

*Our Lady of the Sign
Byzantine Catholic Church*

7311 Lyons Road, Coconut Creek, Florida 33073
www.SouthFloridaByzantine.org

Rev. Martin Vavrak

Pastor

fr.martin@SouthFloridaByzantine.org
(732) 501-2810

Mr. Fred Wilson

Parish Manager & Cantor

fwilson@SouthFloridaByzantine.org
(631) 974-1011



Website



Contribute

Fr. Deacon Michael Opalka

Mr. Jon Cipyak, III & Ms. Lynn McFadden
Assistant Cantors

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

Palm Sunday **Saturday, March 28, 2026, 5:00 p.m.**
EPISTLE Philippians 4: 4-9 For the Faithful of the Parish
GOSPEL John 12: 1-18

Sanctuary Candle:
Health & Blessing of Fina Gonzalez & Raul Gonzalez

Sunday, March 29, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
For the Faithful of the Parish

ANNUAL PICNIC

Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with Holy Anointing **Wednesday, April 1, 2026, 7:00 p.m.**

Vespers with Divine Liturgy for Great and Holy Thursday **Thursday, April 2, 2026, 7:00 p.m.**

Vespers for Great and Holy Friday: The Burial of the Lord **Friday, April 3, 2026, 7:00 p.m.**

An all-night Grave Watch will be held from 9 p.m. Friday night until 10 a.m. Saturday morning. All are welcome to attend and spend an hour with Our Lord, as He lays in the tomb.

Pascha Sunday **Saturday, April 4, 2026, 5:00 p.m.**
Resurrection of our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ For the Faithful of the Parish
Matins and Divine Liturgy, followed by Blessing of Baskets
EPISTLE Acts 1: 1-6 **Sunday, April 5, 2026, 10:00 a.m.**
GOSPEL John 1: 1-17 For the Faithful of the Parish

Sanctuary Candle:
Health & Blessing of Fina Gonzalez & Raul Gonzalez

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, Fina Gonzalez, Raul Gonzalez, 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!

On Palm Sunday, or Flowery Sunday, we commemorate Christ's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. The Gospel of John (12:1-18) recounts the crowds greeting Jesus with palm branches, hailing Him as the King who comes in the name of the Lord. In the Byzantine Catholic Church, this feast beautifully blends joy and solemnity: we rejoice in the Messiah's coming, yet we also recognize that His path leads to the Cross. The faithful gather to bless branches, chant hymns of victory, and reflect on the paradox of Christ's kingship—one of humility, sacrifice, and ultimate glory. His entrance into Jerusalem is not merely a historical event, but a spiritual reality inviting each of us to welcome Him into our hearts.

It was Palm Sunday, and the family's 6-year old son had to stay home from church because of strep throat. When the rest of the family returned home carrying palm branches, the little boy asked what they were for. His mother explained, "People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by." "Wouldn't you know it," the boy fumed. "The one Sunday I don't go to church, and Jesus shows up!"

MEANING OF "HOSANNA"

The Greek form (ὡσαννά) of the Hebrew phrase hoshana, "hosanna" was the term used by the people to acclaim Jesus on his entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. In Psalm 118:25. The word is translated "save now" and, as in the gospels, is followed by the phrase "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." Psalm 118 was used liturgically at the Feast of Tabernacles, and verse 25 was the cue for the waving of the palm branches. In the NT and later rabbinic Judaism, the phrase no longer denoted a prayer for safety and success but rather a proclamation of religious enthusiasm coupled with the waving of palm branches. By the end of the 1st century A.D. the term had become merely an utterance of praise and exaltation in the Christian liturgy.

Let today be a reminder of what true kingship looks like—one that embraces humility, love, and self-giving. As we hold our blessed branches, let them not merely be symbols, but signs of our own hearts opening to Him. May this Palm Sunday prepare us for the journey ahead, to walk with Christ in His Passion, knowing that the road to the Cross always leads to the Resurrection.

*In Christ,
Fr. Martin Vavrak - Pastor*

Announcements & Reminders, continued...

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

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.

