

*Our Lady of the Sign
Byzantine Catholic Church*

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Rev. Martin Vavrak

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Contribute

Fr. Deacon Michael Opalka

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Ms. Susan Scotts & Mr. Mike Donegan
Parish Guild Co-Chairs

Mr. Jon Cipyak, IV & Mr. Mike Donegan
Lay Trustees

**SLAVA ISUSU CHRISTU! SLAVA NA VIKI!
GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST! GLORY FOREVER!**

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast

EPISTLE Hebrews 9: 11-14
GOSPEL Mark 10: 35-45

*Sanctuary Candle:
Health & Blessing of the Parish Family*

Saturday, March 21, 2026, 5:00 p.m.

For the Faithful of the Parish

Sunday, March 22, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

For the Faithful of the Parish

**Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts /
Annunciation of the Theotokos**

Wednesday, March 25, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

Pysanky class

Thursday, March 26, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

Palm Sunday

EPISTLE Philippians 4: 4-9
GOSPEL John 12: 1-18

*Sanctuary Candle:
Health & Blessing of the Parish Family*

Saturday, March 28, 2026, 5:00 p.m.

For the Faithful of the Parish

Sunday, March 29, 2026, 10:00 a.m.

For the Faithful of the Parish

ANNUAL PICNIC

CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Fr. Martin is available to hear confession immediately following each Divine Liturgy or by scheduling an appointment in advance by contacting Fr. Martin.

ROSARY SCHEDULE

- Wednesday: 6:40 p.m.
- Saturday: 4:40 p.m.
- Sunday: 9:40 a.m.

WELCOME!

We welcome our guests and visitors, and are happy to have them join us in prayer.
If you have not officially registered in the parish, and would like to, please speak with Fred.

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS Please continue to remember in our prayers all the needs of the parish family, the sick and suffering, those who have asked for our prayers, especially Frantisek Vavrak, Helena Huk, Angie Nemeth, Lesia, and Natasha Lemeshova. Let us remember the priests and bishops of the Catholic Church, those people who have been denied their basic human rights and dignity, the oppressed, the lonely, the homeless and those who suffer, and those who have no peace of mind or heart. ***Please check our website during your daily prayers for an up-to-date listing of those who are in need of our prayers.***

Pastoral Message

Dear faithful parishioners, and you who have come to our church for the first time – welcome!

If Jesus had granted the wish of His Apostles James and John expressed in today's Gospel reading, both would have died on the cross with Him..., one on each side. But what they really wanted was to be seated on royal thrones one to the right and the other to the left of Jesus when He came into His kingdom.

Like the other Apostles, James and John thought Jesus would be a famous earthly king. They believed some day He would raise an army and free the Jewish people from the Romans who had conquered their country. They wanted to be second in authority in the new Jewish kingdom.

They didn't realize that Jesus' kingdom was not of this world. They couldn't believe I-U's earthly throne would be a cross on which He would be suspended between two criminals. This is why Jesus told them: "You do not know what you are asking for."

All this happened just after Jesus finished telling the Apostles He would be betrayed, condemned to death, mocked, spit upon, scourged and killed. But He also reminded them that He would rise to life again on the third day. In other words, He was trying to tell them He would establish a new kingdom.... a spiritual one. This required Him to die on the cross. By His death and resurrection He would conquer death, break the power of Satan and open the gates of heaven. The cross would be the symbol of this kingdom.

Both James and John did later die a martyr's death. They had to shed their blood for their faith in Christ. It would be a baptism of blood. This is what Jesus meant when He said: "You shall be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized."

*In Christ,
Fr. Martin Vavrak - Pastor*

***DON'T MISS THE PYSANKY CLASS THIS COMING THURSDAY, AT 6 P.M.
AND OUR ANNUAL PICNIC NEXT SUNDAY AFTER DIVINE LITURGY!***

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS TODAY!

Announcements & Reminders, continued...

SLAVIC KITCHEN TODAY is the final day to place your orders. Please provide your orders with payment to Fred.

