



THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF THE DORMITION

OF THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

ПАРАФІЯ УСПІННІА ПРЕСВ. БОГОРОДНИЦІ

Sunday, March 27, 2022

**Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast: St. John Climacus.
Octoechos Tone 3. Our Holy Mother Matrona of Thessalonica**

Address:

15608 -104 Avenue,
Edmonton, AB
T5P 4G5

Services:

Sunday Divine Liturgy
(Ukr & Eng) at 10 am

Presanctified Liturgies:
Wednesdays of Lent at 7 pm

Festal Liturgies:
Major Feast Days at 7pm

Parish Website:

<http://dormition.eeparchy.com>

Eparchial Website:

www.eeparchy.com

Pastor:

Fr. Bo Nahachewsky

Fr. Bo's cell phone:

780-340-FR.BO (3726)

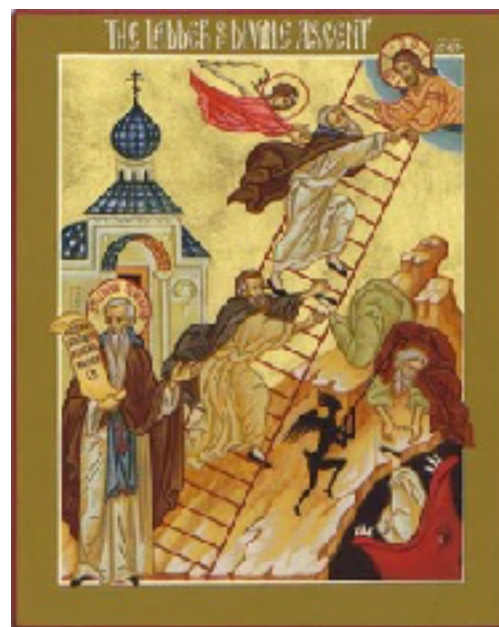
Fr. Bo's Emails:

fr.nahachewsky@eeparchy.com



4th Sunday of Great Lent: St John Climacus (of the Ladder)

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to Saint John of the Ladder (Climacus), the author of the work, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. The abbot of Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th century) stands as a witness to the violent effort needed for entrance into God's Kingdom (Mt.10: 12). The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is a real one, "not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places ..." (Eph 6:12). Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, according to the Lord, only "he who endures to the end will be saved" (Mt.24:13).



Since the beginning of the war in Ukraine, the Eparchy of Edmonton has gathered **over \$ 1.2 Million** to help.

Do you want to help the victims of the War in Ukraine too?

Prayers for peace are needed always. Stay informed. Don't let false information spread.

The Eparchy of Edmonton is still accepting donations. Go to

eeparchy.com to donate online, or mark an envelope clearly with the words "FOR UKRAINE" and you can put it in our parish's collection plate. Donations are also accepted at the Eparchial office weekdays from 8:30-4:30.

If you want to help with refugees by offering employment, housing, immigration sponsorship, consulting, legal aid, in-kind donations, service donations, transportation of people or logistics, childcare or in any other way, please go to **UCC.ca**, which is the website of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress and click on the "I want to Help" button.



Venerable John Climacus of Sinai, Author of “the Ladder”

Saint John of the Ladder is honored by Holy Church as a great ascetic and author of the renowned spiritual book called THE LADDER, from which he is also called “of the Ladder” (Climacus).

There is almost no information about Saint John’s origins. One tradition suggests that he was born in Constantinople around the year 570, and was the son of Saints Xenophon and Maria (January 26).

John went to Sinai when he was sixteen, submitting to Abba Martyrius as his instructor and guide. After four years, Saint John was tonsured as a monk. Abba Strategios, who was present at Saint John’s tonsure, predicted that he would become a great luminary in the Church of Christ.

For nineteen years Saint John progressed in monasticism in obedience to his spiritual Father. After the death of Abba Martyrius, Saint John embarked on a solitary life, settling in a wild place called Thola, where he spent forty years laboring in silence, fasting, prayer, and tears of penitence.

It is not by chance that in THE LADDER Saint John speaks about tears of repentance: “Just as fire burns and destroys the wood, so pure tears wash away every impurity, both external and internal.” His holy prayer was strong and efficacious, as may be seen from an example from the life of the God-pleasing saint.

