

# SOBORNOST

## St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

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*American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese*

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE  
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

## SERVICES

**Saturdays:** Confession 5:00 PM,

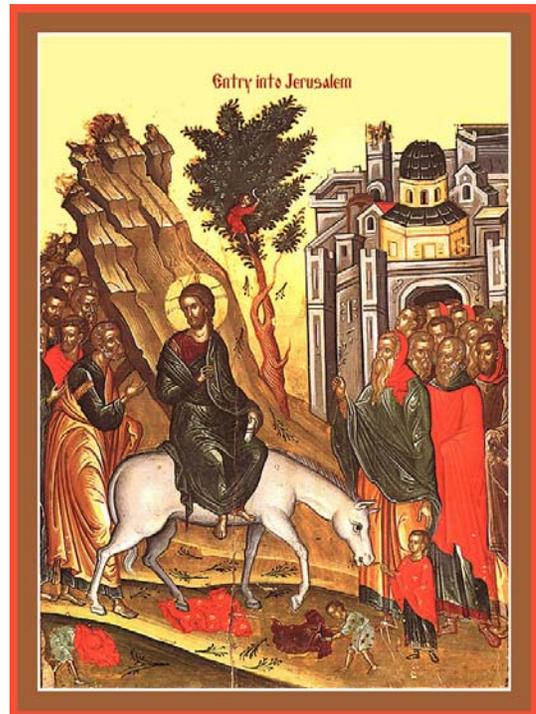
Great Vespers 5:30 PM

**Sundays:** Matins (Orthros) 8:45 AM |

Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM.

### April 24, 2016 – Palm Sunday

On this day the Holy Church especially commemorates the imperial glorification of Jesus Christ before His death on the cross to indicate that the sufferings of the Savior were voluntary. The event of the feast is described in the Gospels (Mt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Luke 19:29-41; John 12:12-19). The beginning of this feast goes back to deep antiquity. We meet the most ancient instruction on it in the teaching for this day of Methodius of Patara (3rd c.). Beginning from the 7<sup>th</sup> century, many hymnographers (Andrew of Crete, Cosmas of Maium, John of Damascus, Theodore and Joseph of the Studite Monastery, the Emperor Leo the Philosopher, Theophanes and Nicephorus Xanthopoulos) have glorified the feast with hymns, which we sing even now. It is traditional to use palms on this feast (palm branches). It is even called "Palm" Sunday, "Flower bearing," "Flower offering" or "Flowery," and in popular usage "Palm Sunday." For us willows replace palms because the willow tree blossoms before other trees. The tradition to use palms on this feast is based on the circumstances of the event of the Entry of our Lord into Jerusalem. Praying as though we will invisibly meet the Lord and greet Him as the Victor over Hades and death, we hold in our hands the "signs of victory": the willows and lighted candles. Because this feast is between days of fasting, it has neither Forefeast nor Afterfeast; but it is one of the **Twelve Major Feasts** and the whole service is for the feast only. The last week before Pascha is devoted to the commemoration of the last days of the mortal life of the Savior, His



suffering, death and burial and is why it is called *Passion Week*. It is also called *Great* because of the significance and greatness of the events that occurred in it. "During this week", as St. John Chrysostom teaches, "the ancient tyranny of the devil is destroyed, death is trampled down, the powerful are in bonds and their weapons are destroyed, sin is expiated, the curse and opening to paradise is removed, heaven has ceased to be inaccessible, people came closer to the angels, the walls of division are broken down, the boundaries are seized. The God of peace has reconciled the heavenly and the terrestrial."

The divine services of this great, according to its internal meaning and sense, week, the Holy Church has also arranged, with respect to its external meaning and sense, majesty, having adorned them with wisely positioned readings from the Prophets, the Epistles and the Gospel, with sublime, inspired hymns and a whole order of deeply meaningful, reverent rites. Everything that is described or predicted not only in the Old Testament, but also in the New Testament is represented or related to the last days and hours of the mortal life of the God Incarnate, - all this the Holy Church reduces to one living and majestic image which gradually unfolds before us in the Divine services of Passion Week.

