

The Heavenly Host

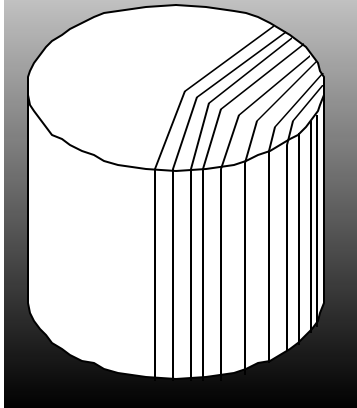
Church Phone: (818) 994-2313
Church Fax: (818) 994-2352
newsletter@stmichaelvannuys.com
www.stmichaelvannuys.com

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Mortgage Update

Our goal is to fill the container. The chart below represents the amount of our mortgage we have paid to date. Our original loan was for \$800,000. As of this month we owe \$567,000. We have paid down about 30% of the balance. Keep it up!



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Pastoral Message by Father Timothy Baclig

Among the theme songs of Great Lent is the *Kontakion* hymn of the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25th):

To thee the Champion Leader do I offer thanks of victory,
O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror;
But as thou that has that power invincible,
O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free:
From all forms of danger free me and deliver me,
That I may cry unto thee:
Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.

[The Kontakion for the Feast of the Annunciation]

The *Kontakion* is also sung on most of the Sunday's of Great Lent. I cannot but wonder what emotions are felt when our brothers and sisters in Jerusalem and all of the Holy Land sing this hymn today.

Jews, Moslems and Christians, Orthodox, observant, atheist, young and old, all human beings of Israel and Palestine today face the most horrific trial of their lives. Each day, they are being tempted to either kill or to abandon all hope and die in despair. We all know that there is no military solution to the problem, just as there is virtually no vision of the future for young Palestinian children should the violence continue. Now that our lives here in America have again resumed a sense of "normality", is it very difficult for us to imagine what it is like to be under the constant threat of terror? What must it be like to leave your home in the morning with the fear of not returning to your family at night? Can we even imagine what it would be like to have our human rights taken away, to be subjected to a military occupation, or to live with the threat that boarding a bus may mean dying with a suicide bomber. May God in His mercy save us from such a barbaric mentality. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.*

Perhaps this year Great Lent can be different for us if we not only think of ourselves as so much better off than others, but become more mindful of what it means to be poor in spirit, to mourn, to be meek, to genuinely hunger and thirst for righteousness, and to be merciful (Matthew 5:3-7). Is "purity of heart" something attainable? Are there any real peacemakers? Is anyone still willing to be "persecuted because of righteousness"? The forty-day fast was not intended for the complacent soul: lovers of the status quo. Nor is it compatible with the busybody: those who have "no time", the proud or self-centered. Every Lenten service is filled with prayers that challenge us to vigilance, humility, patience and love.

It is not enough to "give up something" for lent. It is more important to change what we are doing wrong for what is right. It is honestly and whole-heartedly surrendering all of our bad habits for learning and practicing good ones. It is being serious about Christian values and sacrificing or *giving up* what is necessary for salvation.

Great Lent is not only *for* us but it is a time for reaching out to others. It is seeing God in my brother and sister and my doing what is reasonably possible to help them. Anyone

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Important Dates to Remember for Holy Week

Lazarus Saturday-April 27th (9:30 am)

Service of Preparing the Holy Gifts (Proskomedie)
The Divine Liturgy of Lazarus Saturday (10 am)
Church School Communion Brunch following Liturgy
Great Vespers & Confessions (5 pm)

Palm Sunday-April 28th

Orthros of Palm Sunday (no Church School) (8:45 am)
Liturgy of Palm Sunday & Procession (10 am)

Note: Confessions will be heard before and/or after the services or by appointment during the week. It would be most appropriate for all confessions to be completed by Holy Wednesday (May 1) just prior to the Sacrament of Holy Unction and the Holy Thursday morning Liturgy.

