ST. JOHN'S RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL PRIEST NATHANIEL SOROCHKA, RECTOR

V. REV. MITRED ARCHPRIEST JOHN D. SOROCHKA, Rector Emeritus Fr. Nathaniel's Cell (570-466-5399)

PROTODEACON STEPHEN HOWANETZ

PROTODEACON DIMETRIOS KRENITSKY

VOISTINU VOSKRESE!

706 HILL STREET MAYFIELD, PA 18433-2015
RECTORY (570) 876-0730 - FAX (570) 876-2534
WEBPAGE – www.stjohnsmayfield.org
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SUNDAY RADIO LIVE BROADCAST –WTRW – 94.3 THE TALKER

APRIL 7/20, 2025

THE BRIGHT RESURRECTION OF CHRIST – THE PASSOVER (PASCHA) OF THE LORD

St. George, the Confessor, bishop of Mytilene. St. Hegesippus the Chronicler of Palestine.

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sun., April 20: PASCHAL DIVINE LITURGY - 9:00 AM followed by procession and blessing of baskets

PASCHAL VESPERS - 4:00 PM

Mon., April 21: BRIGHT MONDAY – PASCHAL DIVINE LITURGY w/Procession – 9:30 AM (Followed by OPEN HOUSE in the church

center.)

Tue., April 22: BRIGHT TUESDAY – PASCHAL DIVINE LITURGY – 9:30 AM

Sat., April 26: BRIGHT SATURDAY

CHRISTOS VOSKRESE!

GREAT VESPERS - 4:00 PM

Sun., April 27: ST. THOMAS SUNDAY

MATINS – 8:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY – 9:30 AM

LITIYA FOR:

PETYER SENIO AND FAMILY. MEMORY ETERNAL!

Thomas Pavuk by friends

Joseph Terpak by Dimitri & John

John Terpak by friends

Enoch Beltz by Paschal Friends

John Kowalski by Dolores Lutz

Fred Lutz by Tanya & Fr. Nathaniel

ALTAR VIGILS: IMO ANGELINA TAPYRIK, ANASTASIA TAPYRIK, LYDIA BOCHNOVICH & MARY TAPYRIK by Bev Bowan MEMORY ETERNAL!

TABLE OF OBLATION: Good health & God's blessings upon CAROL & DANIEL SWIRDOVICH. MANY YEARS!

HIGH PLACE: For the health of GARY BRZUCHALSKI by Dimitri & John. MANY YEARS!

ICONOSTASIS VIGIL: IMO *DONALD BROWNELL, SR.* by his wife, Lillian, & family. *MEMORY ETERNAL!* ICONOSTASIS VIGIL: IMO *DONALD BROWNELL, JR.* by his mother & family. *MEMORY ETERNAL!*

ICONOSTASIS VIGIL: IMO STEPHEN BROWNELL by his mother & family. MEMORY ETERNAL!
ICONOSTASIS VIGIL: IMO NATHAN BROWNELL by his grandmother & family. MEMORY ETERNAL!
ICONOSTASIS VIGIL: IMO JOAN BROWNELL by mother-in-law, Lillian Brownell. MEMORY ETERNAL!

ICONOSTASIS VIGIL: Asking for God's blessings upon LINDA ZEFRAN on her birthday by her mother, Lillian. MANY YEARS!
VIGILS: IMO PETER & SELMA FECINA, STEPHEN KULENICH, JUSTINE SHARROCK, WASCO, MARTHA & THOMAS KARPIAK, HELEN KOLANAGE, WALTER DANILO FAMILY, TIHANITCH FAMILY, ALEX & JOAN BEAL & KULENICH FAMILY, DANILO/DAVIS FAMILIES,

ALTAR FLOWERS: IMO DEMETRI & DARIA SCHUSTER by their family. MEMORY ETERNAL! ALSO, for the health & blessings upon the KOCZWARA & SCHUSTER FAMILIES. MANY YEARS!

RESURRECTION ICON WREATH: IMO SOROCHKA & LUTZ FAMILIES by Dolores Lutz & family. MEMORY ETERNAL!

OUTDOOR CROSS: IMO MICHAEL, THEODORA & PAUL MOSCHOWSKY by the Tomcykoski family. MEMORY ETERNAL!

ICONOSTASIS SPRAYS: IMO BOB & MILLIE FIFE & MARTHA & FRANK GASPER by their family; IMO MITRED ARCHPRIEST DIMITRY &

MATUSHKA OLGA KUDRIKOFF by daughter, Andrea Slaugh; IMO STEPHAN KUDRIKOFF by sister, Andrea Slaugh. MEMORY

ETERNAL! ASLO, Asking for good health and God's blessings upon ST. JOHN'S CHOIR. MANY YEARS!

(2) TETRAPOD VASES: IMO JOSEPH, LOUISE & SANDRA BAZINK by their family; IMO CULLEN & LEON FAMILIES by Daniel Leon. MEMORY ETERNAL!

HAND CROSS: IMO VICTOR GANAKIN by wife, children & grandchildren. MEMORY ETERNAL!