Already at Vespers on Palm Sunday the Holy Church invites the faithful from the solemn feast of Palms to flow together to the divine feast of the mystery of the passion of the Lord. Then, with the approach of Passion Week, the Holy Church, recalling in the divine services the events of the last days of the mortal life of the Savior, with the attentive eye of love and reverent vigils, so as to say, after each step, listens attentively to each word, and wants to lead us also to enter into the very spiritual situations of the coming voluntary passion of Christ the Savior, gradually leads us in the steps of the Lord to the full extent of His way to the cross, from Bethany up to the Place of the Skull, from His royal entry into Jerusalem and to His final moment of expiation for human sins by the suffering on the cross, and further on to the bright celebration of the resurrection of Christ.

On the first three days the Holy Church strenuously prepares believers for the passion of Christ. During these days at the Sixth Hour readings are prescribed about the mysterious visions of the Prophet Ezekiel, who prophesied the foundation of the Church of Jesus Christ on earth, Who, having Himself drunk the sorrows of all our afflictions, made all these afflictions sweet and saving for His true followers. The readings from the book of Exodus prescribed for Vespers is devoted to the memory of the distress of the Hebrew people in Egyptian slavery from which this nation was delivered after they have tasted the lamb is the prototype of Pascha. This memory of the Holy Church inspires believers that slavery to the devil is much worse than slavery to the Egyptians from which we are delivered by the new Pascha, Christ, Who suffered for us. The second reading in

Vespers is taken from the Book of Job. The uncomplaining transference of all the heavy afflictions and temptations sent by the will of the Heavenly Father on this righteous man, serves as a prototype of the suffering of Christ for our sins, and also gives us a lesson of uncomplaining transference of troubles and misfortunes in our life. Conforming to the fact that before His suffering Jesus Christ spent the whole day in the temple teaching the people, the Holy Church distinguishes these days with especially long Divine services. Trying to gather and concentrate the attention and thoughts of the faithful on a broader scale to the entire Gospel story of the incarnation of the God-man and His service to the human race, the Holy Church during the first three days of Passion Week reads through the Four Gospels during the Hours. With this announcement the Holy Church also means to show that Jesus Christ in all the events of His mortal life was revealed as true God and true man, and that therefore only His suffering are saving for us.

As in first three days of Passion Week many various meaningful events which have the closest relation to the passion of Christ were accomplished and that these events are also reverently remembered by the Holy Church on those days on which they happened. In the prescription of specially selected Gospel readings for the first three days of Passion Week in Matins and in the Presanctified Liturgy the Holy Church enlightens the faithful through the Gospel narratives about the events of each day and edifies them through the talks and conversations that the Savior made on these days. Thus, the Holy Church persistently leads us to the Divine Teacher, with His disciples, now in the temple, now to the people, now to the tax collectors, now to the Pharisees, and everywhere she enlightens us with those words, which He Himself offered directly to His hearers on these days. Preparing the believers for worthy contemplation and fervent co-participation in the sufferings of the Savior on the cross, the Holy Church offers the character of the primary grief and touching destruction of our sinfulness on a broader scale during the Divine Services of the first three days of Passion Week.

The Great Lenten services terminate with the Vespers of Wednesday and the especially significant services begin with rites of completely different structure. In the church hymns, the sound of crying and the complaints of the guilty human soul are silenced and there come the days of another cry filling the hearts of believers and from this time on penetrating all the Divine church services, - a cry from the contemplation of the horrifying torture and suffering of the Very Son of God on the cross. During the same time other feelings, even of indescribable joy for their salvation, boundless gratitude to the Divine Redeemer, delight the hearts and fill the souls of the believing Christian. Crying innocently for the suffering, the pierced and the crucified, pouring out bitter tears under the cross of the Savior, we

also experience an inexpressible joy from the knowledge that after the crucifixion of the Most Holy Word on the cross, we the perishing will resurrect with Him.