EASTERN CATHOLIC FORMATION Our Eastern Catholic Formation classes offer a transformative journey into the depths of our ancient faith. Everyone is welcome, whether you're a lifelong Byzantine Catholic or newly discovering our traditions. Contact David Wilson for more information at: 407.985.8834

GRAVE WATCH A Grave Watch will be held following Friday night Vespers and end Saturday morning. Individuals or families may sign up via the sheet posted by the coffee table for one-hour blocks of time throughout the evening of Great and Holy Friday. Time slots are used to ensure our Lord's body is not left alone in the tomb. That does not mean if a slot is full, others cannot join. Everyone is welcome to pray at any time throughout the vigil. Just remember to be respectful, as this is a time for quiet self-prayer.

2025 / 2026 BISHOP'S APPEAL You should have received a mailer from the Chancery for this year's pledge drive. If not, copies are available in the back of the church. Our goal, \$6,200.00, equates to \$175.00 per family. If we are successful again in reaching our goal, Bishop Kurt will generously refund our parish 40%. This year, we ask you to submit your contribution directly to the Chancery via the mailer, or via the link on our website.

WHY IS LITURGY LONGER DURING LENT? During Lent, the Byzantine Catholic Church replaces the more commonly used Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom with the longer, more ancient Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great. This is done intentionally as the extended prayers of St. Basil invite the faithful into a deeper, more meditative posture of worship that complements the penitential character of the Lenten season. The longer anaphora (eucharistic prayer) slows the rhythm of the liturgy, creating more space for reflection, contrition, and an awareness of God's mercy. St. Basil's prayers are notably rich in theological depth, drawing heavily on Scripture and expressing profound humility before God; a fitting spirit for a season devoted to fasting, prayer, and repentance. In this way, the very structure of the liturgy becomes itself a form of ascetic practice, uniting the worshiper's body and soul in the Lenten journey toward Pascha.

Directives for the Great Fast from the Office of the Bishop

Our Tradition is to abstain from meat after Meatfare Sunday and from dairy products after Cheesefare Sunday until Easter. The following are the minimum requirements:

1. All who receive Communion in the Eparchy of Passaic are required to abstain from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays of the Great Fast.
2. All adults who receive Communion in the Eparchy of Passaic are required to abstain from meat, eggs, and milk products on the first day of Lent, Monday, February 16, and on Great and Holy Friday, April 3.

Important Dates to Remember

As we enter into the final weeks of the Fast, there are many liturgical services and parish events to be mindful of. These are in addition to our normally scheduled weekend liturgies. Please review the following schedule, and maybe even post it on your refrigerator.

❖ Sunday, March 22:	Slavic Kitchen Orders due	
❖ Wednesday, March 25:	Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts	7:00 p.m.
❖ Thursday, March 26	Pysanky class w/dinner	6:00 p.m.
❖ Palm Sunday, March 29:	Divine Liturgy followed by Annual Picnic	10:00 a.m.
❖ Holy Wednesday, April 1:	Liturgy of the Presanctified w/Holy Anointing	7:00 p.m.
❖ Holy Thursday, April 2:	Vespers with Divine Liturgy	7:00 p.m.
❖ Holy & Great Friday, April 3:	Vespers with Stations of the Cross	7:00 p.m.
❖ Friday / Saturday, April 3-4:	Grave Watch	9 p.m. - 10 a.m.
❖ Holy Saturday, April 4:	Divine Liturgy	5:00 p.m.
❖ Pascha Sunday, April 5:	Matins with Divine Liturgy	10:00 a.m.

Blessing of Baskets will take place after Liturgy on Holy Saturday and Pascha Sunday

Announcements & Reminders

ANNUAL PICNIC Our picnic is set for next Sunday, immediately following Divine Liturgy. If you have yet to purchase your tickets, please do so. Tickets for the event are \$20 per adult, and \$10 per child under 10 years old. Friends and family are most welcome to attend. A 50/50 raffle will also be held, with tickets available now for purchase. Please see Fred to purchase your tickets.

