

# ONLINE RESOURCES Spring 2009

## GREEK ARCHDIOCESE WEBSITE

<http://www.goarch.org>

## BIBLE RESOURCES

1. **Bible Maps** - Google Bible Maps
2. **Crosswalk** – quickly locate Bible passages  
<http://www.biblestudytools.net/>

## CHURCH FATHERS <http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/>

## CHILDREN'S WEEKLY BULLETIN

<http://www.stnicholasorthodoxchristianschool.org/html/login.asp> published by St Nicholas Orthodox School Tarpon Springs, FL, register online

## CURRICULUM

1. **Antiochian Archdiocese** - lists what is available  
<http://www.antiochian.org/christianeducation>
2. **Greek Archdiocese** – [www.religioused.goarch.org](http://www.religioused.goarch.org)
3. **Orthodox Christian Education Commission**  
<http://www.orthodoxed.org/>
4. **Orthodox Church in America's FOCUS UNITS**  
<http://dce.oca.org>

## FAMILY

1. Greek Archdiocese **Center for Family Care**  
[www.familyaschurch.org](http://www.familyaschurch.org)
2. Archives for **Orthodox Family Life**  
<http://www.theologic.com/oflweb>

## ICONS – SITES FOR LEARNING ABOUT ICONS

1. **The Orthodox Church & Its Icons**  
<http://home.eg-gym.dk/fagene/religion/Ortodokse%20kirke/dox.html>
2. **Explanation of the Feast Day icons**  
[www.goarch.org](http://www.goarch.org) / Our Faith / Worship / Major Feasts of the Church

## LESSONS ONLINE

1. **Antiochian Gospel Program** – weekly, 5 levels  
<http://www.antiochian.org/christianeducation>
2. **Orthodox Education Center** - (David Elfering)  
<http://www.aroundomaha.com/sschool/>
3. **Saints, Sunday Gospels & Major Feast: 10 Q&A** for each Gospel Reading, Person, Event  
<http://www.orthodox.net/questions/index.html>
4. **Printable Weekly Lessons** - (Eve Tibbs; series Incomplete) - <http://www.orthodoxonline.com/>
5. **Church Architecture**  
<http://www.aroundomaha.com/sschool/>
6. **Divine Liturgy**  
<http://www.aroundomaha.com/sschool/>

## ONLINE ORTHODOX PROGRAMS

1. **Ancient Faith Radio** - 24-hour Orthodox, worldwide radio ministry on the teachings and music of the Orthodox faith <http://www.ancientfaith.com>
2. **The Ark** - 24-hour Internet radio—<http://receive.org/> Orthodox Christian Network (OCN), SCOBA agency

3. **Come Receive the Light Radio** <http://receive.org/> (CRTL) OCN's Syndicated Radio; Internet Archives
4. **Orthodox Word Podcast - Daily Scripture & Saints** <http://www.goarch.org/en/chapel/podcast.asp>

## PRINTED MATERIAL - MAGAZINES

1. **Children's Orthodox Parochial School Bulletin**  
To Register, go to  
[http://www.StNicholasOrthodoxChristianSchoolorg/html/childrens\\_bulletin.asp](http://www.StNicholasOrthodoxChristianSchoolorg/html/childrens_bulletin.asp)
2. **PRAXIS Magazine**  
<http://www.religioused.goarch.org/praxis.asp>
3. **LITTLE FALCONS Magazine** - Order Form  
[www.phyllisonest.com](http://www.phyllisonest.com)

## PROSPHORO - <http://www.prosphora.org/>

## SAINTS

1. **Greek Archdiocese**  
[http://www.goarch.org/chapel/saintfeast\\_search](http://www.goarch.org/chapel/saintfeast_search)
2. **Orthodox Church in America**  
<http://www.oca.org/FSlives.asp?SID=4>
3. **Prologue of Ochrid**  
<http://www.westsrbdio.org/prolog/prolog.htm>
4. **St. Nicholas Center** [Ecumenical] - Worldwide Traditions & stories -  
<http://www.stnicholascenter.org>
5. **God is Wonderful in His Saints**  
<http://www.abbamoses.com>

## SPECIAL SITES

1. **Ecumenical Patriarch**  
<http://www.ecupatriarchate.org/>
2. **TheoLogic Systems** - <http://www.theologic.com> currently under revision, check back
3. **Virtual Church Tour** of a church in Finland  
[www.ortodoksi.net/virtuaalikirkko/index.html](http://www.ortodoksi.net/virtuaalikirkko/index.html)
4. **Pascha Polyglotta** - <http://www.srbigham.com/> "Christ is Risen" in 250 languages  
<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Troy/1187/links.html>

