

LITURGICAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR SPRING, 2016 FROM HIS EMINENCE, METROPOLITAN JOSEPH

In order to ensure proper celebration of all the upcoming divine feasts and services, His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH has issued the following instructions for spring, 2016. During this time, the Holy Orthodox Church leads us on a journey from the preparatory weeks before Great Lent, through Great Lent itself and the Annunciation, to our Lord's life-giving Passion and His glorious and all-holy Resurrection. All Service Texts that pertain to these instructions will be available on www.antiochian.org (click "Liturgical Guide" on the right side) and www.antiochianladiocese.org (find the links at the bottom-right of the homepage).

PRE-GREAT LENT, 2016

Saturday, March 5 is the first Saturday of Souls (Meat-Fare Saturday). Parishes are encouraged to offer this cycle of services (akolouthia) and ensure they have enough kollyva (boiled wheat) to offer for the memorial of all those who have gone before us. In addition, parishes may choose to offer the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom on subsequent Saturdays of Souls on March 26, April 2 and April 9.

On Wednesday, March 9, the Orthodox Church commemorates the Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebastia, which this year falls during Cheese Fare Week. On this day, we suppress the Triodion and allow for the regular cycle of services and Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

Forgiveness Sunday Vespers must be served on Cheese Fare Sunday, March 13, either immediately following the morning Divine Liturgy, or later that evening at the usual time for Vespers. On subsequent Sunday evenings, parishes may choose to offer Lenten Sunday Vespers.

GREAT LENT, 2016

With God's help, we begin Great Lent on Monday, March 14. During Clean Week, parishes are expected to celebrate the following services: Great Compline on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings with the respective quarter of the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete; the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts on Wednesday evening, and Little Compline with the Akathist Canon and first stasis of the Akathist Hymn on Friday evening.

If parishes have the strength, the following services are also traditional and may be celebrated: Great Compline on Wednesday evening (with the third quarter of the Great Canon of St. Andrew—this service follows the Presanctified Liturgy); and the Presanctified Liturgy on Friday either in the morning or late afternoon (this precedes Little Compline).

Throughout the subsequent weeks of Great Lent, parishes must continue to serve the Presanctified Divine Liturgy on Wednesday nights and Little Compline with the Akathist Canon and subsequent stases of the Hymn on Friday nights, as well as Great Compline at least one night per week either on Monday, Tuesday or Thursday in accord with pastoral discretion.

If parishes have the strength, they may also celebrate the Presanctified Divine Liturgy on Fridays in the morning or late afternoon, as well as the Lenten Ninth Hour before any Presanctified Liturgy. However, these services DO NOT replace Little Compline with the Akathist Hymn. Parishes may also offer Orthros and Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom on the First and Fifth

Saturdays of Great Lent. On March 19, we commemorate the miracle of the kollyva (boiled wheat) wrought by St. Theodore the Soldier (“Recruit” or “Tyro”). On April 16, we celebrate the Saturday of the Akathist Hymn.

All of the preceding is done in addition to the usual order of Great Vespers on Saturday nights, and Orthros and the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great on Sunday mornings.

ANNUNCIATION, 2016

The Great Feast of the Annunciation to the Most-Holy Theotokos, March 25, falls this year on the Second Friday of Great Lent. Parishes will offer services as follows:

- The full cycle of services (akolouthia) beginning with Great Vespers and Litia/Artoklasia on the evening of March 24, then the Festal Orthros on the morning of March 25.

Then, parishes have two options to celebrate the Divine Liturgy:

- The Festal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom on the morning of March 25. Then that night, parishes will still offer Little Compline with the Canon and the second stasis of the Akathist Hymn.

—OR—

- The Vespereal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom on the night of March 25—NOT TO BE CELEBRATED ON THE NIGHT OF MARCH 24. After “Blessed be the Name of the Lord,” parishes will sing only the second stasis of the Akathist Hymn.

NOTE: The schedule of services for the Annunciation changes yearly, depending on where March 25 falls during Great Lent. Regardless, we eat only one semi-festal meal (with fish, wine and oil) following the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, and then we return to the strict fast.

FIFTH WEEK OF GREAT LENT, 2016

Parishes must celebrate Little Compline with the complete Canon of St. Andrew of Crete and the life of St. Mary of Egypt on Wednesday night, April 13. (If the parish has the strength, it may offer the usual Presanctified Divine Liturgy in the morning or late afternoon, but this is not mandatory.) The Presanctified Divine Liturgy IS to be celebrated on Thursday night, April 14, as a “consolation for the labor of the Great Canon.”