THE ART OF PYSANKY THIS Thursday at 6:00 p.m., join us and learn how to write a pysanka. Cost is only \$20.00, and includes supplies and a light bite to eat. Speak with Fred to RSVP.

LITURGY INTENTIONS If you would like a Liturgy offered for the blessed memory or health of a loved one, please fill out the form located in the back of the church. **Requests can also be made online.** Simply visit the Contribute page on the parish website, and follow the link to our secure online payment portal.

Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast

The following is an outline to use with the Green Hymnal.

Page Number		Page Number	
11-13	Enarxis & Litany of Peace SIT	53 Melody B	Creed
14-15	First & Second Antiphons	55 & 96	Anaphora
18 Melody A	Hymn of the Incarnation STAND	96	Holy, Holy, Holy
22	Third Antiphon		Take, eat... PROFOUND BOW
25	Entrance Hymn		Drink of this... PROFOUND BOW
161 & 230	Troparion SIT	98	We praise you...
230	Kontakion	98	Instead of "It is truly proper..."
27 Melody A	Thrice-holy Hymn STAND	63-65	Preparation of Communion SIT
162	Prokeimenon	74	Our Father STAND
	Epistle SIT	78 Melody A	Communion Hymns
163	Alleluia STAND	83	We have seen...
35	Preparation for Gospel	84	May our mouth... SIT
	Gospel	87	Arise! Now that we... STAND
	Homily SIT	88 Melody A	Blessed be the name...
35-37	Litany of Fervent Supplication	454 Melody A	Beneath your Compassion
42 Melody A	Cherubikon STAND		
49-50	For the precious gifts...		

EPISTLE

Hebrews 9: 11-14

When Christ came as high priest of the good things which have come to be, he entered once for all into the sanctuary, passing through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made by hands, that is, not belonging to this creation. He entered, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, and achieved eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and bulls and the sprinkling of a heifer's ashes can sanctify those who are defiled so that their flesh is cleansed, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself up unblemished to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to worship the living God!

Hymns

The grieving mother

1. The grieving Mother stood beneath the Cross; weeping in sorrow, tearfully she prayed: O Son, my Son, innocent and faultless, why must You suffer this bitter passion on the Cross?
2. Bitter tears are falling near Your holy body. O my child I raised You long before these enemies. Now as I lose You, while I weep before You, O my Son You leave me and Your life I will no longer see.

Beneath Your Cross I stand

1. Beneath Your Cross I stand, O Savior hear my request. Turn me from all sin; let me feel remorse; here let me pray and rest.
2. For me You suffered shame; for me You suffered Your Cross. You paid for my sins; You paid for my faults; You redeemed mankind lost.
3. From You I'll never turn; for me Your last breath You spent. Let Your seven words, spoken from Your Cross be my strength to repent.

In Gethsem'ne's darkness

1. In Gethsem'ne's darkness Jesus prayed for us, when He asked God for the strength to bear the cross.
2. Angels came to serve our Lord the help He sought; strength to suffer from the chalice which they brought.

Refrain: The sword of sorrow, foretold long ago, Your Mother's heart will know.

HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 10: 32b-45

At that time, taking the Twelve aside once more, Jesus began to tell them what was going to happen to him. "We are on our way up to Jerusalem, where the Son of man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death and hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit at him, flog him, and finally kill him. But three days later he will rise."

Zebedee's sons, James and John, approached him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to grant our request." "What is it?" he asked. They replied, "See to it that we sit, one at your right and the other at your left, when you come into your glory." Jesus told them, "You do not know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup I shall drink or be baptized in the same bath of pain as I?" "We can," they told him. Jesus said in response, "From the cup I drink of you shall drink; the bath I am immerses in you shall share. But as for sitting at my right or my left, that is not mine to give; it is for those to whom it has been reserved." The other then, on hearing this, became indignant at James and John. Jesus called them together and said to them: "You know how among the Gentiles those who seem to exercise authority lord it over them; their great ones make their importance felt. It cannot be like that with you. Anyone among you who aspires to greatness must serve the rest; whoever wants to rank first among you must serve the needs of all. The Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve = to give his life in ransom for the many."