SANCTUARY CANDLE Each week, we light a seven-day candle, that remains lite inside the church for the entire week, symbolizing the presence of Jesus within the Tabernacle. The faithful can offer the week-long burning light in remembrance or for the health and blessings of a loved one. This is a long-standing tradition within many of our churches. If you would like to make an offering, please complete the form located in the back of the church.

COFFEE SOCIAL Volunteers are needed to bring a tasty treat during the weekly coffee social. If you would like to help out, a sign-up sheet is posted by the coffee station. Speak to Angie with any questions.

HOUSE BLESSINGS House blessings will resume after Pascha. If you would like your house, condo, business, etc. blessed, please speak with Fr. Martin or Fred to be placed on the schedule.

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.

WILLS AND TRUSTS Our Lady of the Sign welcomes charitable donations made by bequest through your Will or through Trust. A Bequest is a unique gift of money or assets left through your will and is an investment in the future of your Parish. By leaving a bequest, you are making a lasting difference in the life of the Parish community. Please contact parish manager, Fred Wilson or lay trustee Michael Donegan if you have any questions.

Directives for the Great Fast from the Office of the Bishop

As we enter the holiest time of the year, the following are the minimum fasting requirements for all Catholics who receive Holy Communion at Our Lady of the Sign, as set by our Bishop:

1. All who receive Communion in the Eparchy of Passiac are required to abstain from meat on Wednesday April 1.
2. All adults who receive Communion in the Eparchy of Passaic are required to abstain from meat, eggs, and milk products on Great and Holy Friday, April 3.

Announcements & Reminders

CONFESSIONS On Holy Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, Fr. Martin will be available for confession at 6:30 p.m. As always, Fr. is also available by appointment. Simply contact him for scheduling.

HOLY WEEK We warmly invite you to join us during Holy Week, the most sacred and significant time in the Byzantine Catholic Church. Holy Week is the very heart of our faith. From the solemnity of Holy Wednesday through the darkness of Holy Friday and the triumphant joy of Pascha, these services carry two thousand years of prayer, music, and meaning. The ancient chants, the candlelight and incense, and the profound liturgical texts come together in a way that is truly unlike anything else... moving, beautiful, and deeply transformative.

Whether you are joining us for the first time or returning after many years, you are welcome here. Come and experience something ancient, something holy, something beautiful. We hope to worship alongside you.

GRAVE WATCH Great and Holy Friday is one of the most solemn days of the Byzantine Church. On this day, we witness our Lord willingly give His life for our sake. We watch our Lord's crucifixion by the hands of those He came to save. An ancient tradition in the Byzantine Church is the Holy Vigil at the Tomb of Christ, also referred to as Grave Watch. After our Lord died on the Cross, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea took the body of Jesus, bound it in linen cloths with spices and buried it in a new tomb. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sat opposite the tomb watching as their Lord was buried. The Church has joined with these two women in keeping watch over Jesus' tomb. The Holy Vigil is our opportunity to help keep watch over our Lord's body as He descends into Hell to loosen the bonds of death.

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.

THANK YOU Thank you to everyone who joined us for Thursday evening's pysanky class! It was such a joy to share this beautiful tradition with you. Your creativity, and enthusiasm made the night truly special. We hope you're proud of the stunning eggs you created... each one a little work of art. A special thank you to those who helped with the setup and cleanup, and to Claudia for finding such a wonderful and knowledgeable teacher.

THANK YOU Thank you to Sharon, Bob and Frank for giving color to our treasured statue of Mary; to Angie, who ordained Mary with flowers, as she has been faithfully doing for the past 12 years; and to George who helped Bob install the arbor and lay new concrete. Together, this team of dedicated volunteers has brought new life to the grounds of our parish.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS There are many updates around the parish for which we are accepting special contributions. Some of the collections include: Gospel Book Gilding; Camera and Sound Streaming System; Pavilion; Golden Dome; Carillon Bells; Vestment and Altar Linen Sets (blue, gold, red, white, green). Please speak with Fred, Michael Donegan, or Fr. Martin if you are interested in any of these collections.

