

SUNDAY OF THE MYRR-BEARERS



*Icon of Our Lord's Appearance to the Myrr-bearing Women*

## A REFLECTION ON OUR READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

On this second weekend of our 40 day celebration of the Lord's Resurrection, the Church recalls the Myrrh-Bearing Women, those women who came to complete the Jewish burial process for Jesus. He was hastily taken down from the Cross and buried without all the traditional Jewish rituals having been conducted. These women came to complete the process.

On this weekend our readings are taken from ACTS (6:1-7) and Mark (15:43-16). What is interesting about these two readings is that they both deal with "service" to others. In ACTS deacons are added to the inner core of the church to be of service to others. In MARK, the women are attempting to be of service to Jesus and complete His burial. In ACTS, the Apostles decide that they should tend to the preaching of the message of Jesus and not be directly involved in one of the primary actions of the Christian community, namely taking care of others.

**SERVICE TO OTHERS** is a very important part of the Jesus message. We see that when He walked the earth, His primary thrust was not necessarily in preaching but in acting as a person who saw service to others as primary. In fact He tells His disciples before He dies that He came to be a servant to others and therefore they must become servants to others.

The Myrrh-Bearers realized that one of the primary tasks was to "bury the dead" in an appropriate and traditional manner. Therefore they took it upon themselves to attempt to do just that - to do the final anointing of Jesus as prescribed by Jewish law and tradition. They, of course, were astounded to find the tomb



empty. They were further directed to go and tell Jesus' disciples that Jesus, was raised.

There is a longer ending to Mark's Gospel which changes how the passage we hear is understood. We hear that the women, because of their great fear, said nothing to anyone. The longer ending of Mark's Gospel we hear that Mary Magdalene, one of the Myrrh-Bearers, did actually go and tell the disciples that He was raised.

John's Gospel gives us an ever longer ending, indicating that Mary Magdalene, while weeping at the tomb, encounters Jesus and, after that encounter goes to tell Peter. Again, **SERVICE** is the main theme.

# St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan



## OUR NEW REALITY

Our new reality is that we will not be able to “congregate” as spiritual families for several more weeks. We will continue to “stream” the Divine Liturgy at 10 AM on Sundays. In fact, even when we reopen the Church, we will continue to stream the Liturgy so that those who can’t make it to church can have the option to pray with us.

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## A BIG THANK YOU

I would offer a “big thank you” to all those who have not forgotten the Parish during this difficult time and have sent donations. Unfortunately while we are closed, certain bills still appear like electric, gas and water. So thank you for remembering us.

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## PROPER PRAYERS

I would like to thank Deacon Leonard for preparing the Proper Prayers we use during this Paschal Time in a digital format so that we can send them out to those who have email. This will help those watching the Liturgy on the Internet to pray along with us. For those who have given me their email address, I’ll be sending these out with the Bulletin prior to each Sunday.

## LIVING THE NEW LIFE

The “new life” is a life that is informed by the revelation of the real resurrection of Christ. It is a life that is lived with the understanding that life is eternal. So what does this mean to you? How do we live a life, during this current lifetime that we believe is eternal?



It means that we do all within our power, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit who is shared with us, to grow spiritually! It means that we don’t live in fear of human death since we truly believe that life continues. So how does this change the way that we live?

It means that we truly attempt to live like Jesus since that opens our hearts and minds to all other human beings and that we don’t judge or condemn others for how they live, how they treat us, or how they believe. It means that we simply accept others for who they are, realizing that if they cannot accept us that they are missing the true meaning of life. It means that we don’t base our response to others on how they treat us. We base our response on others in accord with our basic beliefs. *(Continued on page 6)*

# OUR LIVES AS UKRANIAN GREEK-CATHOLIC CHRISTIANS

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We are called as Ukrainian Greek-Catholics to a certain, true beliefs, namely that life is “immortal” which means that is also “eternal” and that we see ourselves involved in an eternal process of growing and becoming more like Jesus. That means that at this present time we do everything we can do to open ourselves to an “eternal process” of growing and changing.

Of course we first have to change our way of thinking, namely that this earthly life is the only opportunity we have to change and grow. It would seem, at least to me, that there is an eternal process of changing and growing to become more like Jesus. I don't profess to know what that is like, I only believe that there is an eternal process and that at every inch of it requires us to give our all to the process.