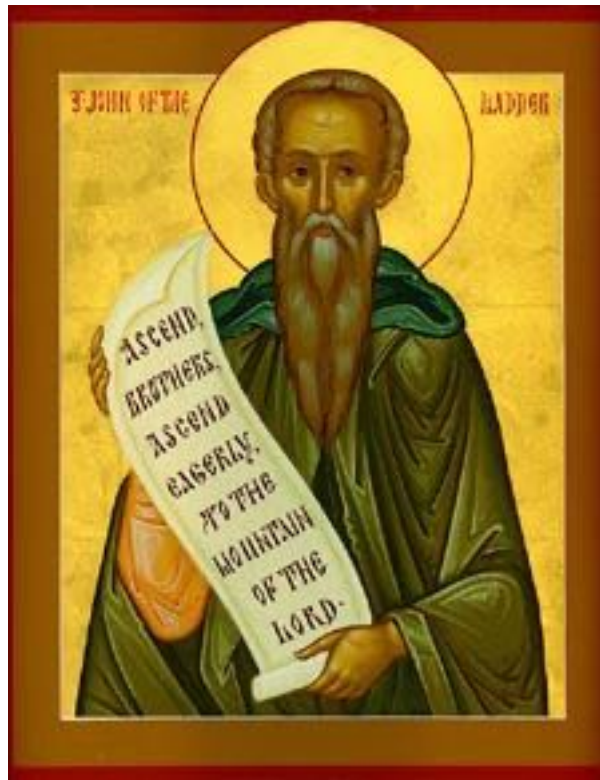
Saint John had a disciple named Moses. Once, the saint ordered his disciple to bring dung to fertilize the vegetable garden. When he had fulfilled the obedience, Moses lay down to rest under the shade of a large rock, because of the scorching heat of summer. Saint John was in his cell in a light sleep. Suddenly, a man of remarkable appearance appeared to him and awakened the holy ascetic, reproaching him, “John, why do you sleep so heedlessly, when Moses is in danger?”

Saint John immediately woke up and began to pray for his disciple. When Moses returned in the evening, Saint John asked whether any sort of misfortune had befallen him.

The monk replied, “A large rock would have fallen on me as I slept beneath it at noon, but I left that place because I thought I

heard you calling me.” Saint John did not tell his disciple of his vision, but gave thanks to God.

Saint John ate the food which is permitted by the monastic rule, but only in moderation. He did not sleep very much, only enough to keep up his strength, so that he would not ruin his mind by unceasing vigil. “I do not fast excessively,” he said of himself, “nor do I give myself over to intense all-night vigil, nor lay upon the ground, but I restrain myself..., and the Lord soon saved me.”



The following example of Saint John’s humility is noteworthy. Gifted with discernment, and attaining wisdom through spiritual experience, he lovingly received all who came to him and guided them to salvation. One day some envious monks reproached him for being too talkative, and so Saint John kept silence for a whole year. The monks realized their error, and they went to the ascetic and begged him not to deprive them of the spiritual profit of his conversation.

Concealing his ascetic deeds from others, Saint John sometimes withdrew into a cave, but reports of his holiness spread far beyond the vicinity. Visitors from all walks of life came to him, desiring to hear his words of edification and salvation. After forty years of solitary asceticism, he was chosen as igumen of Sinai when he was seventy-five. Saint John governed the holy monastery for four

years. Toward the end of his life, the Lord granted him the gifts of clairvoyance and wonderworking.

At the request of Saint John, igumen of the Raithu monastery (Commemorated on Cheesefare Saturday), he wrote the incomparable LADDER, a book of instruction for monks who wished to attain spiritual perfection.

Knowing of the wisdom and spiritual gifts of Saint John of Sinai, the igumen of Raithu requested him to write down whatever was necessary for the salvation of those in the monastic life. Such a book would be “a ladder fixed on the earth” (Gen. 28:12), leading people to the gates of Heaven.

Saint John felt that such a task was beyond his ability, yet out of obedience he fulfilled the request. The saint called his work THE LADDER, for the book is “a fixed ladder leading from earthly things to the Holy of Holies....” The thirty steps of spiritual perfection correspond to the thirty years of the Lord’s age. When we have completed these thirty steps, we will ...

Venerable John Climacus of Sinai, Author of “the Ladder” continued...

...find ourselves with the righteous and will not stumble. THE LADDER begins with renunciation of the world, and ends with God, Who is love (1 John 4:8).