LAZARUS SATURDAY, PALM SUNDAY, HOLY WEEK & PASCHA, 2016

PARISHES MUST ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING SCHEDULE FOR THESE SERVICES.

THEY ARE ALL MANDATORY UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

Friday, April 22

Morning or Late Afternoon: Presanctified Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday (strongly encouraged)

Evening: Little Compline with the Canon of the Raising of Lazarus

Saturday, April 23

Morning: Orthros and Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom for Lazarus Saturday

Evening: Great Vespers (with Litia/Artoklasia if desired) for Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 24

Morning: Orthros and Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom for Palm Sunday
Evening: Bridegroom Orthros for Holy Monday¹

Monday, April 25

Morning or Late Afternoon: Presanctified Divine Liturgy (strongly encouraged)
Evening: Bridegroom Orthros for Holy Tuesday

Tuesday, April 26

Morning or Late Afternoon: Presanctified Divine Liturgy (strongly encouraged)
Evening: Bridegroom Orthros for Holy Wednesday

Wednesday, April 27

Morning or Late Afternoon: Presanctified Divine Liturgy (strongly encouraged)
Evening: Holy Unction Service

Thursday, April 28

Morning: Orthros for Holy Thursday (strongly encouraged)², followed immediately by...
Morning: Vespertal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great for the Anniversary of the Mystical Supper of Christ; following this service, also encouraged is the “Rite of the Washing of the Feet”
Evening: Orthros with the Twelve Passion Gospels for Holy Friday

Friday, April 29

Morning: The Royal (Great) Hours and Typika on Holy Friday³
Late Afternoon: Great Vespers for Holy Saturday, the Taking-down of Christ from the Cross
Evening: Orthros with the Lamentations for Holy Saturday

Saturday, April 30

Morning: Vespertal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, the First Liturgy (Baptismal Liturgy) of Pascha. The Archdiocese will provide online the Service Text for the VDL with the order of Baptism and Chrismation for parishes which are receiving new faithful into the Holy Orthodox Church on this day.

Sunday, May 1: Great and All-Holy Pascha

The Vigil of Pascha—consisting of Midnight Office, the Resurrection (Rush) Service, Paschal Orthros and Paschal Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom—is offered uninterrupted in succession, and must commence NO EARLIER THAN 10:00 P.M. on Saturday, April 30. If there is a dire need to deviate from this directive, then pastors **must** obtain permission from their local hierarchs. The Agape Vespers is to be served on Sunday afternoon.

¹ From Monday Bridegroom Orthros onward, use the book *The Services of Great and Holy Week and Pascha*, Second or Third Edition, published by the Antiochian Archdiocese.

² Holy Thursday Orthros can also be offered on Wednesday night before or after the Holy Unction Service. It is available at the Online Liturgical Guide.

³ These can be served as one service or individually at their respective hours (6am, 9am, noon, 3pm). However, the 9th Great Hour and Typika must be said before the Great Vespers of the Taking-down of Christ from the Cross.

BRIGHT WEEK, 2016

The Archdiocese has provided the Service Text for the Paschal Office which can be offered right before Agape Vespers, as well as in place of Morning and Evening Prayers, Compline, Midnight Office, the Hours and Post-Communion Prayers throughout Bright (Renewal) Week. Pastors should publish the Paschal Office in the parish bulletin for the faithful to use in their homes.

On Bright Monday, May 2, we have a combined celebration of St. George (transferred from April 23) and the recovery of the relics of St. Athanasius the Great whose commemoration already falls on this day. The Agape Vespers, Orthros and Divine Liturgy Variables will reflect this. On Bright Tuesday, May 3, we commemorate St. Mark (transferred from April 25) and Liturgical Texts will be produced for this day as well.

Again, all services not found in printed books will be posted in early to mid-March at www.antiochian.org at the "Online Liturgical Guide" and www.antiochianladiocese.org (find the links at the lower right of the homepages).

If you have any questions about this directive, please write to Very Rev. Thomas Zain, Archdiocesan Vicar General, at abounathomas@me.com. For all other questions, please email Subdeacon Peter Samore at service_texts@antiochianladiocese.org. May your worship and prayers be offered for the glory of God and the edification of the faithful.