The Services of Great and Holy Week

Palm Sunday Evening

Bridegroom Orthros & Procession (6:30 pm)

Great and Holy Monday-April 29th (6:30 pm)

Bridegroom Orthros & Confessions

Great and Holy Tuesday-April 30th (6:30 pm)

Bridegroom Orthros & Confessions

Great and Holy Wednesday-May 1st (6:30 pm)

Confessions & The Sacrament of Holy Unction

Great and Holy Thursday-May 2nd

Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil (9:30 am)
Orthros of the Twelve Passion Gospels (6:30 pm)

Great and Holy Friday-May 3rd

Great Vespers of Descent from the Cross (3:00 pm)
Orthros of Lamentations & Procession (6:30 pm)

Great and Holy Saturday-May 4th

Service of Preparing the Holy Gifts (Proskomedie) (8:30 am)
Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (9:00 am)

The Services of the Glorious Resurrection - Holy Pascha

Saturday-May 4th

The "Rush Procession," Orthros (11:30 pm)
The Diving Liturgy & "Agape Breakfast"

Holy Pascha-May 5th

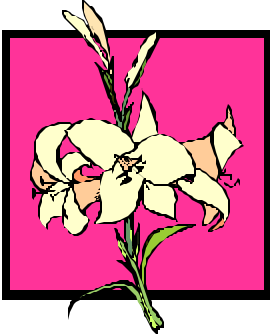
The Paschal Vespers of Love "Agape" (Noon) & Sunday School Easter Egg Hunt

St. Michael Church

www.stmichaelvannuys.com

APRIL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	6:30 pm -Great Compline in Chapel 1	7:30 pm -Ladies Guild Meeting at Paula Kence's home 2	6:30 pm -Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts Followed by Lenten Dinner/Agape Meal 3		6:30 pm -The Akathist/Madeyeh Prayer Service 5	6
7	6:30 pm -Great Compline in Chapel 7:30 pm -Parish Council Meeting 8		6:30 pm -Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts Followed by Lenten Dinner/Agape Meal 10		6:30 pm -The Akathist/Madeyeh Prayer Service 12	13
14	6:30 pm -Great Compline in Chapel 15		6:30 pm -Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts Followed by Lenten Dinner/Agape Meal 17		6:30 pm -The Akathist/Madeyeh Prayer Service 19	20
21	6:30 pm -Great Compline in Chapel 22		6:30 pm -Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts Followed by Lenten Dinner /Agape Meal 24		6:30 pm -The Akathist/Madeyeh Prayer Service 26	9:00 am -Lazarus Saturday 10:00 am -School Communion Brunch 27
PALM SUNDAY 10:00 am -Liturgy 6:30 pm - Bridegroom Orthros 28	HOLY MONDAY 6:30 pm -Bridegroom Orthros/Confessions 29	HOLY TUESDAY 6:30 pm -Bridegroom Orthros/Confessions 30	HOLY WEDNESDAY 6:30 pm -Sacrament of Holy Unction 1	HOLY THURSDAY 9:30 am -St. Basil Liturgy 6:30 pm -12 Passion Gospels 2	HOLY FRIDAY 3:00 pm -Decent from the Cross 6:30 pm - Lamantations Procession 3	HOLY SATURDAY 8:30 am -Preparing the Holy Gifts 9:00 am -Liturgy 11:30 pm -"Rush Procession" 4
12:00 am - Paschal Liturgy 2:00 am -Agape Breakfast Noon - Vespers of Love & Easter Egg Hunt 5	6	7	<p style="text-align: right;"><i>Regular Services</i></p> <p><i>Saturdays:</i> <i>Great Vespers at 5 pm in the Church.</i></p> <p><i>Sundays:</i> <i>Orthos at 8:45 am & Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am in the Church.</i></p> <p><i>Confessions are arranged by appointment or prior to services.</i></p>			



Special offerings for Holy Week and Easter flowers should be turned in with your commemorations by Palm Sunday (April 28th).

Please complete the form below accompanied with your offering (earmarked: "flowers"). Thank you.

Name(s) _____

Date _____

This offering is for Holy Week/Easter flowers _____ (check if appropriate)

This offering is for: _____ with prayers

For the health of: _____

In loving memory of: _____

Plan to be with us on
Saturday, April 27th

Lazarus Saturday

9:30 a.m. Service of Preparing the Holy Gifts

10 a.m. Liturgy

Followed by

Church School

Communion Brunch

(sign up during coffee hour or with a Sunday School Teacher)



Don't Miss It!

Sunday, May 5th at 12 noon

Agape Vespers &

St. Michael Church School

Easter Egg Hunt



(donations of candy for the Easter egg hunt would be appreciated;
Please see any Sunday School Teacher; thanks)

Are you interested in a PARISH CRUISE in 2003? Help us plan!

