

Saint Nicholas Romanian Orthodox Church Shrewsbury Massachusetts Biserica Ortodoxă Română Sfântul Nicolae Shrewsbury Massachusetts

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Parish Priest Vasile Aileni
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WEEKLY BULLETIN Sunday March 30, 2025

Liturgical Services

Sunday: 9:00 a.m. - Matins;
10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy;
11:30 a.m. - Coffee Hour.

DURING LENT

Saturday: 9:30 a.m. - Akathist;
10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy;
11:30 a.m. - Memorial Service.

This Week's News

HOLY UNCTION – Tuesday, April 1, 2025 we will have the Sacrament of the Holy Unction in our church. It will also start at 6:00 p.m. We will have the blessing to serve with Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Ene, the Vicar of the Metropolis and the Dean of the East coast Deanery together and also with fellow priests from Worcester area.

THE PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY - Next Wednesday, April 1st the Pre-sanctified Liturgy will be held at St. Nicholas Romanian Church, 34 Gold St. Shrewsbury. The Liturgy will start at 6:00 pm.

MEMORY ETERNAL! This Sunday, March 30th, we will offer a **Memorial Service** for **Mariana Heletea**, beloved mother of **Gheorghina Shaheen**, who fell asleep in the Lord on **April 3, 2022**. We will also commemorate the **40th Day Memorial** of **Siham Shaheen**, dear aunt of **Daniel Shaheen**, who fell asleep on **February 16th** in **Ramallah, Palestine**. **Gheorghina and Daniel Shaheen** will lovingly sponsor the **Coffee Hour** in their memory. May our Loving Lord comfort Gheorghina, Daniel, and their families, and may He grant rest to **Mariana and Siham** among His Saints, where there is no pain, sorrow, or sighing, but life everlasting.

BAKING ORDERS FOR EASTER need to be in by Sunday April 30th. If you have family or friends who would like pitas, pastry, or pastry platters for the holiday, please make sure you get the orders in on time! Any questions, please contact Betty Anderson by email (bettya16@verizon.net) or by phone 508-353-9449.



**The Fourth Sunday of Great Lent - St. John of Sinai,
Author of the Ladder of Divine Ascent**
Apostolic Reading: Hebrews 6:13-20;
Gospel: Mark 9:17-32
((Healing of the Epileptic Boy))
Tone 7 † Resurrection Gospel 7

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION

Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION FOR ST. JOHN CLIMACUS

The barren wilderness thou didst make fertile with the streams of thy tears; and by thy deep sighing thou hast given fruit through thy struggles a hundredfold. Accordingly, thou hast become a star for the universe, sparkling with miracles. Therefore, O righteous Father John Climacus, intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

KONTAKION FOR SUNDAYS IN GREAT LENT

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.





"When you see that people are sinning in one way or another against you, against the Lord, against their peers and against themselves, do not be fierce with hatred against them, because even without you there is enough hatred on earth, but pity them, forgive them with all your heart when they offend you and say to yourself: "Lord, forgive them - because their sin has confused them - for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23, 34)"

Saint John of Kronstadt

Happy Birthday! God Grant You Many More Years!

- March 6 - Belishta, Ornela
- March 12 - Pra, Claudia Aileni
- March 16 – Lolo, Vangjush
- March 20 – Keimig, Michael
- March 27 - Cebotari, Dan
- March 27 – Popa Andreia
- March 29 - Morris, Dimitri

Let us Pray for the good health of:

Andrei, Mark, Irene - Ekaterina, Psa Aza, Betty Ekaterina, Psa Ileana, Luiza, Andrew, Margareta, Marius-Nicolae, Loredana-Anca, Teodora, Joanne, Deborah-Ann, Rebeka, Fr. George, Fr. Stefan and his son Andrei for their helath and for their salvation!

Amin!

Dates to remember:

- March 2** - Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare)
- March 3** - GREAT LENT BEGINS
- Wed, Mar 5** – Pre-Sanctified Lit - St. Nicholas 6 PM
- Mon, Mar 25** – Annunciation
- Sun, April 13** - Palm Sunday
- Sun, April 20 - **GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA**

A Prayer of Fr. Laurence

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD! Eternal Lord and master: By the inscrutable mystery of your divine wisdom, your only Son suffered for us, giving us an example to follow. He had done no wrong and there had been no perjury in his mouth. Though he was insulted, he did not retaliate with insults; though he was tortured, he made no threats, but placed his trust in you, his Father. When he was dying on the cross, he bore our faults in his own body. Therefore, master we entreat you: Let his wounds heal us, so that we may die to every form of wrongdoing and live for you alone. For you deserve all glory, honor, and worship, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: now and forever, and unto ages of ages. Amen!



LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR HOLY WEEK

Holy Monday - April 14, 2025 - 6:00 p.m. Bridegroom Service

Holy Tuesday - April 15, 2025 - 6:00 p.m.- Bridegroom Service

Holy Wednesday - April 16, 2025 - 6:00 p.m. Bridegroom Service - Holy Unction Service

Holy Thursday - April 17, 2025 - 9:30 Akathist; 10:00 Divine Liturgy of the Holy Supper - 6:00 p.m. - Holy Passion (12 Gospels)

Holy Friday - April 18, 2025: -1:30 p.m. Royal Hours.
 - 3:30 p.m. Great Friday Children’s Retreat
 - 5:00 p.m. Descend from the Cross Service
 - 6:00 p.m. Bridegroom Service- Lamentation (Prohodul)

Great and Holy Saturday - April 19, 2025 - 9:30 a.m. Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

Day	Date	Time	Service Type
Mar-25			
Sunday	2-Mar	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	Sunday of Forgiveness — The Casting out of Adam & Eve from Paradise Cheese-Fare Sunday
Monday	3-Mar	6:00 PM	THE GREAT CANON OF SAINT ANDREW OF CRETE - Great Lent Begins
Tuesday	4-Mar	6:00 PM	THE GREAT CANON OF SAINT ANDREW OF CRETE
Wednesday	5-Mar	6:00 PM	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at St. Nicholas
Thursday	6-Mar	6:00 PM	THE GREAT CANON OF SAINT ANDREW OF CRETE
Sunday	9-Mar	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	First Sunday of Great Lent (The Sunday of Orthodoxy) Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great
Wednesday	12-Mar	6:00 PM	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at St. Mary
Saturday	15-Mar	9:30 AM	Akatist
		10:00 AM	Divine Liturgy. Memorial Service. Confession by appointment.
Sunday	16-Mar	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	The Second Sunday of Great Lent St. Gregory Palamas
Wednesday	19-Mar	6:00 PM	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at St. Spyridon
Saturday	22-Mar	9:30 AM	Akatist
		10:00 AM	Divine Liturgy. Memorial Service. Confession by appointment.
Sunday	23-Mar	9:00	Matins
		10:00	The Third Sunday of Great Lent (The Veneration of the Precious Cross)
Tuesday	25-Mar	7:30 AM	Akatist
		8:00 AM	(†)Annunciation of the Theotokos
Wednesday	26-Mar	6:00 PM	Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at St. George Cathedral
Saturday	29-Mar	9:00 AM	Akstist
		10:00 AM	Divine Liturgy. Memorial Sevice. Confession by appointment.
Sunday	30-Mar	9:00 AM	Matins
		10:00 AM	The Fourth Sunday of Great Lent - St. John of Sinai, Author of the Ladder of Divine Ascent (Healing of the Epileptic Boy)

2025 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy and HOLY TRINITY Schedule

Date	Day	Holy Trinity	Pre-Sanctified Rotation	Comment
3/5/2025	Wednesday	Fr. Mark	St. Nicholas	
3/9/2025	Sunday		St. George	Concelebration-Sunday of Orthodoxy
3/12/2025	Wednesday	Fr. Chris	St. Mary	
3/19/2025	Wednesday	Fr. Milad	St. Spyridon	
3/26/2025	Wednesday	Fr. Vasile	St. George	
4/2/2025	Wednesday	Fr. Chris	St. Nicholas	
4/9/2025	Wednesday	Fr. Milad	St. Mary	
4/16/2025	Wednesday	Concelebration		(Unction)
4/17/2025	Thursday	?		Holy Thursday

St. John of Sinai, Author of the Ladder of Divine Ascent

The memory of this Saint is celebrated on March 30, where his biography may be found. He is celebrated today because his book, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, is a sure guide to the ascetic life, written by a great man of prayer experienced in all forms of the monastic polity; it teaches the seeker after salvation how to lay a sound foundation for his struggles, how to detect and war against each of the passions, how to avoid the snares laid by the demons, and how to rise from the rudimental virtues to the heights of Godlike love and humility. It is held in such high esteem that it is universally read in its entirety in monasteries during the Great Fast.

Sunday of St. John Climacus



The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to Saint John of the Ladder (Climacus), the author of the work, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. The abbot of Saint Catherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th century) stands as a witness to the violent effort needed for entrance into God’s Kingdom (Mt.10: 12). The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is a real one, “not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places ...” (Eph 6:12). Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, according to the Lord, only “he who endures to the end will be saved” (Mt.24:13).

