

HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH

THROUGH THE CROSS JOY HAS COME INTO ALL THE WORLD

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RESURRECTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT?

by Fr. Patrick Henry Reardon



When we search for Old Testament evidence that ‘Christ must rise,’ we should be prepared to look at the Hebrew Scriptures through the lens used by the New Testament writers. Simply put, what prophetic passage did they have in mind when they declared, “it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day”?

A rather obvious answer, surely, appears in the Septuagint version of Hosea:

On the third day we shall arise—en te hemera te trite anastesometha (6:2).

It is nearly impossible not to think that this is the text Paul had in mind when he declared that Christ

was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures—egegertai te hemera te trite kata tas graphas (1 Corinthians 15:4).

Likewise, these “three days” in Hosea, I submit, certainly evoked in the minds of the first Christians those three days Jonah spent in the belly of the sea monster.

Even without the mention of “three days,” numerous Old Testament passages informed the Church that the Christ must rise. Peter—famously—perceived in the Psalter a

prophecy of the Resurrection:

For David says, with respect to him (eis auton), ‘I envisage the Lord before me in all things. / For He is at my right hand / lest ever I be shaken. / Because of this my heart rejoiced, / and my tongue was loosed in laughter. / Indeed, my flesh, as well, will rest in hope. / For You will not abandon my soul unto the nether world (hades), / nor will You consign Your holy one to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; / You will make me full of joy with Your face (meta tou prosopou Sou).

Particularly to be noted, perhaps, is this final quoted verse, according to which the joy of God’s presence follows the Resurrection. In fact, our text from Hosea, cited above, conveys the same idea; after declaring, “On the third day we shall arise,” the prophet goes on to declare, “we shall live in His presence” (Hosea 6:2).

In the Psalter there is no shortage of prayers referring to God’s deliverance from death. For example:

Many and evil were the sorrows You showed me, / But You turned again and gave me life. / You raised me up again from the depths of the earth.

Particularly note-worthy is Psalm 20 (21), in which the Church prays to the Father, glorifying Him for the Son’s paschal victory over sin, death, and hell. The psalm begins, “O Lord, the King will rejoice in Your strength, / and greatly will he exult in Your salvation.

This is the rejoicing of Jesus himself, ‘the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:2).

In this psalm the Resurrection is God’s response to Christ’s own prayer: “You have given him his heart’s desire, nor have You denied him the request of His lips.” The Gospels

tell of that prayer for deliverance from death. Some words of that prayer, indeed, were audible to those nearby and were recorded for all the Church to know. With respect to this prayer during the Passion we are told that Jesus “was heard because of His godly fear” (Heb. 5:7).

And for what did Jesus pray during those “days of his flesh”? “He asked life of You,” answers our psalm. And what sort of life? The mere survival of his earthly body? Hardly. The object of Jesus’ prayer was, rather, the total life that stands forever victorious over death, the irruption of the divine life into the world by reason of his own passage through death to glory.

The true eternal life is not a simple continuation of man’s earthly existence. It is something new altogether:

He asked life of You, and You gave him length of days unto ages of ages.

This is the divine life given in the Resurrection, of which Jesus said:

Amen, Amen, I say to you, the hour is coming-and now is-when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in himself (John 5:25, 26).

By reason of the Resurrection, says this psalm, Jesus reigns as King, the very title that Pilate, in God’s providential irony, affixed to the Cross itself:

O Lord, the King will rejoice in Your strength.” And because he is King, He is crowned: “A crown of precious stones have You placed upon his head.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Holy Fire is coming from Jerusalem!

We will have the joy of receiving the Holy Fire which descends in a miraculous way yearly at the Lord’s Sepulcher in Jerusalem on Holy Saturday as it is making its way around the country thanks to a dedicated grassroots group or Orthodox faithful who have been coordinating this effort. We will receive it at Vespers on Saturday, May 6 and it will be available on Sunday as well.

If you wish, the faithful are encouraged to bring something to keep this miraculous flame alive and protected, for transport to your home to be placed in your icon corner. That may involve some planning on your part, possibly using some of kind of lantern, or something to maintain and protect the flame until you can bring it

home safely.

Join us for this very special blessing as we receive the Holy Fire from Jerusalem!

What is the Holy Fire?

Orthodox tradition holds that the Holy Fire happens annually on the day preceding Orthodox Pascha, in which a blue light emanates within Jesus Christ’s tomb (usually rising from the marble slab covering the stone bed believed to be that upon which Jesus’ body was placed for burial) now in the Holy Sepulchre, which eventually forms a column containing a form of fire, from which candles are lit, which are then used to light the candles of the clergy and pilgrims in attendance. The fire is also said to spontaneously light other lamps and candles around the church.

While the Patriarch is inside the chapel kneeling in front of the stone, there is darkness but far from silence outside. One hears a rather loud mumbling, and the atmosphere is very tense. When the Patriarch comes out with the two candles lit and shining brightly in the darkness, a roar of jubilation resounds in the Church.