## YOUTH WEBSITES & PODCASTS – NEW!

1. **RECALL** <http://www.orthodoxyouth.org/recall> - teen podcast
2. **SAINTS ALIVE** <http://games.goarch.org/> - interactive games and puzzles for kids ages 5 & up
3. **Orthodox Teen Online - OTTO** - Podcasts for teens <http://www.myocn.net/index.php/Orthodox-Teen-Talk-Online>
4. **Get Wisdom** - weekly Bible Study podcast for teens, young adults and families. Printable study guide. <http://www.myocn.net/index.php/Get-Wisdom/>
5. **ORTHODOX WORD PODCAST Regular Edition:**  
[www.annunciationakron.org/podcast/orthodoxword.xml](http://www.annunciationakron.org/podcast/orthodoxword.xml)  
A reading of the daily scriptures & saints.



# RESOURCES FOR GREAT LENT, HOLY WEEK & PASCHA

## DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

[www.religioused.goarch.org](http://www.religioused.goarch.org)

**Journey Through Holy Week** - Follow Christ and the Church through each stage of Holy Week - Saturday of Lazarus - Agape Vespers service. Author Stephania Gianulis pinpoints the relevance and meanings of the services, hymns, & scripture readings. Each page - icons, traditions, & history. Ages 10 & up. Retreats, church, home, or classroom. Zinestyle magazine \$3.95; 10 or more \$2.95.

## DEPARTMENT OF OUTREACH & EVANGELISM

<http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent.asp>

**Brochures** – Option: Go to the above URL and Scroll down.

1. Our Lenten Journey: *Preparing for the Passion & Resurrection of Our Lord* – 3 formats
2. [http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Our\\_Lenten\\_Journey.pdf](http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Our_Lenten_Journey.pdf)
3. Preparing for Confession by Fr. James Kordaris
4. <http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Confession.pdf>
5. The Great Fast by Metropolitan Isaiah
6. [http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/The\\_Great\\_Fast.pdf](http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/The_Great_Fast.pdf)
7. Repentance by Fr. Alexander Veronis  
<http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Repentance.pdf>
8. Holy Communion: *The Gift of Eternal Life* by Fr. Alkiviadis Calivas  
<http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Communion-Calivas.pdf>
9. All Things New in the Resurrection by Fr. Stanley S. Harakas  
<http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Resurrection.pdf>
10. The Paschal Homily of Saint John Chrysostom (*Trilingual: Greek-English-Spanish*)  
[http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Paschal\\_Homily.pdf](http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Paschal_Homily.pdf)
11. Lenten Study Program - St. Catherine, Greenwood Village  
[http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Lenten\\_study.pdf](http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent/brochures/Lenten_study.pdf)

**Sermons/Reflections** Go to the following URL & Scroll down.

<http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/departments/outreach/greatlent.asp>

1. [The Incarnation: A Revolution for Freedom](#) by Dr. Aristotle Papanikolaou
2. [My Soul Magnifies the Lord](#) by Fr. Thomas Paris
3. [God for Us: Why the Incarnation is Rational](#) by Dr. Aristotle Papanikolaou
4. [Blessed is that Servant Whom He Shall find Waiting: An Exhortation to Vigilance](#) by Fr. William Chiganos
5. [Focus Fasting](#) by Fr. Athanasios Demos
6. [The Precious and Life-Giving Cross](#) by Fr. Luke Veronis
7. [Holy Friday Reflection-The Train Bridge](#)
8. [Proclaim His Resurrection: Seven Miles with Jesus](#) by Fr Christopher Makiej

## [WWW.GOARCH.ORG](http://www.goarch.org)

### GREAT LENT AND HOLY PASCHA

All the following articles are found at - <http://www.goarch.org/ourfaith/pascha>

1. [And Then They Will Fast](#) by His Eminence Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver
2. [The Origins of Pascha and Great Week](#) by Rev. Alkiviadis C. Calivas, Th.D
3. [On Fasting](#) by His Eminence Metropolitan Maximos of Pittsburgh
4. [Fasting from Iniquities and Foods](#) by Rev. George Mastrantonis
5. [THE GREAT LENT - A Week by Week Meaning](#) by Rev. George Mastrantonis

