  Elisabeta Cojocaru
April 7  Persephoni Sgouritsas
April 7  Del Monroe
April 10  Maximos Pappas
April 12  Catalin Enache
April 12  Helen Thomas
April 13  Dhimitra Adamopoulos
April 18  Kathy Bilis
April 18  Pauline Mueller
April 19  Kaiden Kunkel
April 21  Muriel Angelo
April 23  Leslie Manthos
April 23  Cynthia Johnson
April 23  Celia Milios
April 24  Donna Christo
April 25  Harrison Jordanoglou
April 25  Zachary Bethune
April 30  Bertha Constantine

**WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES:**

April 28  Richard & Sophia Bethune

**NAMEDAYS:**

Pascha, April 16
Anestis Jordanoglou

Sunday after Easter—St. Thomas
Thomas Baxter

—

Thomai Gatsogiannis
Thomas Klebart
Tom Laurea
Gideon Thomas Ross
Garry Thomas Ross

St George
George Condos
Evis Georgia Jordanoglou
Georgette Nicholopoulos
George Baraklilis
George Carabina
George Milios
George Nonis
George Papageorge
Leslie Georgia Manthos
Georgia Sgouritsas

—

SAVE DATES
Metropolis of Boston

Summer Camp
Week 5 - July 31 - Aug 6

Vacation Church Camp
(tentative dates)
July 9-14
HOLY SCRIPTURE FOR PASCHA

If Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins!
If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all people the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead and has become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

I Corinthians 15:17-20

Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. Go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead indeed, and He is going before you to Galilee.

Matthew 28:5-7

“Thus it is written and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and “that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations.”

Luke 24:46-47

“Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

John 20:29
Thank You to those who sponsor our monthly bulletin!

Shaw-Majersik Funeral Home
48 School Street
Webster, MA 01570
tel: 508-943-6278
Because We Care
Richard D. Majersik, Director
www.shaw-majersik.com

Robert J. Miller, Inc.
Funeral Services
366 School Street
Webster, MA 01570
Tel. (508) 943-0045
ROBERT J. MILLER Toll Free 866-360-0045
Funeral Director Fax (508) 943-3163
Email: miller.funerals@verizon.net www.rjmillerfunerals.net

Dudley - Auburn - Blackstone

Allasso Chiropractic
Pediatric Development & Family Health
Robert Mirandola D.C.
Newtonville, MA 02460, Dr.Mirandola@gmail.com

Lake Pizza & Restaurant
39 Thompson Road

Point Breeze
Your Restaurant on Webster Lake
114 Point Breeze Road
Webster, MA
508-943-0404
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<tr>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>8:30 Matins 9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>Greek Parade in Boston</td>
<td>7pm AA</td>
<td>March 29</td>
<td>March 30</td>
<td>April 1</td>
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<td>8:30 Matins 9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>11:15 “How to Paint Icons” Presentation</td>
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<td>10:00 Bible Study</td>
<td>Youth Lock-In Retreat with St. Spyridon GOYA</td>
<td>No Bible Study</td>
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<td>6:00 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</td>
<td>6:30 Akathist Hymn</td>
<td>Parish Council Retreat at Hellenic College Holy Cross</td>
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<td>8:30 Matins 9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>6:00 Philoptochos Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 Bible Study</td>
<td>6:00pm Activities Committee and Festival Committee Meeting</td>
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<td>LAZARUS SATURDAY</td>
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<td>6:00 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</td>
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<td>8:45 Matins 9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
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<td>7:00 Great Compline</td>
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<td>10:30 Pancake Breakfast, making Palm Crosses, Stuffing Easter Eggs</td>
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<td>15 HOLY SATURDAY</td>
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<td>9 PALM SUNDAY</td>
<td>10 HOLY MONDAY</td>
<td>11 HOLY TUESDAY</td>
<td>12 HOLY WEDNESDAY</td>
<td>13 HOLY THURSDAY</td>
<td>14 GOOD FRIDAY</td>
<td>15 HOLY SATURDAY</td>
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<td>8:30 Matins 9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>11:15 Community Fish Luncheon</td>
<td>9:00 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</td>
<td>9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
<td>9:00 Holy Hours</td>
<td>9:30 1st Resurrection Service</td>
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<td>6:30 Bridegroom Service</td>
<td>9:00 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</td>
<td>6:30 Service of 12 Gospels</td>
<td>9:00 Decoration of Epitaphio</td>
<td><strong>10:00pm Resurrection Service</strong></td>
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<td>6:30 Bridegroom Service w Hymn of Kassiani</td>
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<td>16 PASCHA</td>
<td>17 Bright Monday (St George)</td>
<td>18 Bright Tuesday</td>
<td>19 Bright Wednesday</td>
<td>20 Bright Thursday</td>
<td>21 Bright Friday Life Giving Fount</td>
<td>22 Bright Saturday</td>
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<td>11:00 Easter Egg Hunt 12:00 Agape Vespers 1:00 Pascha Pot-Luck Dinner</td>
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<td>8:30 Matins 9:30 Divine Liturgy</td>
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<td>7:30 Young Adult Meeting</td>
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<td>12:00 Baptism</td>
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<td>5:00 Philoptochos Spaghetti Dinner</td>
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<td>7pm AA</td>
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OUR RISEN LORD

Born in a manger surrounded by beasts
Three kings came to praise him from the Far East
His mission was known to his father above
Yet misunderstood by the people he loved

His mother was a Virgin and holy as could be
And He was raised by a carpenter close to the sea
Soon he embarked on his life as a teacher
A fisher of men, an itinerant preacher

Few people knew that He was the Messiah
The Pharisees looked down on him as a pariah
Performing miracles and raising Lazarus from the dead
His influence and fame became even more widespread

Despite his power, He was more humble than a dove
Changing lives as He taught his disciples to love
He preached that the meek shall inherit the earth
And to love your enemies and those of lowly birth

He was soon betrayed by one of his own
Given to Pilate and tortured to the bone
To fulfill his Godly mission He was handed over to die
And crucified with two criminals on a hill near the sky

His body was pierced as he gasped for his last breath
Those around him did not know He would soon conquer death
He was placed in a sealed off tomb of stone within
And in three days was resurrected to save us from sin

His legacy has lasted for over 2,000 years
Transforming lives with hope and less fear
We praise him today and rejoice on high
As we sing “Christ is Risen” in joyous reply!

Nicholas A. Veronis