Please complete these questions and give to an Usher in Church on Sunday or mail to the Church office:

*St. Michael Orthodox Church
16643 Vanowen St.
Van Nuys, CA 91406
Attn: Parish Cruise*

1. Would you consider going on a cruise with others from the parish and our local sister churches? Y or N
2. If so, where would you prefer to go? (check only one response)
 - Hawaiian cruise (11 day/10 night)
 - Caribbean cruise (8 day/7 night)
 - Mediterranean cruise (11 day/10 night land & sea package)
 - Other location, specify _____
3. Do you look cute in cruise wear? (optional) _____

THANK YOU. WATCH THE HEAVENLY HOST FOR FURTHER DETAILS!

Catechism Bowl

Plans are being made for the Catechism Bowl to be held at the Western Region Parish Life Conference in San Diego during the July 4th, 2002 weekend. We have three teams; Junior, Senior and Adult. We will be studying the Book of Matthew.

Study times will be held every two weeks immediately after church. The Orthodox Study Bible will be used. Get involved. This is an enriching experience. Call Carrie Skaff to register at (818) 501-3477.

Western Region Conference 2002 Theme:

“Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren,
you did it to Me.” (Matthew 25:40)

Deadlines for eligibility for:

Festivals - May 1st,
Oratorical - June 1st and
Bible Bowl - June 1st.



From the Ladies Guild

Gift certificates are available each Sunday in the Community Center. A portion of each dollar is donated to our Church and is applied to our mortgage. Buy your scrip today!

You're all invited to sign up for Holy Bread & to host a coffee hour. Please call Leila Abu-Ghazaleh for more information on open dates at (805) 522-4797.

Spiritual Bouquets: Donations are offered in memory of the deceased in lieu of flowers. If you wish to participate, please see Jeannette About.

Pageant of the Masters: 45 people attended this year's event in Laguna. Make your reservations now for next year's event. Please contact Carrie Skaff at (818) 501-3477.

ST. MICHAEL ANTIOCHIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

V. Rev. Fr. Timothy Baclig, Pastor

16643 Vanowen Street
Van Nuys, CA 91406-4622

Phone: (818) 994-2313
Fax: (818) 994-2352
newsletter@stmichaelvannuys.com
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Pastoral Message, continued...

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can afford the time to do what his heart so desires. We make the time to spend our treasure upon what pleases ourselves. For our hearts reside where our treasure is.

And so, choosing to fast, choosing to pray, and choosing to do good deeds are the ways in which our church calls us to a therapy for changing our minds and hearts. Change, however, does not come easy. It requires a deep desire and a humble spirit. And when we are sincere, God does the rest. *May God grant us a spiritually rewarding season as we make our pilgrimage to the Holy Cross and Empty Tomb.*

Recipe of the Month

Butternut Squash Soup

1 Tbsp. vegetable or olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 lb butternut or other yellow winter squash, peeled, seeded, and cut into cubes
1 medium potato, peeled and cubed
1 tart cooking apple, peeled, cored, and cubed
2 cups vegetable stock* or water
2 cups apple juice or cider
½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground ginger
¼ tsp ground cumin
A grating of fresh nutmeg
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over moderate heat and cook the onion for 5 minutes, until tender but not brown. Add the remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer covered 15 to 20 minutes, until the potato and squash are tender. Carefully process in small batches in a food processor or electric blender until smooth. Garnish with an additional grating of fresh nutmeg, if desired. Serve hot.
Serves 4 to 6.

Vegetable Soup

1 large onion, sliced	3 celery stalks, chopped
2 medium carrots, chopped	2 large potatoes, diced
1 cup cabbage, shredded	2 Tbsp. parsley, chopped
8 cups cold water	1 bay leaf
1 tsp. thyme	6 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tsp. whole peppercorns	1 cup white rice

Combine all vegetable ingredients and water in a large soup pot and bring to a boil. In a cheesecloth or metal tea ball, combine bay leaf, thyme, garlic and peppercorns. Place herbs into pot, reduce heat and simmer for 40 minutes. Add rice and simmer another 20 minutes. Remove soup from heat and discard herbs. Serve hot.

Variation*: To make a basic vegetable stock, omit rice and simmer soup for 45 minutes. Cool the stock. Strain the vegetables, reserving them for another use. Discard herbs. Refrigerate or freeze the stock until ready to use.

Serves 8.