6. [First Sunday of Lent: The Sunday of Orthodoxy](#)
7. [Recommended Lenten Reading](#)
8. [Seeing and Believing: The Thomas Incident \(John 20:24-29\)](#) by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios Trakatellis
9. [The Sanctification of the Holy Chrism](#) by Pavlos Menesoglou
10. [Holy Week Meditation and Study Guide](#) by Fr. Andrew Demotses
11. [Holy Week in the Eastern Orthodox Church](#) by Rev. George Mastrantonis
12. [The Saturday of Lazarus and Palm Sunday](#) by Rev. Alkiviadis C. Calivas, Th.D.
13. [Great Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday](#)
14. [Great Thursday](#)
15. [Great Friday](#)
16. [The Great and Holy Saturday](#)
17. [The Origins of Pascha and Great Week - Part I](#) by Rev. Alkiviadis C. Calivas
18. [The Origins of Pascha and Great Week - Part II](#) by Rev. Alkiviadis C. Calivas
19. [The Liturgical Cycle of the Great Lenten Period](#) by Rev. Pavlos Koumarios, Ph.D.
20. [THE MEANING OF THE GREAT FAST: The True Nature of Fasting](#) by Mother Mary and Bishop Kallistos Ware

**HOLY WEEK - <http://www.lent.goarch.org/>**

Includes the [1] Story, [2] an Explanation of the Icons & How the events are celebrated, [3] the hymns of the Feast, and [4] References.

- **Saturday of Lazarus** [http://www.lent.goarch.org/saturday\\_of\\_lazarus/learn/](http://www.lent.goarch.org/saturday_of_lazarus/learn/)
- **Palm Sunday** [http://www.lent.goarch.org/palm\\_sunday/learn/](http://www.lent.goarch.org/palm_sunday/learn/)
- **Bridegroom Services** [http://www.lent.goarch.org/bridegroom\\_services/learn/](http://www.lent.goarch.org/bridegroom_services/learn/)
- **Holy Unction** [http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy\\_wednesday/learn/](http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy_wednesday/learn/)
- **Holy Thursday** [http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy\\_thursday/learn/](http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy_thursday/learn/)
- **Holy Friday** [http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy\\_friday/learn/](http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy_friday/learn/)
- **Holy Saturday** [http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy\\_saturday/learn/](http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy_saturday/learn/)
- **Great and Holy Pascha** [http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy\\_pascha/learn/](http://www.lent.goarch.org/holy_pascha/learn/)

**DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES**

<http://listserv.goarch.org/scripts/wa.exe?A0=YOUTH>

**YOUTH RETREATS**

- **Holy Friday retreats:**  
<http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/departments/youth/youthworkers/sessions/>
- **Session: What's up with the Resurrection?** by Khalil Samara  
[http://www.lent.goarch.org/youth/session\\_resurrection.asp](http://www.lent.goarch.org/youth/session_resurrection.asp)
- **Retreat: The Resurrection** by Khalil Samara  
<http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/youth/youthworkers/sessions/resurrection>

**ACTIVITIES AND CRAFTS:**

- **Pascha (Easter) baskets**  
<http://www.theologic.com/oflweb/lentpask/basket.htm>  
<http://htaoc.com/parish/ministries/traditions/baskets.html>  
<http://yya.o.ca.org/TheHub/Activities/Crafts/BPcrafts.htm#terrarium>
- **Pretzel bread (can be used to teach concept of Christ's Resurrection)**  
<http://yya.o.ca.org/TheHub/Activities/Recipes/BPPrecipes.htm>
- **Red Easter eggs**  
<http://www.o.ca.org/QA.asp?ID=98&SID=3>

**BRIGHT WEEK & PENTECOSTARION** The week after Pascha is known as Bright Week, or Renewal Week, and is viewed by the Church as one continual day of joyful celebration. After Bright Week, the Church enters the period of the Pentecostarion, or the period between Easter and Pentecost.

- **Icons of Bright Week feasts and Pascha season feasts**  
<http://www.oca.org/FSicons-churchyear.asp?SID=4&Section=bright>
- **The Pentecostarion (the period between Pascha and Pentecost)**  
<http://www.anastasis.org.uk/pentecos.htm>

**My Website** [www.phyllisonest.com](http://www.phyllisonest.com)

**ARTICLES ON ORTHODOX FAMILY LIFE** – Go to website, click onto category, click onto title.

1. **Getting the Most Out of Lent**
2. **A Family Lesson: How Will We Prepare for Pascha?**
3. **Holy Unction**
4. **Pascha vs. Easter, Eggs, Bunnies & Baskets**

## LENT & PASCHA RESOURCES

### Articles About...

- **“GREAT LENT”** by Fr. George Shalhoub plus a Lesson Plan - Spring '05 ([PDF](#))
- **“Planning for Great Lent in the Church School”** by Dr. John Boojamra – Spring '04 ([PDF](#))