Although the book was written for monks, any Christian living in the world will find it an unerring guide for ascending to God, and a support in the spiritual life. Saints Theodore the Studite (November 11 and January 26), Sergius of Radonezh (September 25 and July 5), Joseph of Volokolamsk (September 9 and October 18), and others relied on THE LADDER as an important guide to salvation.

The twenty-second step of THE LADDER deals with various forms of vainglory. Saint John writes: “When I fast, I am vainglorious; and when I permit myself food in order to conceal my fasting from others I am again vainglorious about my prudence. When I dress in fine clothing, I am vanquished by vanity, and if I put on drab clothing, again I am overcome by vanity. If I speak, vainglory defeats me. If I wish to keep silence, I am again given over to it. Wherever this thorn comes up, it stands with its points upright.

A vain person seems to honor God, but strives to please men rather than God.

People of lofty spirit bear insult placidly and willingly, but only the holy and righteous may hear praise without harm.

When you hear that your neighbor or friend has slandered you behind your back, or even to your face, praise and love him.

It is not the one who reproaches himself who shows humility, for who will not put up with himself? It is the one who is slandered by another, yet continues to show love for him.

Whoever is proud of his natural gifts, intelligence, learning, skill in reading, clear enunciation, and other similar qualities, which are acquired without much labor, will never obtain supernatural gifts. Whoever is not faithful in small things (Luke 16:10), is also unfaithful in large things, and is vainglorious.

It often happens that God humbles the vainglorious, sending a sudden misfortune. If prayer does not destroy a proud thought, we bring to mind the departure of the soul from this life. And if this does not help, let us fear the shame which follows dishonor. “For whoever humbles himself shall be exalted, and whoever exalts himself shall be humbled” (Luke 14:11). When those who praise us, or rather seduce us, start to praise us, let us recall our many sins, then we shall find that we are not worthy of what they say or do to honor us.”

In THE LADDER Saint John describes the ascent toward spiritual perfection, which is essential for anyone who wishes to save his soul. It is a written account of his thoughts, based on the collected wisdom of many wise ascetics, and on his own spiritual experience. The book is a great help on the path to truth and virtue.

The steps of THE LADDER proceed gradually from strength to strength on the path of perfection. The summit is not reached suddenly, but gradually, as the Savior says: “The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force” (Mt.11:12).

Saint John is also commemorated on the fourth Sunday of Great Lent.



Martyr Matrona of Thessalonica

The Holy Martyr Matrona of Thessalonica suffered in the third or fourth century. She was a slave of the Jewish woman Pautila (or Pantilla), wife of one of the military commanders of Thessalonica. Pautila constantly mocked her slave for her faith in Christ, and tried to convert her to Judaism. Saint Matrona, who believed in Christ from her youth, still prayed to the Savior Christ, and secretly went to church unbeknownst to her vengeful mistress.

Pautila, learning that Saint Matrona had been to church, asked, “Why won’t you come to our synagogue, instead of attending the Christian church?” Saint Matrona boldly answered, “Because God is present in the Christian church, but He has departed from the Jewish synagogue.” Pautila went into a rage and mercilessly beat Saint Matrona, tied her up, and shut her in a dark closet. In the morning, Pautila discovered that Saint Matrona had been freed of her bonds by an unknown Power.

In a rage Pautila beat the martyr almost to death, then bound her even more tightly and locked her in the closet. The door was sealed so that no one could help the sufferer. The holy martyr remained there for four days without food or water, and when Pautila opened the door, she again found Saint Matrona free of her bonds, and standing at prayer.

Martyr Matrona of Thessalonica continued...

Pautila flogged the holy martyr and left the skin hanging in strips from her body. The fierce woman locked her in the closet again, where Saint Matrona gave up her spirit to God.

Pautila had the holy martyr's body thrown from the roof of her house. Christians took up the much-suffered body of the holy martyr and buried it. Later, Bishop Alexander of Thessalonica built a church dedicated to the holy martyr. Her holy relics, glorified by many miracles, were placed in this church.



Clergy in Edmonton gather with Bishop David to join in the prayers for the Consecration at the Cathedral on Friday.

Pope consecrates Russia & Ukraine: 'Spiritual act of trust amid cruel war'

Pope Francis consecrates all humanity—especially Russia and Ukraine—to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and says the act expresses our complete trust in the Virgin Mary in the midst of the “cruel and senseless war” in Ukraine.

By Devin Watkins

Pope Francis presided over the annual “24 Hours for the Lord” Lenten penitential service in St. Peter’s Basilica on Friday evening, as the Church marked the feast of the Annunciation.