Palm / Flowery / Willow Sunday
The Journey of Our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ into Jerusalem

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

Page Number		Page Number	
	Blessing of Palms	49-50	For the precious gifts...
11-13	Enarxis & Litany of Peace SIT	53 Melody B	Creed
235-236	First & Second Antiphons	55 & 96	Anaphora
18 Melody A	Hymn of the Incarnation STAND	96	Holy, Holy, Holy
236	Third Antiphon		Take, eat... PROFOUND BOW
237	Entrance Hymn		Drink of this... PROFOUND BOW
237	Troparion SIT	98	We praise you...
238	Kontakion	239-240	Instead of "It is truly proper..."
27 Melody A	Thrice-holy Hymn STAND	63-65	Preparation of Communion SIT
239	Prokeimenon	74	Our Father STAND
	Epistle SIT	241	Communion Hymns
239	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 B	Blessed be the name...
35-37	Litany of Fervent Supplication	454 Melody A	Beneath your Compassion
42 Melody A	Cherubikon STAND		

EPISTLE Philippians 4: 4-9

Rejoice in the Lord always! I say it again. Rejoice! Everyone should see how unselfish you are. The Lord is near. Dismiss all anxiety from your minds. Present your needs to God in every form of prayer and in petitions full of gratitude. Then God's own peace, which is beyond all understanding, will stand guard over your hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Finally, my brethren, your thoughts should be wholly directed to all that is true, all that deserves respect, all this is honest, pure, admirable, decent, virtuous, or worthy of praise. Live according to what you have learned and accepted, what you have heard me say and seen me do. Then will the God of peace be with you.

HOLY GOSPEL John 12: 1-8

Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, the village of Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave him a banquet, at which Martha served. Lazarus was one of those at table with Jesus. Mary brought a pound of costly perfume made from genuine aromatic nard, with which she anointed the feet of Jesus. Then she dried his feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the ointment's fragrance. Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (the one about to hand him over), protested: "Why was not this perfume sold? It could have brought three hundred silver pieces, and the money have been given to the poor." (He did not say this out of concern for the poor, but because he was a thief. He held the purse, and used to help himself to what was deposited there.) To this Jesus replied: "Leave her alone. Let her keep it against the day they prepare me for burial. The poor you always have with you, but me you will not always have." The great crowd of Jews discovered Jesus was there and came out, not only because of Jesus but also to see Lazarus, whom Jesus had

raised from the dead. The fact was, the chief priests planned to kill Lazarus too, because many Jews were going over to Jesus and believing in him on account of Lazarus. The next day the great crowd that had come for the feast heard that Jesus was to enter Jerusalem, so they got palm branches and came out to meet him. They kept shouting: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the king of Israel!" Jesus found a donkey and mounted it, in accord with Scripture: "Fear not, O daughter of Zion! Your king approaches you on a donkey's colt." (At first, the disciples did not understand all this, but after Jesus was glorified they recalled that the people had done to him precisely what had been written about him.) The crowd that was present when Jesus called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead kept testifying to it. The crowd came out to meet him because they heard he had performed this sign.

Hymns

Blessing of Palms

1. Rejoice today with all your heart, O daughter Zion. Here is your King coming to you, as He sits upon a colt. Zachariah prophesies, Zephania joins with him to proclaim the Master, the Master.
2. Hosanna in the highest, He who comes is blessed: Entering Jerusalem, the Redeemer of the world. Now we sing in glorious praise, and proclaim his holy Name. "Hosanna in the highest," forever.



1. The peo - ple in great throngs had gath - ered
 2. That day the streets were filled with peo - ple;
 3. Christ en - tered in this ho - ly ci - ty,
 4. Come forth and greet the King of Glo - ry.



to greet our Lord in Je - ru - sa - lem.
 with palms and branch - es in their hands.
 an - oth - er proph - e - cy to ful - fill.
 He hum - bly comes in - to our midst to - day.



They called him King and cried Ho - san - na,
 They waved them high and cried Ho - san - na,
 We know that now their cries Ho - san - na,
 Pro - claim him King and cry Ho - san - na;



O Son of Da - vid, King of Is - ra - el,
 O Son of Da - vid, King of Is - ra - el,
 would change to Cru - ci - fy, a - way with him,
 an - nounce his king - dom which is here to stay;



O Son of Da - vid, King of Is - ra - el.
 O Son of Da - vid, King of Is - ra - el.
 would change to Cru - ci - fy, a - way with him.
 an - nounce his king - dom which is here to stay.