Through the fullness of the sacred narrations, the deeply supportive hymns and, finally, the whole order of reverent rites and sacred customs, the Holy church during the days of the passion of Christ will bless the soul of the Christian with such abundant feelings of sadness and joy, boundlessly touching and life-giving, that the religious revival and inspired delight of the believing Christian soul during these days does not yield to any description - no word is able to express it. Consistently developing the amazingly majestic story of the passion of the Lord, the Divine Services of Passion Week gives us the full possibility in our mind of translating ourselves to those days in Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives, on Mount Zion, in Gethsemane, on Golgotha, in Joseph of Arimathea's garden similarly to the myrrh-bearing women who ran "very early" to the tomb of the Savior, in order to see His life-bearing resurrection.

Narrowly pulling us together with the voluntary passion borne by our Savior, the Divine Services of Passion Week delivers to us the priceless opportunity to thoughtfully behold the streams of His most holy blood poured out for us, and to hear his last words and His divine teachings as if directly from His most Immaculate lips before His death. In a word, being present in church during Passion Week, the last days of the Savior vividly representing everything as if the events happened in our presence, we in our mind pass through everything with majestic feelings and immense instruction. So close to the heart of the Christian in his mind and heart is the story of the sufferings of Christ, "let us go with Him and let us be crucified with Him." Therefore Passion Week reveals itself as the most significant time of the year, incomparably ennobling the soul of the Christian and adjusting it to the acceptance of the highest ideas and impressions, - by the season, by the supplying of plentiful food for religious Christian thought and heavenly satisfaction and delight to the believing heart.

According to the witness of St. Chrysostom, taking priority for Christians, who persistently burn with the desire to be with the Lord in last days of His life, praying is intensified and the usual ascetic effort of the fast is increased during Passion Week. They individually according to the love for fallen humanity, imitating the Lord, who suffered unexampled suffering, try to be good and indulgent to our infirm brethren and to do more deeds of love and mercy. Considering the indecent judgment uttered during the days of our justifying the most pure blood of the Undeified Lamb, they stopped all law suits, legal proceedings in offices, disputes and punishments and even released those prisoners not guilty of criminal offences from the chains of prison during this time. (*from Handbook for Church Servers, 2nd ed., by S. V. Bulgakov (Trans. Archpriest Eugene D. Tarris)*)

### **Today's Epistle Lesson – St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians 4:4-9**

Brethren, rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is* at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

### **Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint John 12:1-18**

At that time, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, who would betray Him, said, "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."

Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed *is* He who comes in the name of the Lord!' The King of Israel!" Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: "Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt." His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that* they had done these things to Him. Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.

## *A Word From the Holy Fathers*

Christ came in order that while He might become a sacrifice for us all, we, nourished up in the words of truth, and partaking of His living doctrine, might be able with the saints to receive also the joy of Heaven. For, as He called the disciples to the upper chamber, so does the Word call us with them to the divine and incorruptible banquet in Heaven; having suffered for us here, but there, preparing the heavenly tabernacles for those who most readily hearken to the summons, and unceasingly, gazing at the goal, pursue the prize of their high calling; where for them who come to the banquet, and strive with those who hinder them, there is laid up both a crown, and incorruptible joy. For even though, humanly speaking, the labor of such a journey is great, yet the Savior Himself has rendered even it light and kindly. . . . Let us, brethren, who have received the vineyard from the Savior, and are invited to the heavenly banquet, inasmuch as the Feast is now drawing nigh, take the branches of the palm trees, and proving conquerors of sin, let us too, like those who on that occasion went to meet the Savior, make ourselves ready by our conduct, both to meet Him when He comes, and to go in with Him and partake of the immortal food, and from thenceforth live eternally in the heavens. – St. Athanasius the Great