Toward the end of the liturgy, the Pope prayed the Act of Consecration of humanity, especially of Russia and Ukraine, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

He prayed the Act in communion with all Catholic Bishops across the globe, as the Papal Almoner, Cardinal Konrad Krajewski, did the same at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima, in Portugal.

The Pope’s renewal of the Consecration came in response to the war in Ukraine and at the request of the Blessed Virgin Mary made in an apparition at Fatima on 13 July 1917.

Spiritual act of trust

In his homily at the Celebration of Penance, Pope Francis reflected on humanity’s need for God’s forgiveness and on the meaning of the Consecration.

He said the renewal of the Act of Consecration is meant to consecrate the Church and all the whole of humanity, especially Russia and Ukraine, to Mary’s Immaculate Heart.

“This is no magic formula but a spiritual act. It is an act of complete trust on the part of children who, amid the tribulation of this cruel and senseless war that threatens our world, turn to their Mother, reposing all their fears and pain in her heart and abandoning themselves to her.”

The Pope added that we place all that we have and are into “pure and undefiled heart, where God is mirrored.”

Saturday, March 26th (Yesterday) Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox bishops, priests and faithful pray together for the souls of those who have lost their lives during the war in Ukraine.



The Miraculous Icon of Mother of God of Zarvanytsia

ZARVANYTSIA, UKRAINE, 1240

The icon was given by the Blessed Virgin Mary to a wounded monk who was escaping the Mongol invaders. She first appeared to him in a dream, then when he awoke a spring of water appeared with the icon above it. The monk's wounds were healed by washing in the spring. He named the place Zarvanytsia, and soon a chapel was built for the icon and many miraculous healings occurred among the people who flocked there.

In World War II, the icon was hidden by the villagers to protect it from the Soviet soldiers. During the nearly 50 years the icon was hidden, Soviet authorities blocked roads to Zarvanytsia on holy days, wrapped the miraculous spring in barbed wire, and blew up the church. All religious services were forbidden.

In 1989 when the Soviet Union fell, the icon came out of hiding, and the shrine was restored. It remains a major pilgrimage destination.

PRAYER

Holy Mother of God, spread your maternal mantle over all Christians and over all people of good will who live in this great nation. Lead them to your Son, Jesus, who is for everyone the way, the truth and the life. Amen.

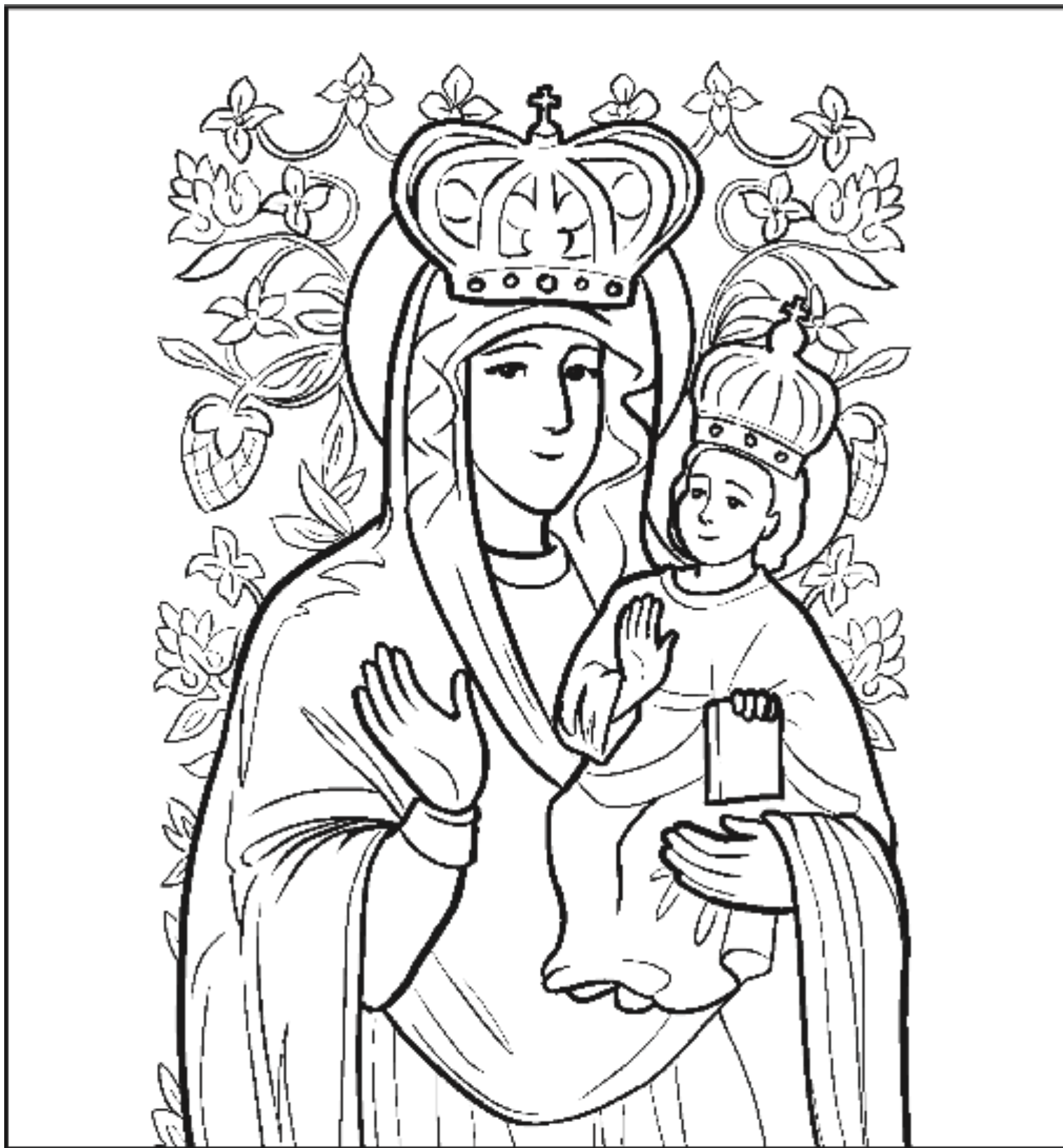
Prayer of Pope Saint John Paul II before the miraculous icon of our Lady of Zarvanytsia, June 23, 2001