### Books, Leaflets, etc.

- **Getting Ready for Holy Week & Pascha** - Book ([PDF](#))
- **A Young Person's Guide to the Lenten & Holy Week Services** - Leaflet Spring '07/'08 ([PDF](#))

### Bulletin Board Ideas

- **Paschal Greetings in Various Languages** - Spring '00 ([PDF](#))

### Cards (ex. Orthodox Prison Ministry)

- **Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry Information Sheet** - ([PDF](#))
- **“Pascha Card”** - Spring 05 ([PDF](#))

### Confession

- **“Sacrament of Penance and the Younger Child”** by Dr. Constance Tarasar -Spring '01 ([PDF](#))

### Games

- **Our Journey to Pascha** - Spring '00 Questions ([PDF](#)) - Game Board ([PDF](#))
- **“PASCHA EGGS: The Resurrection Story for Orthodox Christian Children”**  
Directions for Assembly & Booklet – 2007 Edition ([PDF](#))

### Lesson Plan Ideas

- **Lenten Resource List** in the **“Yellow Pages for Religious Education”**([PDF](#))
- **Holy Week & Pascha Recall** - Spring '06 ([PDF](#))
- **Quotes to Remember: A Holy Week Bible Study** - Spring'05 ([PDF](#))
- **Icons & Hymns of Holy Week** - Spring '07([PDF](#))
- **IOCC Children's Lenten Project** - Fall '99([PDF](#))
- **Pascha Egg Hunt with a Message** - Classroom Activity - Spring '04([PDF](#))
- **Pascha Lesson Cookie Recipe** - Spring '00 ([PDF](#))
- **Preparing Our Children for Holy Week Services & Pascha** - Spring '07/'08([PDF](#))
- **Resurrection Witness Reports** Classroom Activity - Spring '02 Newsletter page 2 ([PDF](#))

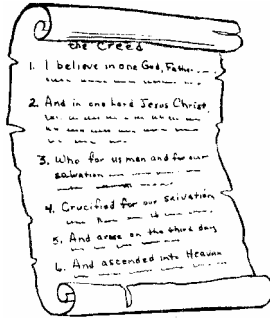
### 40-Day Activities

- **A Lenten Bouquet**(PS - First grade) - Spring '05 ([PDF](#))
- **Lenten Treasure Chest & Coins**(Grades 2-6) - Lenten Home Activity - Spring '05 ([PDF](#))
- **Our Lenten Journey Begins** Puzzle for younger children - Spring '06 ([PDF](#))
- **“Pascha Egg Collecting” Basket** - Lenten activity Spring '06 ([PDF](#))
- **“Shamrock Bag”** Lenten Home Activity - Spring '04 ([PDF](#))

### Miscellaneous

- **Orthodoxy Sunday Procession flyer** - March '07 Update ([DOC](#))





# RESOURCES FOR THE CREED

1. **Book of Saints** who helped either define the Christian Faith (the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Ecumenical Councils) or fought to maintain the Faith. Compiled by Phyllis Meshel Onest. Contact Phyllis at [pmonest@neo.rr.com](mailto:pmonest@neo.rr.com) for the file.
2. **Little Falcons** children's magazine issue the **CREED**. Cost is \$5. Go to [www.phyllisonest.com](http://www.phyllisonest.com) for the order form.
3. **The Creed** – Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Department of Religious Education. Pupil's textbook & Teacher's Manual. [www.religioused.goarch.org](http://www.religioused.goarch.org)
4. **The Credo - Creed Curriculum** by Camp St. Raphael, Wagoner, OK. Downloadable at <http://www.orthodoxcamps.org/resources/christianed.html>
5. **Introducing the Orthodox Church: Its Faith & Life** by Fr. Anthony Coniaris. Chapter on the Creed. A separate Study Guide available. [www.light-n-life.com](http://www.light-n-life.com)
6. **Nicene Creed**: A fill-in-the-blank puzzle to teach the Creed. <http://www.synaxis.org/catechist/index.htm>
7. **The Nicene Creed for Young People** by Fr. Anthony Coniaris includes a study guide with questions & discussion starters. [www.light-n-life.com](http://www.light-n-life.com)
8. **Orthodox Christian Theology: Questions & Answers**. Section on the Creed. Website of St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, McKinney (Dallas area) Texas. <http://www.orthodox.net/questions/index.html>
9. **The Orthodox Church – Vol 2. Doctrine** by Fr. Thomas Hopko.
10. **Our Faith** section of the Greek Archdiocese's website <http://www.goarch.org/ourfaith/introduction>
11. **The Way, The Truth, The Life** (first section) Orthodox Christian Education Committee [OCEC] – Pupil's textbook & Teacher's Manual. <http://www.orthodoxed.org>