Thousands of pilgrims as well as local Christians of all denominations gather in Jerusalem to partake and witness this annual event. The Holy Fire is taken to certain Orthodox countries, such as Greece and Russia, by special flights, being received by church and state leaders.

Blueprints for the Little Church Adult Sunday School Class

When: Sunday March 5-April 9, May 7, 14 and 21.

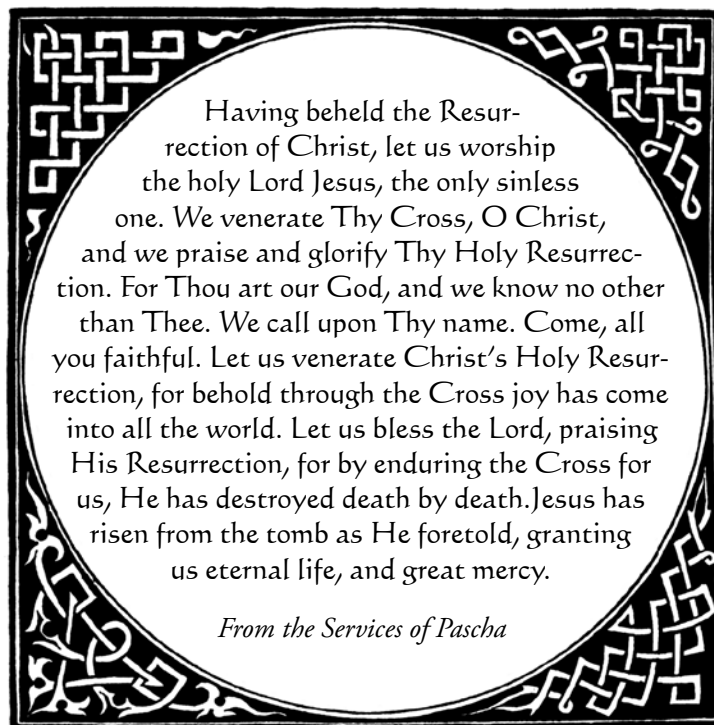
Time: 1-1:45pm

What: An adult study of the Orthodox home life, family, and parenting. Designed to be an encouraging and safe place to discuss, to learn, and to discover ways of connecting our parish with our homes in meaningful ways. Using Blueprints for the Little Church: Creating an Orthodox Home, by Elissa Bjeletich and Caleb Shoemaker as our outline, we will discuss topics ranging from family prayer and fasting to creative almsgiving and activities to commemorate the Church Year in our homes. Coffee and food welcome. Hand-outs will be provided.

Contact: Caleb Shoemaker (518-590-8546, caleb.shoemaker@gmail.com) if you plan to attend

Moleben on our property: We will continue serving a weekly short prayer service on our property in Kernersville. This is a service of supplication (Molieben) that Archbishop Dimitri of blessed memory blessed for the use

of parishes in the diocese. Fr. Christopher will be serving it on Friday mornings at 10 AM except where noted in the calendar. Our property is located at 1320 Masten Drive in Kernersville.



Sisterhood of the Holy Myrrhbearers: The sisterhood meeting will be held at 6:30 PM on May 23.

Men's Group: The Men's Group will be held at 7:00 PM on May 18.

Order Gift Cards Through Holy Cross! Scrip cards are available from hundreds of retailers and don't cost any more than the face value of the gift card. It's a "free" fundraiser to benefit the Holy Cross

building fund! Contact Karen Brudnak-Slate.

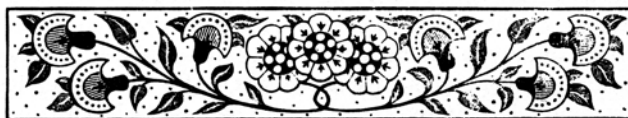


FINANCIAL SUMMARY

April data:

	Actual	Budget
Income	\$9,362.90	\$10,631.00
Expense	\$10,792.36	\$11,319.28

Thank you everyone for your generosity!



HOLY CROSS ORTHODOX CHURCH



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 6 PM Great Vespers - HOLY FIRE from Jerusalem
7 Paralytic 9:00AM Church School 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy 12:45PM Blueprints for the Little Church Adult Class	8	9	10	11 6PM Parish Council	12	13 6 PM Great Vespers
14 Samaritan Woman 9:00AM Church School 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy 12:45PM Blueprints Class	15	16	17	18 7PM Men's Group	19 7PM OCAT Home Meeting	20 6 PM Great Vespers
21 Blind Man 9:00AM Church School 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy 12:45PM Blueprints Class	22	23 6:30 Sisterhood	24 6:30PM Ascension Vespers	25 ASCENSION 8AM Divine Liturgy 6:30PM Inquirers Class	26 5PM Open Door	27 6 PM Great Vespers
28 Fathers of the 1st Ecumenical Council 9:40AM Hours 10AM Divine Liturgy	29	30	31			

