

# St. Demetrius Orthodox Church

## April 2026

### **Palm Sunday**

### **April 5**

Palm Sunday is the celebration of the triumphant entrance of Christ into the royal city of Jerusalem. He rode on a colt for which He Himself had sent and He permitted the people to Hail Him publicly as a King. A large crowd met Him in a manner befitting royalty, waving palm branches and placing their garments in His path. They greeted Him with these words: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel! (John 12:13).

This day together with the raising of Lazarus are signs pointing beyond themselves to the mighty deeds and events which consummate Christ's earthly ministry. The time of fulfillment was at hand. Christ's raising of Lazarus points to the destruction of death and the joy of resurrection which will be accessible to all through His own death and resurrection. His entrance into Jerusalem is a fulfillment of the messianic prophecies about the King who will enter His Holy City to establish a final Kingdom. "Behold, your King is coming to you, humble and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass." (Zech. 9:9).

Finally, the events of these triumphant two days are but the passage to Holy Week: the "hour" of suffering and death for which Christ came. Thus, the triumph in an earthly sense is extremely short-lived. Jesus enters openly into the midst of His enemies, publicly saying and doing those things which mostly enrage them. The people themselves will soon reject Him. They misread His brief earthly triumph as a sign of something else: His emergence as a political messiah who will lead them to the glories of an earthly Kingdom.+

## Pascha 2025

Once again the cycle of the year brings us to Lent, Holy Week and Pascha. In the mystery of this Holy Season we see revealed in the world the victorious sign of God's presence in the world, reconciling mankind to Himself.

We, as mankind, have been separated from God, our Father by our sinfulness. But Christ, the Reconciler, has opened for us the way which leads from sin and eternal death to Life Everlasting in the Kingdom of the Father.

Christ has instructed us that He Himself is the only way by which we can come to the Father. And how can we come to Christ except by joining ourselves to His Body, which is the church, by participating in His Death and Resurrection, which is Baptism, and by being fed week by week from the food of the Kingdom, which is the Holy Communion, the every true Body and Blood of Christ.

In our sinful weakness all of us desperately need this union with Christ, and, thru Christ, this reconciliation with the Father. As we need to be reconciled with God the Father then, we also need to be reconciled with the Church and with one another.

There is no better time to come to church, this fountain of our life in the Kingdom, than now in Holy Week and Pascha.

Please see the enclosed April service calendar for Holy Week days and times.+

## I am The Resurrection And The Life"

Aside from the Twelve Apostles, little is known of other friends and acquaintances that Jesus may have had. We do know of one person with whom our Lord was apparently very close: Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary. Their friendship was the motivation for Christ's most impressive miracle: *The raising of Lazarus from the dead.*

The Gospel of St. John provides us with detailed information concerning this miraculous happening. When Jesus receives word that Lazarus was gravely ill, He reacts in a puzzling manner. Instead of going to be with His friend, Christ remains in an undisclosed location, going to Bethany only when He learns that Lazarus was surely dead.

It is largely significant to note that Christ arrives at the home of Martha and Mary four days after the death of their brother. The Jews believed that the soul lingered around the body for three days. On the fourth day, it was felt that there was absolutely no hope of reviving the one who had passed on. Surely, our Lord was aware of this. He knew that when He cried out: *"Lazarus, Come Forth!"* and his friend came out of His tomb, still bound in his burial clothes, there would be no doubt concerning His power over death.

The family and friends of Lazarus were overjoyed! Little did they realize that this was merely a foreshadowing of greater things to come. Little did they know that in a week's time, Christ would raise Himself from His grave of three days and that His words to Martha would truly impact the entire world through eternity: ***"I am the Resurrection And The Life."***+

## Post Easter Sundays

### St. Thomas Sunday: Antipascha

Everyday during the week of Easter, called Bright Week by the Church, the Pascha Services are celebrated in all their splendor. The Easter baptismal procession is repeated daily. The royal gates of the sanctuary remain open. The joy of the Resurrection and the gift of the Kingdom of eternal life continue to abound. Then, at the end of the week, on Saturday evening, the second Sunday after Easter is celebrated in remembrance of the appearance of Christ to the Apostle Thomas "after eight days." It is important to note that the number eight has symbolical significance in both Jewish and Christian spiritual tradition. It signifies more than completion and fullness, it signifies the Kingdom of God and the life of the world to come since seven is the number of earthly time.

The Sunday after Easter, called the Second Sunday, is thus the eighth day of the paschal celebration, the last day of Bright Week. It is therefore called the Antipascha and it was only this day in the early Church that the newly baptized Christians removed their robes and entered once again into the life of this world.

The third Sunday after Pascha is dedicated to the myrrh-bearing women who care for the body of the Saviour at his death and who were the first witnesses of his Resurrection.

The fourth Sunday is dedicated to Christ's healing of the paralytic (John 5). The man is healed by Christ while waiting to be put down into the pool of water. Through baptism in the church, we too, are healed and saved by Christ for eternal life. Thus, in the church, we are told, together with the paralytic, to "sin no more than nothing worse befall you." (John 5:14).

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## Services

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 No adult ed. Holy Unction 6 pm.	2	3 Presanctified Liturgy 5:30 pm, Lenten meal	4 Lazarus Saturday Vespers 3 pm
5 <u>Palm Sunday</u> Liturgy 9:30 am.  Blessing of Palms	6 <u>Holy Monday</u> Bridegroom Matins 6 pm	7 <u>Holy Tuesday</u> Bridegroom Matins 6 pm	8 <u>Holy Wednesday</u> No adult ed. Presanctified Liturgy 6 pm	9 <u>Holy Thursday</u> Liturgy 9:30 am. Matins w/12 Gospels 6 pm	10 <u>Holy Friday</u> Vespers 4 pm, Lenten meal. Matins and Lamentations 6:30 pm	11 <u>Holy Saturday</u> Liturgy w/15 OT readings 9:30 am. Paschal Services 9:30 pm. Agape Meal
12 <u>Pascha Sunday</u> Paschal Vespers 11 am	13 <u>Bright Monday</u> Paschal Liturgy 5:30 pm	14	15 No adult ed.	16	17	18 Vespers 3 pm
19 St. Thomas Sunday Liturgy 9:30 am Children's Easter Egg Hunt follows. P.C. meeting	20	21	22 No adult ed.	23	24	25 Vespers 3 pm
26 Liturgy 9:30 am	27	28	29 No adult ed.	30		

Fr. Dusan in Chicago, Clergy Convocation