Parish Pastoral Council Meeting Wednesday at 7pm.

All newly elected PPC members, please attend.

If you can't be there in person, let Fr. Bo know and he will set up the Zoom.



Hey Kids:

Can you colour this icon of the Mother of God of Zarvanytsia?

Praying for Mary's Protection is an important thing you can do.

Parish News:

- **Please pray for** several of our parishioners and family members including (but not limited to): Mickey, Sister Andrea, Kristopher, Greg, Peter, Ross, Ron, Peter, Jean, Verna, Miranda, Sarah, Marge, Ann & Louis.
 - **Happy birthday** to Verna Hnatiuk & Stefan Sokolowski who celebrate their birthdays this week. May God grant you many happy years. Mnohaya Lita.
 - **PPC Meeting this week**, Wednesday, March 30 at 7 pm in the Church hall.
 - **Blessing of the new PPC...** we haven't talked about it yet, but it shall be done... on one of the upcoming Sundays. Stay Tuned.
 - Our UCWLC **will be baking Paskas**. If anyone is interested in ordering some, please contact Helen at 780-435-2017, or speak with Virginia or Diane at Church.
 - **Fellowship after Liturgy has returned!** As we used to do before covid, after liturgy people are invited to visit over a cup of coffee or tea (or juice). All are welcome.
 - **Confessions:** Fr. Bo is always happy to hear confessions. Just me know and I will make some time for you. (Before Liturgy is possible only if we book some extra time in advance as we do not want to start Liturgy late.)
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Holy Week & Easter Schedule 2022

PALM SUNDAY:

10 AM *Divine Liturgy with Willow blessing (English & Ukrainian)*

GREAT AND HOLY THURSDAY:

6 PM *Matins of the Passion (Mostly English)*

GOOD FRIDAY – THE CRUCIFIXION:

3 PM *Vespers with the laying out of the Shroud. (Mostly English)*

Followed by: *Confessions.*

HOLY SATURDAY - DECENT INTO HADES

3 PM *Vespers & Liturgy of St. Basil (Mostly English)*

Followed by: *Nadhrobne*

PASCHA – THE RESURRECTION – EASTER SUNDAY

9 AM *Resurrectional Matins, (English & some Ukrainian)*

Followed by: *Resurrectional Divine Liturgy (English & Ukrainian)*

Followed by: *Blessing of Easter Baskets. (English & Ukrainian)*