“Fasting is a means and not an end. It is “a tool for training those who desire self-restraint.” Without fasting, it is almost impossible to conquer the passions and attain dispassion. You must not fool yourself. You will not escape from Pharaoh—that is, the devil—and you will not see the heavenly Passover unless you constantly eat bitter herbs and unleavened bread, the bitter herbs of toil and hard fasting, and the unleavened bread of a mind made humble.” Based on Saint John of the Ladder

HOLY WEEK DONATIONS

General donations in any amount to defray the cost of decorations for the Paschal Feast are most appreciated. Some specific needs are:

Flowers for Palm Sunday Icon	50.00
Palms	\$100.00
Flowers for Bridegroom Icon	\$50.00
Holy Thursday Gospel Candles	\$60.00
Wreaths for Cross (Great Friday)	\$75.00
(Resurrection)	\$75.00
Resurrection Icon	\$50.00
Bay Leaves for Holy Saturday	\$100.00
1 Gallon of Olive Oil	\$25.00
1/2 lb Incense	\$40.00
Priest’s Paschal Candle	\$50.00
Rose Oil for Epitaphion	\$25.00
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Flowers for Epitaphion	\$600.00
Decorations/Plants for Pascha	\$250.00
Easter Candy/Gifts for Children	\$100.0

THE RULES OF FASTING

Within this developed pattern of Lent, what precisely do the rules of fasting demand? Neither in ancient nor in modern times has there ever been exact uniformity, but most Orthodox authorities agree on the following rules:

- (1) During the week between the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee and that of the Prodigal Son, there is a general dispensation from all fasting. Meat and animal products may be eaten even on Wednesday and Friday.
- (2) In the following week, often termed the 'Week of Carnival', the usual fast is kept on Wednesday and Friday. Otherwise there is no special fasting.
- (3) In the Week before Lent, meat is forbidden, but eggs, cheese and other dairy products may be eaten on all days, including Wednesday and Friday.
- (4) On weekdays (Monday to Friday inclusive) during the seven weeks of Lent, there are restrictions both on the number of meals taken daily and on the types of food permitted; but when a meal is allowed, there is no fixed limitation on the quantity of food to be eaten.
- (a) On weekdays in the first week, fasting is particularly severe. According to the strict observance, in the course of the five initial days of Lent, only two meals are eaten, one on Wednesday and the other on Friday, in both cases after the Liturgy of the Presanctified. On the other three days, those who have the strength are encouraged to keep an absolute fast; those for whom this proves impracticable may eat on Tuesday and Thursday (but not, if possible, on Monday), in the evening after Vespers, when they may take bread and water, or perhaps tea or fruit-juice, but not a cooked meal. It should be added at once that in practice today these rules are commonly relaxed. At the meals on Wednesday and Friday xerophagy is prescribed. Literally this means 'dry eating'. Strictly interpreted, it signifies that we may eat only vegetables cooked with water and salt, and also such things as fruit, nuts, bread and honey. In practice, octopus and shell-fish are also allowed on days of xerophagy; likewise vegetable margarine and corn or other vegetable

oil, not made from olives. But the following categories of food are definitely excluded:

- (i) meat;
 - (ii) animal products (cheese, milk, butter, eggs, lard, dripping);
 - (iii) fish (i.e. fish with backbones);
 - (iv) oil (i.e. olive oil) and wine (i.e. all alcoholic drinks).
- (b) On weekdays (Monday to Friday inclusive) in the second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth weeks, one meal a day is permitted, to be taken in the afternoon following Vespers, and at this one meal xerophagy is to be observed.
- (c) Holy Week. On the first three days there is one meal each day, with xerophagy; but some try to keep a complete fast on these days, or else they eat only uncooked food, as on the opening days of the first week.

On Holy Thursday one meal is eaten, with wine and oil (i.e. olive oil).

On Great Friday those who have the strength follow the practice of the early Church and keep a total fast. Those unable to do this may eat bread, with a little water, tea or fruit-juice, but not until sunset, or at any rate not until after the veneration of the Epitaphion at Vespers.

On Holy Saturday there is in principle no meal, since according to the ancient practice after the end of the Liturgy of St. Basil the faithful remained in church for the reading of the Acts of the Apostles, and for their sustenance were given a little bread and dried fruit, with a cup of wine. If, as usually happens now, they return home for a meal, they may use wine but not oil; for on this one Saturday, alone among the Saturdays of the year, olive oil is not permitted.