### **Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri and Mt. Kenya**

In January of this year, his Grace, Bishop Neofitos was given the responsibility for a new diocese in his native Kenya, overseeing 43 priests. Until this year, there was only one bishop for all of Kenya's over 250 priests, and parishioners would go years without seeing their bishop; he is filling a huge need. He is also starting from absolutely nothing; when he set out to go to his new diocesan seat, he didn't even have a place to stay. He jokes that his office is his briefcase. He would like to build an office, but land is expensive in his city and his diocese is largely rural and poor. His priests often cannot hold weekly services because they cannot afford the fare to get to the church and back; his goal is to equip every priest in his diocese with a motorcycle so they can celebrate liturgy every Sunday. Bishop Neofitos runs an orphanage of 200 children with the assistance of 12 teachers; though their salary is \$250/month, they have not been paid since January because there is no money to pay them. In parts of his diocese, people have to walk for miles to get a glass of water, and it is a struggle to provide food for one meal a day. Our three Lenten disciplines are prayer, fasting, and charity – we are exhorted to do all three. If you would like to assist the Bishop, you can make a check out to OCMC and send it to OCMC, 220 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086 with "Bishop Neofitos" on the memo line. You also can donate online through OCMC at [https://www.ocmc.org/donate/donation\\_info.aspx](https://www.ocmc.org/donate/donation_info.aspx); just *make sure* to type "Bishop Neofitos" in the special instructions field.



## On Stewardship and the Orthodox Life – Part 65: Life Lived in Vain

“For you yourselves know, brethren, that our visit to you was not in vain...” (1 Thessalonians 2:1 RSV)

Our Western society spends a great amount of time doing trivial things. We watch a great deal of mindless television programs. We spend an excessive part of our days surfing the world-wide web or playing video games or reading frivolous writings that are published as literature. The son of David, king in Jerusalem, Ecclesiastes (the Preacher) says this of life: “*Vanity of vanities! All is vanity!*” (Ecclesiastes 1:2 RSV). Vanity, or things done *in vain*, are things that have no value. Fifty years ago, “*futurists*” were warning that our generation would have too much leisure time. Those futurists appear to be correct. We have idolized our free time. We use our free time for vanity – as late as two generations ago, people did not have much leisure time as they sought their next meal, or worked overtime just to make it. We, however, in our own generation have time to spare: time to surf, play, check email, tweet, update Facebook, send text messages, watch NFL games (again and again), etc., etc.

When St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians that his visit with them was not in vain, he meant that he had come there for a purpose. And He fulfilled that purpose. Paul came to Thessalonica through much suffering, in order to bring the Good News of salvation through Christ to them. Paul and the Thessalonians knew of God’s purpose. They also knew that the time was short for them. The earliest Christians expected the immediate return of Christ, and lived that way. There was no time for vain activities.

Good stewards know the value of time. They put their time to good use. Stewards recognize that God has created us and this world for a purpose. And that purpose is that we honor God with our time and our treasure. When some time in the future, the world realizes that surfing the net and watching TV are simply activities in vain, what will it have to turn to? It remains to us who understand and undertake the task of stewardship to be constantly ready to provide real life to those whose life has just been a series of things done *in vain*.

Good stewards must live a life that makes it possible at any time to share that life with those who need it. This fulfills God’s purpose. Good stewards must be so good at prayer and study that others can learn from them. Good stewards must be so good at sharing that no one is ever without necessities. Good stewards must be so good in their disciplined life that they always have time for anyone in need. Good stewards put away all those things that are done simply *in vain*. (from *acrod.org*)

## The Nazarene Returns

The fourth 2016 Spring issue of The Nazarene, the Camp Nazareth newspaper started last summer at Camp, is now available at the Camp website, and is linked from the Camp's Facebook page. It is also posted in the social hall. Each weekly issue includes a "Remember When" section from last year as well as a section devoted to what is up and coming this Summer (without spoiling any surprises).

## Young Women's Encounter

Registration is now open for the Third Annual Diocesan Young Women's Encounter which will take place from Sunday, June 26th to Wednesday, June 29, 2016 at Sts Peter and Paul Church in Windber, PA which is open to young women in our Diocese ages 12-18. This engaging experience will highlight how young women can live our Orthodox Faith and serve the Church with their own unique gifts. This year we are really looking forward to having Katrina Bitar with us. She is the YES North America Program Director (Youth Equipped to Serve) for FOCUS North America (Fellowship of Orthodox Christians United to Serve.)

Space is limited to the first thirty respondents, so participants are urged to register as soon as possible. **Registration Deadline is June 1, 2016.** For more information, please visit <http://www.acrod.org/news/7283/ywe2016>

## Diocesan Altar Boy Retreat

The annual Diocesan Altar Boy Retreat will happen at the same time as the Young Women's Encounter. More information will be forthcoming as the date approaches.