ICON OF HUMILITY: IMO THE DEPARTED MEMBERS OF THE KRENITSKY, HUBIAK & ROMAN FAMILIES. MEMORY ETERNAL!

IVERON ICON: For the health of the KRENITSKY FAMILY. MANY YEARS!

PASCHAL CANDLES: Donated by many parishioners for special intentions. May your intentions be fulfilled according to God's Will! Many thanks to all donors for their generosity and love for St. John's. May the Risen Lord bless you with good health & happiness for MANY YEARS!

PASCHAL GREETINGS: On behalf of Matushka Larissa, the boys, and myself, I wish to extend to all of you, our "spiritual family," great joy and love on this most blessed Feast! May the Risen Lord bless you all with good health and strength! Thank you for the cards, gifts and most importantly, the prayers! With love in our Risen Lord, Fr. Nathaniel

PARISH OPEN HOUSE: Tomorrow, Bright Monday, in the church center following the Liturgy. All are invited to attend. Come celebrate and share the joy of the Resurrection together, as a parish family. All are welcome!

NURSING HOME VISITATIONS: Following "Open House" tomorrow, Fr. Nathaniel and parents will be visiting our local nursing home with our children. Parents, please allow your children to participate in this visitation – it means so much to the residents!

ST. JAMES-GEORGE CHURCH ROAST BEEF DINNER: Saturday, May 3 – Noon to 4 PM – Take Out Only - \$15. Please support our neighbors in Christ by purchasing your dinner from them on that day.

CONGRATULATIONS to all of you who attended every Lenten Service this year! It was so gratifying to see so many of the same faces at every liturgical service. May God bless all of you who put in the extra effort to be present in church every time our bells rang. We understand not everyone can do this, but it must be noted how many did attend. May God bless for your good intentions!

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN! How do we describe an event that changed the world — an event that even changed the way time is calculated and recorded? How do we describe an event that has replaced despair with hope and death with life? Indeed, how can we even begin to describe what the Resurrection of Christ means to us and to every faithful believer who has ever walked the face of the earth? It is almost impossible to put what we feel today into our own words, so perhaps it is best to use words that our Holy Orthodox Church has drawn upon for more than 1300 years --- words written by the great hymnologist St. John of Damascus: "THIS IS THE HOLY AND CHOSEN DAY! THE GREAT AND HOLY SABBATH! THE FEAST OF FEASTS! THE TRIUMPH OF TRIUMPHS! THEREFORE, ON THIS DAY WE BLESS CHRIST FOREVER!" Yes, Pascha is all of this for us. At the beginning of our Resurrection Services, we light our candle from the triple candle held by the priest, reminding us of our unity with Christ, Who is the Light of the world. As we walk in procession, it is often a struggle to keep our candles lit. How comforting it is to know that the Light of Christ can never be extinguished. It shines for all, and when the winds of sin take their toll, Christ and His Everlasting Light is always there for us. It is because of the Resurrection of Christ that there is always a glimmer of hope in even the most hopeless situations. It is because of the Resurrection of Christ that we should never feel alone or abandoned. It is because of the Resurrection of Christ that we should never feel alone or abandoned. It is because of the Resurrection of Christ that we should never feel defeated, for by virtue of His Rising, Christ conquered death --- mankind's greatest fear and enemy. CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

NO KNEELING: The Resurrection of Christ warrants great joy and spiritual uplifting. Due to this joy, there is no kneeling during the period of Pascha to the Feast of Pentecost. Please keep this in mind.

FAST-FREE WEEK: Due to the great joy experienced by the Resurrection of Christ, there is no fasting this week!

APRIL RADIO BROADCAST: IMO BASIL & ESTHER TELP by daughter, Barbara. MEMORY ETERNAL!

BABAS' REQUEST: God willing, the Babas are planning another Flea Market for October 2025. When you begin your Spring cleaning, keep this in mind. If you have used, but not abused items, such as small appliances, kitchenware, jewelry, paintings, collectibles, etc., please keep the Flea Market in mind. Drop off at the center will begin in August.

BOOK & PUZZLE SALE: Baba's will be having a gently used book and puzzle sale on August 9th. Donations of books and puzzles (no missing pieces) will be accepted starting July 25th and ending August 3rd at St. John's Center. Any questions, please call Sandy at 570-876-3576. This is another exciting venture in our parish's fundraising events. Please remember to check for books and puzzles to help with the inventory for this fundraiser. Thank you!

WHY WE DO NOT VENERATE THE ICONS UPON RECEIVING THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION: Having just received the Body of Christ, one is filled with the grace of the Sacrament, and one is communing with the Divine Presence. It is therefore superfluous to this action of Grace and Communion to be thinking at this time of venerating the Saints who occupy a lesser place in the heavenly realm. So, it is not necessary to venerate the icons, which play no part in what one is participating in at that time. The communion of the Divine Body and Blood is the ultimate act of Orthodox worship and for the rest of the day one should constantly be aware of this fact and act appropriately. In that way, an Orthodox Christian is induced to perform Christian virtues and so progress in his/her spiritual life. It is, however, permissible to kiss the cross at the conclusion of the Liturgy because the cross depicts the crucifixion of our Lord and Savior Who by this act of redemption has given us His Body and Blood and by the grace of receiving It brings us closer to Him. The cross is the instrument of our salvation, and we should venerate it. Please keep this in mind when partaking of the Blessed Sacrament.

