

Pascha 2020



On the occasion of the glorious feast of the Lord's resurrection we extend sincere greetings to all our God-loving parishioners; the members of our parish council; to our benefactors, supporters and volunteers; to our children and youth; all members of our church choir and its director; Sunday school teachers, assistants and parents; altar servers, sacristans, and elders; members of the Holy Protection sisterhood; all our ill and infirm parishioners and family members in hospitals, nursing homes, or at home; our Ukrainian brothers and sisters both in the homeland and throughout the world; to all our Canadian brothers and sisters; to all Orthodox Christians; and to all people of good will:

Christ is Risen!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I had hoped to greet you with these joyful words personally in Church, but this year it will not be possible. Rather than a common celebration together we will be home, celebrating in a close circle of loved ones.

First of all, no matter where, or with whom we will be, may God grant that we will be healthy! I pray that the Lord God will protect all of you, and that none of our parishioners will perish as a result of the pandemic.

Secondly, if you know of someone who might be home-bound or isolated and needs help with groceries, etc., and you are not able to help them yourself please let me know. We have parishioners who are ready to help.

Thirdly, if anyone has any particular need please do not hesitate to call me at any time. Through our common prayers and with God's help we have faith that this pandemic with its associated dangers and inconveniences will pass quickly, and that we will all take to heart the lessons that God wishes to teach us through this crisis.

Regarding our Church services, we will serve as many as we are able to without violating the health and civil guidelines. The Church will continue to be locked, and no one will be allowed to enter except for those who serve and those who sing. We are trying to organize live-streaming of our services over the internet. We are not yet sure if this will be possible, please check our web-site, www.stjohnshawa.org for up to date information.

If we are not able to arrange for live-streaming of our services, you are encouraged to follow the Holy Week and Paschal services streamed from the Metropolia of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, which can be accessed here: https://uocofusa.org/news_200404_3 (these services are conducted bi-lingually).

Regarding the Blessing of Paschal Foods:

There will not be any common blessing of Paschal Foods on our Church property! Instead, we ask you, our faithful parishioners, to follow the guidelines published by the Bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA: *"If you are live-streaming your Paschal-Resurrection services, Rev. Fathers, then following the dismissal of the Paschal Divine Liturgy, you may place your own basket on your Tetrapod in Church and encourage your faithful to gather their families around their own baskets at home. You will then read the Paschal Blessing Prayers and sprinkle your basket with Holy Water. At the same time, you should instruct your faithful to sprinkle their baskets at home, in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, with the Holy Water they received in Church on the Feast of Epiphany/Theophany. You should also send a copy of the Paschal Blessing prayers to all of your parish family members so that they are able to read them together as a family before the blessing.*

If you are not able to live-stream your Pascha-Resurrection services, then please send a copy of the Paschal Blessing Prayers to all of your parish family members, notifying them of the exact time you will begin the blessing of your own basket following Divine Liturgy and invite them to gather with their families in their homes at that same time to read the prayers together, following which they will then sprinkle their baskets, in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, with the Holy Water they received on the Feast of Epiphany/Theophany."

PLEASE NOTE: For those who do not have internet access the prayers for the blessing of paschal foods will be read in Church at 8:00 AM on Pascha morning, immediately after the Liturgy.

Prayer for the Blessing of Bread (Paska)

O Holy Master, Almighty Father, Pre-eternal God! Of Your good will deign to bless this bread with Your Holy Spiritual blessing, that it would be for those who partake of it unto salvation of the soul, bodily health, protection against all physical illness and every attack of the enemy. Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, who came down from heaven, grants life and salvation to the world, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer for the Blessing of the Paschal Lamb

Look down, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, on this fleshmeat and sanctify it, as You sanctified the ram which faithful Abraham brought to You, and the lamb which Abel offered to You as a whole-offering. Likewise the fattened calf which You commanded to be slain for Your Prodigal Son when he had returned again to You; that as he was granted to enjoy Your grace, so too may we enjoy these things sanctified and blessed by You, for the nourishment of us all. For You are the True Nourishment and the Bestower of good things, and to You we ascribe glory, together with Your Father Who is without beginning, and Your Most-Holy, God, and Life-creating Spirit now, and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer for the Blessing of Milk, Butter, and Other Foods

O Master, Lord our God, the Creator and Maker of all things: bless this curdled milk, and with it these eggs, and preserve us in Your goodness, that partaking of these, we may be filled with Your gifts, which You bestow on us ungrudgingly, together with Your unspeakable goodness. For Yours is the dominion and Yours is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Schedule of Services for Holy Week and Bright Week:

April 11th, Lazarus Saturday:	9:00 AM, Divine Liturgy with Memorial Service 5:00 PM, Great Vespers
April 12th, Palm Sunday:	9:00 AM, Divine Liturgy
April 13th through 15th:	6:00 PM, Bridegroom Matins
April 16th, Maundy Thursday:	9:00 AM, Vesperal Divine Liturgy 6:00 PM, Orthros of Great and Holy Friday (Reading of the 12 Passion Gospels)
April 17th, Good Friday:	3:00 PM, Vespers with the Deposition of the Holy Shroud 6:00 PM, Orthros of Holy Saturday
April 18th, Holy Saturday:	9:00 AM, Vesperal Divine Liturgy
April 19th, Pascha:	5:30 AM, Midnight Office, Paschal Matins, Divine Liturgy. 3:00 PM, Paschal Vespers
April 20th, Bright Monday:	8:00 AM, Paschal Matins and Divine Liturgy
April 25th, Bright Saturday:	5:00 PM, Great Vespers
April 26th, Thomas Sunday:	9:00 AM, Divine Liturgy with Memorial Service

NOTE: On Sunday the 26th we will serve a general memorial service in Church following Liturgy. After this Father will go *alone* to Ss. Volodymyr and Ol'ha, Thornton, and Union Cemeteries to bless the graves. There will not be any common graveside services with the presence of the faithful.

Truly, Christ is Risen!

Fr. Bohdan