## Parish Life in Pictures – April Anniversaries & Birthdays



## **THE ISSUE OF ORTHODOX DIASPORA (NOT) TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE PAN-ORTHODOX COUNCIL**

In his report delivered at the Bishops' Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia focused, among other things, on the preparation for the Pan-Orthodox Council and the topics which it will consider.

The Orthodox Diaspora is one of such topics. As a result of the mass migration in the 20th century, a great many Orthodox Christians found themselves in the territories which are not in the jurisdiction of any Local Orthodox Church. Among those people were hierarchs and clerics of different jurisdictions.

Such situation has arisen that several Orthodox bishops of different Local Churches may reside in the same city. As His Holiness Patriarch Kirill noted, the Synaxis of the Primate of the Local Orthodox Churches which completed its work in Chambésy a few days ago took a decision on how the issue of the Orthodox Diaspora is to be addressed at the future Pan-Orthodox Council.

In 2009, the Pan-Orthodox Conference approved the establishment of consultative bodies in some regions – the assemblies of all Orthodox bishops who carry out their ministry in a given region. According to the decision taken at the Conference, the assemblies are consultative bodies which by no means restrict the canonical authority of the Orthodox hierarchs of various jurisdictions in diaspora or interfere with their relations with the Supreme Authority of their Local Churches.

It was supposed to be a temporary situation; the Pan-Orthodox Council was to take another, final, decision on the matter. “However, the objective and comprehensive analysis of the problem of diaspora and, first and foremost, the experience accumulated by the Episcopal Assemblies which, on the one hand, bear witness to the unity of the Orthodox Church, and on the other, confirm the natural right of each Orthodox Church to take care of her flock in diaspora, have shown that no new conciliar decisions on this matter are required, and the current practice of the Episcopal Assemblies is to be maintained,” His Holiness Patriarch Kirill said.  
*(from mospat.ru)*

### **Statement by His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew on Lesbos on April 16, 2016**

Dearest brothers and sisters, precious youth and children, we have traveled here to look into your eyes, to hear your voices, and to hold your hands. We have traveled here to tell you that we care. We have traveled here because the world has not forgotten you.

With our brothers, Pope Francis and Archbishop Ieronymos, we are here today to express our solidarity and support for the Greek people, who have welcomed and cared for you. And we are here to remind you that – even when people turn away from us – nevertheless “God is our refuge and strength; God is our help in hardship. Therefore, we shall not be afraid” (Ps 45: 2-3).

We know that you have come from areas of war, hunger and suffering. We know that your hearts are full of anxiety about your families. We know that you are looking for a safer and brighter future.

We have wept as we watched the Mediterranean Sea becoming a burial ground for your loved ones. We have wept as we witnessed the sympathy and sensitivity of the people of Lesbos and other islands. But we also wept as we saw the hard-heartedness of our fellow brothers and sisters – your fellow brothers and sisters – close borders and turn away.

Those who are afraid of you have not looked at you in the eyes. Those who are afraid of you do not see your faces. Those who are afraid of you do not see your children.

They forget that dignity and freedom transcend fear and division. They forget that migration is not an issue for the Middle East and Northern Africa, for Europe and Greece. It is an issue for the world.

The world will be judged by the way it has treated you. And we will all be accountable for the way we respond to the crisis and conflict in the regions that you come from.

The Mediterranean Sea should not be a tomb. It is a place of life, a crossroad of cultures and civilizations, a place of exchange and dialogue. In order to rediscover its original vocation, the Mare Nostrum, and more specifically the Aegean Sea, where we gather today, must become a sea of peace. We pray that the conflicts in the Middle East, which lie at the root of the migrant crisis, will quickly cease and that peace will be restored. We pray for all the people of this region. We would particularly like to highlight the dramatic situation of Christians in the Middle East, as well as the other ethnic and religious minorities in the region, who need urgent action if we do not want to see them disappear.

We promise that we shall never forget you. We shall never stop speaking for you. And we assure you that we will do everything to open the eyes and hearts of the world.