I do not believe that during one lifetime on earth will require us to sit on a cloud praising God or being in an eternal struggle of pain. My God is not like that. He created us to be united with Him and He decided that, even though it might take an eternity, that was His absolute goal, namely union with Him.

I wonder what your beliefs are and



what your fantasies are about life? People have so many truly very unrealistic ideas about what life is after earthly death. People think in terms of truly absolutes: I either, after this life, either have reward or true punishment. Why

would God create a world like that? Why would He only give us one chance to receive either reward or, of course, punishment since He is sharing His life with us?

Of course this requires that we believe that the life we experience is really and truly a sharing in God's own life! Ask yourself: Is this something you believe? If you believe in it, then what does it mean for your life?

You know, we say all of these things and, even during the Paschal Season sing the Tropar which says that Christ is risen from the dead and has trampled Death by death and yet I wonder if we truly we believe this. I know that it is a difficult belief since we have never directly experienced anyone who has come back from the dead. I can tell you, however, that I know more people, including myself, who have experienced people who have gone one before us who have attempted to communicate with us. What do you really believe?

## CHRIST'S DESCENT INTO HADES

The teaching on Christ's descent is an inseparable part of the dogmatic tradition of the Church. It was shared by all members of the ancient church as reflected in the New Testament, the works of the early Christian apologists, father and teachers of the church, ancient and later writers of both the East and West, as well as in the baptismal creeds, eucharistic services and liturgical texts. It seems that the descent of Christ into hell was by itself not contested either in Gaul, North Africa, Italy, Palestine, Syria, Alexandria or Armenia. At that time no Christ could possibly reject the descent of Christ into hell without putting into question the notion which was an integral part of Church faith and therefore without joining the side of the opponents of Christianity.

While the fact that the descent was not itself questioned by the representatives of church tradition, there existed various interpretations of this event. Many writers maintained that Christ freed all who were held captive in hell, others thought that only the Old Testament righteous were liberated, and another group believed that only those who came to believe in Christ and followed Him were saved. Finally, others held that Christ freed

only those who had lived in faith and piety during their earthly lives. The first interpretation is most widely reflected in the liturgical texts of the Eastern Church: that Christ "emptied" hell and "not a single mortal" remained. The first and second opinions were endowed with equal authority in the Eastern Christian patristic tradition, but with the passing of the centuries the first gradually gave way to the second. In the Western tradition after Augustine, the second and fourth views were given preference.



Christ's preaching in hell, mention in 1 Peter, has also been interpreted in different ways. Some writers allowed the possibility that those who did not believe in Christ during their lifetimes could have come to believe in him after their death. Others, mainly Western theologians, rejected this possibility. Some insisted on a literal interpretation: that Christ preached only to the unrepentant sinners from Noah's time. Others interpreted it in a wider sense: that Christ's preaching in hell reached all who were held there. Augustine and later Western writers did not consider the Petrine text to refer to the descent into Hades and believe it should be understood in an allegorical sense. *More to follow!*

# Schedule of Services

St. Michael the Archangel  
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church  
6340 Chase Road  
Dearborn, MI 48126

Rev. Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.  
Pastor

Rectory: (313) 582-1424  
Cell: (313) 580-4412  
WRuchgy@gmail.com

## LITURGY SCHEDULE

**Sundays @ 10:00 AM**  
Ukrainian & English

**Weekdays @ 8:00 AM**  
English

## SACRAMENTS

**Penance**  
By Appointment

**Baptism & Matrimony**  
In most instances membership  
required for six months

**Funerals**  
Membership of an immediate family  
member required

## Parish Life Council

Bob & Corinne Boyko  
734.451.1893

John & Janet Dicky  
586.755.3129

Daria Drobny  
313.791-0292

Robert Krokosky  
248.734.7078

Leo & Mary LaDouceur  
313.278.7378

Gordon Malaniak  
734.564.9817

Rev Deacon Leonard Mier  
313.584-6795

Greg & Esther Petrovich  
734.453-4354

Rafic Vawter  
313.624.9867

**Sunday, April 26 - Weekend of the Myrrh-Bearers - Liturgy Streamed**  
**10:00 AM - Mary Mihalko; Kotltnakl Family**  
**George Durlsin's Birthday; Family**