POLKA PARTY: Our parish is holding a "POLKA PARTY" on Saturday, May 17, between 2 PM & 6 PM at our church center. Music will be provided by JOHN STEVENS' DOUBLESHOT. Light fare and a cash bar will be available. The cost is \$15 pp. Contact any church council member, or Mott (570-335-2128) for tickets.

BLESSING OF BASKETS: The Pascha (Easter) Basket holds a special place in Slavic culture and in Orthodox tradition. It is a deeply spiritual and beautifully symbolic custom that blends faith and heritage in the joy of Christ's Resurrection. Its history reflects the journey of the Church throughout time, with it stretching back to early Christian practices, shaped by centuries of religious life and culture. The tradition of bringing food to church for blessing dates to the earliest centuries of Christianity. In the early Church, particularly during the time of fasting in Great Lent, Christians abstained from meat, dairy, fish and rich foods (many still do). When Pascha arrived, it was customary to bring these abstained from foods to the church to be blessed before breaking the Lenten Fast. Over time, this evolved into the ritual of preparing a basket filled with those foods that had not been eaten during Great Lent. The custom spread throughout the Christian world, but in Slavic lands it developed certain characteristics enriched by local piety and symbolism. The Easter Basket became an important feature of Paschal celebration, and the blessing of food was integrated into liturgical and parish life. It flourished in village churches and was lovingly maintained by immigrants around the world, including in the Orthodox parishes in America. Each item in the Paschal basket has symbolic meaning rooted in our faith. After today's Liturgy, the baskets will be blessed by Fr. Nathaniel. He will recite prayers and will bless the baskets with Holy Water, joyfully proclaiming, "CHRIST IS RISEN!" to which you, the faithful, will respond, "INDEED HE IS RISEN!" The blessing will be accompanied by singing, bells, and much love. The Paschal Basket is a beautiful expression of Orthodoxy. Whether in large cities or this small town of Mayfield, PA, the faithful have prepared their baskets with reverence, love, joy, and gratitude. Many of you are teaching your children and grandchildren the meaning behind each food item, passing on not just a tradition, but a living Faith. In Orthodox parishes throughout the world, the basket remains a sign of love, spiritual richness, and the true and blessed joy of Christ's Holy Resurrection. May you and your loved ones experience the true joy, love and spiritual uplifting within your hearts when you hear the words, "CHRIST IS RISEN" this year! Wishing you all a most blessed and joyous Feast of the Resurrection!

Holy Fire in Jerusalem on Orthodox Pascha



The Holy Fire is a deeply symbolic and miraculous event in Orthodox Christianity, celebrated annually on Holy Saturday, the day before Orthodox Pascha (Easter). It takes place at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, the site of Jesus' burial and resurrection. During the ceremony, the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem enters the tomb chamber and prays for the Holy Fire to descend. The fire is said to miraculously ignite candles and lamps, and pilgrims claim it does not burn them for the first 33 minutes. This tradition is considered one of the longest-attested annual miracles in Christianity, with documentation dating back to

the 4th century. The Holy Fire is distributed to Orthodox churches worldwide, symbolizing the light of Christ's Resurrection.

The Holy Fire ceremony has a rich history rooted in Christian tradition. It is believed to date back to the early centuries of Christianity, with accounts tracing it to the 4th century. Historian Eusebius mentions a miraculous event in Jerusalem around 162 AD, where lamps were said to ignite with water instead of oil, a story linked to the origins of the Holy Fire. The ceremony as we know today takes place annually at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem on Holy Saturday, the day before Orthodox Pascha. The Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem leads the ritual, entering the Sepulchre (the chamber which houses Jesus' tomb) to pray for the Holy Fire to descend, then distributing it the faithful pilgrims who are present. It remains a profound symbol of Christ's Resurrection and the triumph of light over darkness.

For modern believers, the Holy Fire symbolizes the light of Christ's Resurrection, a central tenet of Christian faith. It represents hope, renewal, and the triumph of life over death. The fire is said to have unique properties—it reportedly does not burn those who touch it initially, and it is distributed to clergy and pilgrims who light their candles from it. The flame is then transported to Orthodox churches worldwide. For many Orthodox Christians, this event is a profound expression of their faith and the divine presence. The flame is seen as a reminder of God's presence and the spiritual illumination that guides believers in their faith journey. Additionally, the Holy Fire fosters a sense of unity among Orthodox Christians worldwide. As the flame is distributed to churches and communities globally, it serves as a shared symbol of faith and connection, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries. For many, the Holy Fire also inspires personal reflection and spiritual renewal, encouraging believers to rekindle their faith and embrace the transformative power of Christ's Resurrection. It is a profound tradition that continues to resonate deeply in the hearts of the faithful.