Peace is not the end of History. Peace is the beginning of a History tied to the future. Europe should know that better than any other continent.

This beautiful island we stand right now is just a dot in the map.

To dominate the wind and the rough sea Jesus, according to Luke, called a halt to the blow outright when the ship He and His disciples embarked was in danger. Eventually calm succeeded the storm.

God bless you. God keep you. And God strengthen you.

### **Also commemorated today: Martyr Sabbas Stratelates**

Saint Sabbas Stratelates (“The General”) of Rome came from a Gothic tribe. For his bravery he attained the high rank of military commander or “stratelates,” and he served under the Roman emperor Aurelian (270-275). From his youth, Sabbas was a Christian and he fervently followed the commands of Christ. He helped the needy, and visited Christians in prison. Because of his pure and virtuous life the saint received from the Lord the gift of wonderworking, healing the sick and casting out demons in the name of Christ.

When the emperor learned that St Sabbas was a Christian, he demanded that he apostasize. The martyr threw down his military belt and declared that he would not forsake his faith. They beat him, burned him with torches, and threw him into a cauldron with tar, but the martyr remained unharmed.

Looking on at his torments, seventy soldiers came to believe in Christ. They were beheaded by the sword. St Sabbas was thrown in prison. At midnight, while he was praying, Christ appeared to the martyr and shone on him the light of His Glory. The Savior bade him not to fear, but to stand firm. Encouraged, the Martyr Sabbas underwent new torture in the morning, and was drowned in a river in 272. *(from oca.org)*

### **News from Jesse Brandow Feb – April 2016**

Dear friends,

Spring greetings from here in Guatemala!

Guatemala News

**Clinic now open daily:** In February, our clinic administrator (Juana Pascual) began offering basic medical care from 8am to 2pm, daily. I've seen her handle both routine visits and emergencies like deep lacerations with lots of bleeding. From August 2015 until now, the clinic has offered a total of 1,197 patient visits.

**Dental and medical teams:** Right now a dental team is treating patients in Aguacate. We also have upcoming medical teams in mid April and in August.

**Bookmaking project is funded:** In my last newsletter I asked for donations to help us purchase bookmaking equipment. We finished the fundraising,

thanks to many of you! Now we are selecting a copy machine to purchase, and we already bought a binding machine. Thank you so much!

**Our bishop visited three villages:** In March His Eminence Athenagoras visited Pebil Pam, Tajumuco, and Aguacate. My favorite moment was when the people of Pebil Pam greeted him with fiddles and guitars!

#### Personal News

**Completed calendar of readings and saints for April – June:** My biggest ongoing project is a monthly liturgical calendar in Spanish for the parishes across Guatemala. We just published the edition for April, May, and June. This project requires lots of translation work, so I oversee everything, but my ultimate goal is to teach four of the seminarians how to take control of the project. For this edition I taught them how to gather the daily Scripture readings in Spanish.

**Visited Metropolis in Mexico City:** In January and February I spent a week in Mexico City with Fr. Evangelos. We met with our archbishop, visited parishes in the capital, and sought theological resources.

**Building collection of theological works in Spanish:** In Mexico City I looked for as many patristic and theological works as I could find in Spanish. On the bus ride back to Guatemala I was carrying almost a hundred books! Now we have a small library in Aguacate.

**Taught lenten retreat:** During clean week I taught parish leaders about the themes and special hymns of lent. They loved the story of St. Mary of Egypt.

#### Ways to Help

##### **Prayer requests:**

- My greatest concern is the educational program for our pre-seminarians. We want to enroll four of them in a long-distance Spanish theological program, but the process has been so long. Please pray that they will be able to begin soon!
- Please pray for my mom and dad, and for my brother. They're doing well, but they have to put up with my living so far from home. We miss one another a lot. Soon I will begin to decide whether I should come back to Guatemala for another two-year term, and my family could use your prayers during that discernment.