## **3rd PASCHAL WEEK**

Monday, April 27 - Simeon, Bishop-Martyr  
*No Service Scheduled*

Tuesday, April 28 - Jason Sosipater, Apostles  
*No Service Scheduled*

Wednesday, April 29 - The Nine Martyrs of Cyzice  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Thursday, April 30 - James the Greater, Apostle**  
**8:00 AM - Divine Liturgy**

Friday, May 1 - Jeremiah, Prophet  
*No Service Scheduled*

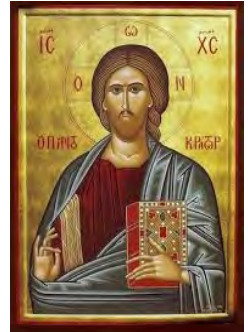
Saturday, May 2 - Athanasius the Great, Patriarch  
*No Service Scheduled*

**Sunday, May 3 - Weekend of the Paralytic Man - Liturgy Streamed**  
**10:00 AM - George & Irene Durlsin's Anniversary; Family**

*(Continued from page 5 - Living The New Life)*

I find that one of the things that we humans do so readily is to base our response to others and the way that they respond to us. We don't necessarily base our response on others in accord with our beliefs. This is the change that we are called to make.

SO, if someone who we think of as our enemy wants to kill us, how do we respond, even though it might be hypertheoretical? We respond as someone who protects him/herself but does nothing more than that and does not result to "hatred" for those persons (there are so many hypothetical persons in our global society that quality as enemies). How we think about them is imperative for our spiritual growth. **DON'T HATE THEM!** This is the challenge!



<http://www.stmichaelarchangel.org> - and - [Facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn)



# THE EASTERN HERALD

## СХІДНИЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.  
Vol. 67 No 17      Weekend of the Myrrh-Bearers      April 25-26, 2020

### THE IMPACT OF THE RESURRECTION

In this article I have been attempting to reflect on the impact of the Lord's Resurrection from the dead. Herein lies the true revelation of God.

The way that the Eastern Church celebrates the life of Christ is that She stresses that Jesus had to die in order to "conquer Death" and, at the same time, "Harrow Hades," giving life to all those who died before Him, thus revealing that human life is "eternal."

When you think about this, you realize that there is certainly a very different emphasis put on these events in the Western Church. This is why, I believe, that our traditional Resurrection Icon does not show Christ coming out of the tomb - the typical picture in the Western world - but, rather, destroying Hades and giving life to all those, primarily Adam and Eve, who died before God's revelation through Jesus' death and Resurrection.

I believe that the Eastern Church's

interpretation of these events presents a much more hopeful message for humankind. Think about it. It attempts to eradicate our "fear" of death and promises us immortality. Christ destroyed Death and revealed that life is immortal. Think about the Tropar we sing throughout the days of our Easter celebration: He, Jesus, conquered Death by death and granted life to those in the graves. It cannot truly be any clearer.



So, again I would ask you the questions I asked in the previous Bulletin: *Do you really believe this?* If you truly believe this, than how does it change the way that you live? What is its meaning for you? I truly believe that what we believe dictates how we live. So, if I believe that life is immortal and that Death has been conquered, how must I live?

As you know, I like to challenge my readers to serious think about their faith and live that faith!

## *The Best Role of All*

The church school was getting ready for the annual Easter pageant and all the children were asked to choose which part they wanted to play. One child chose to play Mary Magdalene, other children chose to play Saint Peter, or Joseph of Arimathea, and so forth. But, when it came time for Johnny's tum to choose, he happily wanted to be the angel who rolls away the stone that sealed the tomb of Our Lord.

After the pageant was over and Johnny was going home with his parents, his mother expressed how disappointed they were that he didn't choose a larger, more prominent role in the play. Johnny, however, was bouncing excitedly all over the back seat, obviously thrilled with his performance in the pageant. Finally, his mother turned to him and asked, "Tell me,

Johnny, why are you so happy about just being the angel who rolls away the stone from the tomb? Wouldn't you have liked to have had a bigger part to play?" Johnny replied quite innocently, "Oh, no, mom, just think! I'm the one who gets to let Jesus out! What role could be better than that?"

"The myrrh-bearing women arrived just before the dawn at the tomb of the Giver of Life and found an angel seated on the stone who spoke these word to them: 'Why do you seek the living among the dead? Why do you mourn the Incorruptible among those subject to decay? Go announce the good news to His disciples!'" (From Resurrection Matins) Let us continue to announce the good news and joyfully sing out: "Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!"