The rule of xerophagy is relaxed on the following days:

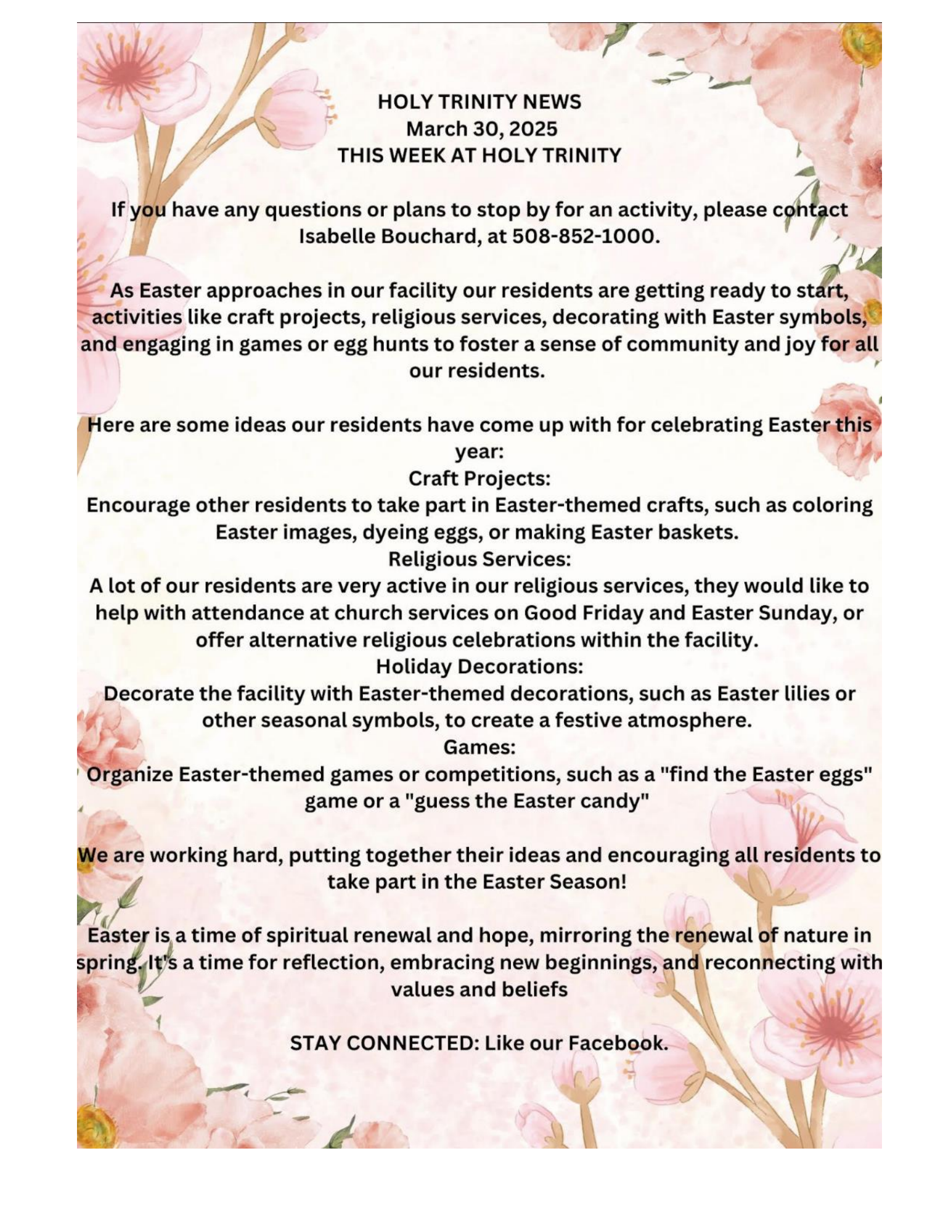
- (1) On Saturdays and Sundays in Lent, with the exception of Holy Saturday, two main meals may be taken in the usual way, around mid-day and in the evening, with wine and olive oil; but meat, animal products and fish are not allowed.
- (2) On the Feast of the Annunciation (25 March) and Palm Sunday, fish is permitted as well as wine and oil, but meat and animal products are not allowed. If the Feast of the Annunciation falls on the first four days of Holy Week, wine and oil are permitted but not fish. If it falls on

Great Friday or Holy Saturday, wine is permitted, but not fish or oil.

- (3) Wine and oil are permitted on the following days, if they fall on a weekday in the second, third, fourth, fifth or sixth week:
 - First and Second Finding of the Head of St. John the Baptist (24 February)
 - Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (9 March)
 - Forefeast of the Annunciation (24 March)
 - Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel (26 March)
 - Patronal festival of the Church or Monastery
- (4) Wine and oil are also allowed on Wednesday and Thursday in the fifth week, because of the vigil for the Great Canon. Wine is allowed—and, according to some authorities, oil as well—on Friday in the same week, because of the vigil for the Akathistos Hymn.

