

PROCESSION HELPERS: We need people to sign up to carry holy items (banners, icons, flag, etc.) in the processions around the church on *Holy Friday* and the *Pascha Sunrise Service*. Please sign your name on the lists in the vestibule if you would like to help. Church resurrection helpers are also needed to arrange the sanctuary for the resurrection.

GRAVE WATCH: We are asking members of the parish (men & women) to sign up for the “**Grave Watch**” for Holy Friday Evening and Holy Saturday, until 6 p.m. If you served at a grave watch position in past years, and want to continue, **see Fr. Timothy or Keith Hay**. There is no limit to the amount of people at each grave watch. The schedule for the grave watch will be posted on the bulletin board today. See Fr. Timothy with any questions or changes.

COLORED PASCHA EGGS - Again, we would like to repeat the custom of sharing Pascha Eggs in our parish on Holy Pascha. Fr. Timothy asks that each Family bring one half to one dozen dyed, hard-boiled eggs to church when they bring their basket to be blessed on Saturday at 5:00 p.m. or Sunday morning before Sunrise service at 6:00 a.m. Please use only pure food coloring as some dyes are not edible. These eggs will be blessed on Holy Pascha after Divine Liturgy and distributed to each person in church.

BLESSING OF BASKETS: A colorful Easter custom observed in the Orthodox Church is the blessing of Easter baskets. Each family prepares a basket which contains all the essentials for a family repast (special golden-colored bread decorated Easter eggs, ham, sausage, butter, and special foods such as an egg cheese) which is brought to church to be blessed on Saturday at 5:00 pm in the church hall or Easter/Pascha Sunrise service to be blessed after church services in the church hall. A lighted candle is placed in each basket. People often eat their Pascha foods after the blessing in the hall or take them home to their families. These baskets represent a humble offering brought to the Resurrected Christ. (Faith of our fathers)

EASTER EGGS: A custom that is sometimes observed among those of the Orthodox Faith is the presenting of **red colored eggs** to friends while giving Easter greetings. This custom had its beginning with Mary Magdalene. After the Ascension of Christ, she went to the Emperor of Rome and greeted him with, “**Christ is Risen,**” as she gave him a red egg. She then began preaching Christianity to him. The egg is symbolic of the grave and life renewed by breaking out of it. The red symbolizes the blood of Christ redeeming the world, represented by the egg, and our regeneration through the blood shed for us by Christ. The egg itself is a symbol of the Resurrection - while being dormant it contains a new life sealed within it. (Faith of our Fathers)

ARTOS – During Easter Week a loaf of bread, representing the Bread of Eternal Life, and called Artos, is placed under the Icon of Christ. The custom of having this bread in church on Easter dates back to the time of the first Apostles who always left an empty place at the head of the table to honor the memory of Christ. It was their firm belief that He was invisibly present with them.

The Artos is kept on the lectern during Easter week. On St. Thomas Sunday, the eighth day after Easter, the Artos is again blessed by the priest and is then broken up and given to the worshipers.

During the period between *Easter* and *Pentecost*, because of the glory bestowed on mortals by Christ’s victory over death, **Orthodox Christians do not kneel in church.** (taken from Faith of our Fathers)

ST. MICHAEL’S BOOK CLUB: The next scheduled meeting of the Book Club will be on Lazarus Saturday, April 4, 2026 after divine Liturgy 2026 . The book being discussed is Holy Moments by Matthew Kelly.

REMINDER: THERE IS NO KNEELING FROM PASCHA TO THE PENTECOST KNEELING PRAYERS!