**Items to Donate:** Several people have asked what items we currently need in Guatemala. Incense and self-lighting charcoal always are useful. Crosses on necklaces also are wonderful because we need tons of baptismal crosses and

people can't easily get them here (they should be *three-bar* crosses if possible). I also would like to get lots of copies of the Spanish translation of Father Arseny because this is a very accessible book that contains many theological concepts in the stories. It would be excellent to hand out to the parish leaders and/or pre-seminarians. If you would like to donate an item, contact me at [jesse.brandow10@gmail.com](mailto:jesse.brandow10@gmail.com) for how to send it.

### Final Word

The mission teams are keeping me and Fr. John quite occupied this month (interpreting between Spanish and English) so I won't write a long reflection. But know that every day I take a few minutes to think of all of you after Matins and Vespers. We celebrate those morning and evening services each day with the pre-seminarians. That means that every smile that I share with the pre-seminarians, and every song that I sing with them, gets woven together with my thoughts for all of you. Please keep praying for us just as we pray for you—Christ unites us. Thank you for all your love and support!

In Christ,

Jesse

### AMAZONSMILE

The on-line shopping store, Amazon.com will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese of the USA whenever you shop on AmazonSmile. AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know – same products, same prices, same service. Simply go to the home page of our Diocesan website ([www.acrod.org](http://www.acrod.org)) and click on the AmazonSmile button in the far left column and then shop as usual.



## May Anniversaries and Birthdays



### Anniversaries:

Ronnie & Katrina Robinson 1<sup>st</sup>

Kari & Mary Diane David 4<sup>th</sup>

Alex & Valentina Makowelski 18<sup>th</sup>

Chris & Nicole Nicolaus 27<sup>th</sup>

Brad & Bernadette Karbowsky 28<sup>th</sup>

### Birthdays:

Charlotte Flade 6<sup>th</sup>

Amelia Flade 15<sup>th</sup>

Jennifer Popescu 20<sup>th</sup>

Olivia Wright 24<sup>th</sup>

Andy Single 27<sup>th</sup>

Stephen Sproul 30<sup>th</sup>

## Parish News

❖ Schedule of services for the coming week:

- On Monday and Tuesday morning, we will celebrate Bridegroom Matins at 6:00 AM.
- On Wednesday evening, we will celebrate the service of Holy Unction at 7 PM.
- On Thursday, we will celebrate the Institution of the Eucharist (DL) at 9 AM.
- Also on Thursday, we will read the Passion Gospels at 7 PM.
- On Friday, we will chant the Royal Hours of Great Friday at 9 AM.
- Also on Friday, we will commemorate the Burial Service of our Lord at 7PM.
- On Saturday, we will celebrate the Harrowing of Hell (DL) at 9 AM.
- Also on Saturday, we will celebrate Resurrection Matins at 8:30 PM (in place of the usual Matins service at 8:45 AM on Sunday).

**On Holy Pascha, we will have a potluck feast after liturgy. Please bring something to share.**

### Follow Our Diocese On-Line

Diocesan Website: <http://www.acrod.org>

Camp Nazareth: <http://www.campnazareth.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/acroddiocese>

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***In Your Prayers – Please Remember...*** His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Grace Bishop GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi of Aleppo, Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri and Mt. Kenya, Fr. John & Pani Betty Jean Baranik, Fr. Vincent Saverino, Presbyteria Katie Baker and family, Alicia Barosio and family, Millie Borys, Jeffrey Carey, Xenia Chilkowich, Jon Church, Ramius Connour, Curtis Cooper, Tina Crull, Ron Dominiecki, Linda A. Georgiev, Heather Himler, Alex Holthus, John Homick, Cameron Houk, Helen Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Deanna Jarrett, Tucker Karl and family, Robert Karpin, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Brian, Helen, and Luke Mahony, Alex & Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, Anna Meinhold, Dn. Henry Middleton, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & Family, Henry & Lisa Osborne, Westin Perry & Parents, Mary Reed, Chris & Kaitlin Rixey, Jerry Von Ronne, Anne Rosario, James, Theodore and Christina Ristas, Samson Family, Sharon Sheptak, Dawn & Faith Ulmschneider, Daria Virvan, Lydia Vita, Christine, Marshall, Nathaniel, the Syrian Christians displaced by war, Mother Virginia Marie and the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, and all those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)