It has always been held that these rules of fasting should be relaxed in the case of anyone elderly or in poor health. In present-day practice, even for those in good health, the full strictness of the fast is usually mitigated. Only a few Orthodox today attempt to keep a total fast on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday in the first week, or on the first three days in Holy Week. On weekdays—except, perhaps, during the first week or Holy Week—it is now common to eat two cooked meals daily instead of one. From the second until the sixth week, many Orthodox use wine, and perhaps oil also, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and less commonly on Mondays as well. Permission is often given to eat fish in these weeks. Personal factors need to be taken into account, as for example the situation of an isolated Orthodox living in the same household as non-Orthodox, or obliged to take meals in a factory or school canteen. In cases of uncertainty each should seek the advice of his or her spiritual father. At all times it is essential to bear in mind that 'you are not under the law but under grace' (Rom. 6:14), and that 'the letter kills, but the spirit gives life' (2 Cor. 3:6). The rules of fasting, while they need to be taken seriously, are not to be interpreted with dour and pedantic legalism; 'for the kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit' (Rom. 14:17).

K. Ware with Mother Mary (Trans.), *The Lenten Triodion* (pp. 35–37). South Canaan, PA: St. Tikhon's Seminary Press.



HOLY TRINITY NEWS
March 30, 2025
THIS WEEK AT HOLY TRINITY

If you have any questions or plans to stop by for an activity, please contact Isabelle Bouchard, at 508-852-1000.

As Easter approaches in our facility our residents are getting ready to start, activities like craft projects, religious services, decorating with Easter symbols, and engaging in games or egg hunts to foster a sense of community and joy for all our residents.

Here are some ideas our residents have come up with for celebrating Easter this year:

Craft Projects:

Encourage other residents to take part in Easter-themed crafts, such as coloring Easter images, dyeing eggs, or making Easter baskets.

Religious Services:

A lot of our residents are very active in our religious services, they would like to help with attendance at church services on Good Friday and Easter Sunday, or offer alternative religious celebrations within the facility.

Holiday Decorations:

Decorate the facility with Easter-themed decorations, such as Easter lilies or other seasonal symbols, to create a festive atmosphere.

Games:

Organize Easter-themed games or competitions, such as a "find the Easter eggs" game or a "guess the Easter candy"

We are working hard, putting together their ideas and encouraging all residents to take part in the Easter Season!

Easter is a time of spiritual renewal and hope, mirroring the renewal of nature in spring. It's a time for reflection, embracing new beginnings, and reconnecting with values and beliefs

STAY CONNECTED: Like our Facebook.

Cercetează-ți Credința

Vă invităm să participați, prin intermediul Programului educațional „Cercetează-ți Credința!”, la o nouă serie de evenimente dedicate celebrării Anului Omagial al Centenarului Patriarhiei Române și Anului Comemorativ al Duhovnicilor și Mărturisitorilor Ortodocși Români din Secolul al XX-lea.

În fiecare a doua joi a fiecărei luni, începând cu ora 7:00 PM EST | 6:00 PM CST | 4:00 PM PST, catehezele vor fi susținute de către Domnul Profesor Dragoș Ursu, având ca temă principală „O istorie a Ortodoxiei în spațiul românesc. Devenire instituțională și biografii spirituale”.

Prima conferință va avea loc Joi, 9 Ianuarie 2025, și va aborda subiectul: „Introducere în istoria Ortodoxiei românești. O privire teologică asupra trecutului”.

Pentru a participa la conferință, vă rugăm să accesați link-ul de conectare prin portalul ZOOM.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82458482255?pwd=e14Lvw2IbLBcWMl6AKa.1>

Vă reamintim că Joi, 27 Februarie, la ora 7.00 pm EDT | 6pm CST | 4pm PST, sunteți invitați la o nouă întâlnire din programul de STUDIU BIBLIC în LIMBA ROMÂNĂ despre Sfânta Evanghelie după Marcu susținut de Dl. Prof. Gheorghe Butuc, profesor la Seminarul Teologic „Sfântul Andrei” din Galați.

Studiul Biblic se va desfășura prin portalul ZOOM: <https://link.mitropolia.us/zCJTZm>

Meeting ID: 819 0536 3350

Passcode: Romania

Găsiți mai multe detalii în acest video:

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

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Sunday Services: Matins at 9:00 am and Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am