**THE BIBLE IN  
50 WORDS**

**God made  
Adam bit  
Noah arked  
Abraham split  
Joseph ruled  
Jacob fooled  
Bush talked  
Moses balked  
Pharaoh  
plagued  
People walked  
Sea divided  
Tablets guided  
Promise landed  
Saul freaked  
David peeked  
Prophets  
warned  
Jesus born  
God walked  
Love talked  
Anger crucified  
Hope died  
Love rose  
Spirit flamed  
Word spread  
God remained**

**THE BIBLE IN  
50 WORDS**

**God made  
Adam bit  
Noah arked  
Abraham split  
Joseph ruled  
Jacob fooled  
Bush talked  
Moses balked  
Pharaoh  
plagued  
People walked  
Sea divided  
Tablets guided  
Promise landed  
Saul freaked  
David peeked  
Prophets  
warned  
Jesus born  
God walked  
Love talked  
Anger crucified  
Hope died  
Love rose  
Spirit flamed  
Word spread  
God remained**

**THE BIBLE IN  
50 WORDS**

**God made  
Adam bit  
Noah arked  
Abraham split  
Joseph ruled  
Jacob fooled  
Bush talked  
Moses balked  
Pharaoh  
plagued  
People walked  
Sea divided  
Tablets guided  
Promise landed  
Saul freaked  
David peeked  
Prophets  
warned  
Jesus born  
God walked  
Love talked  
Anger crucified  
Hope died  
Love rose  
Spirit flamed  
Word spread  
God remained**



*To be effective teachers, we need to understand the developmental stages of our students. We need to know what their limits so [1] we do not expect more than they can do and [2] they do not become frustrated with ideas they cannot comprehend. In addition, always remember that the Orthodox faith is an experiential faith, one of worship. We are to experience, and then talk about it. (Liturgy and Life: Christian Development through Liturgical Experience by Alexander Schmemmann) Phyllis Meshel Onest*

## ***Early Childhood Religious Development (5-7)***

**Understanding of Church:** At this age, church is understood strictly as the church building.

**Understanding of God:** God is willingly recognized as "the one who made everything" when this is stated by adults. Jesus Christ is recognized as someone who was very good and helped people.

**Understanding of Prayer:** On one hand, prayers and church rites are perceived as obligations imposed by parents. On the other hand there is willing acceptance of the automatic and magical validity of prayer.

**Understanding of Symbolism:** The symbolism of things is readily acceptable, i.e., a stick is a gun, etc. But the symbolic meaning of stories is often interpreted quite irrelevantly.

**Understanding of Moralism:** At this stage, evil is identified with the material harm done, with parental or social disapproval, with the severity of the punishment. Any injustice or hurt to oneself is strongly felt, but there is little perception of hurting others or of being unjust to them. Good is identified with approval.

### ***In a nutshell:***

1. All the information should be built around what the children perceive by their senses.
2. The purpose of telling them Bible and saint stories is to accumulate impressions and preliminary ideas of what God does.

### ***Ideas for teaching:***

1. Arrange visits to the church when there are no services going on when the children can touch and examine all they see.
2. Train students in the physical aspects of church behavior: sign of the cross, kneeling, kissing an icon, putting up a candle, approaching Holy Communion.
3. Concepts that can be taught include the sign of the cross, Bible stories preparing for the concept of the Holy Trinity (creation, icon of the visit of the three angels, God speaking to Moses on the mountain), Bible stories from the New Testament (Nativity, Epiphany, Jesus and the children, calming the tempest, healing the paralytic, Jesus and Zaccheus, entry to Jerusalem, Last Supper, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost).
4. Short prayer sentences enable the children to join in liturgical worship: "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;" "Lord have mercy," "Glory to You, O Lord," "Alleluia," "Grant this O Lord," and others.
5. Short prayers can be memorized by singing or reciting them in class.
6. Children can be encouraged to make up simple prayers and "litanies" of their own, asking God for what they need and thanking Him.
7. It is also appropriate to prepare lists of names of family and friends to be remembered in individual prayer or during Divine Liturgy.

### **Source:**

Koulomzin, Sophie. Our Church and Our Children. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 1975.

Reprinted from "A Child's Spiritual Journey," Youth Pulse Worker, 9/6/07

## ***Middle Childhood Religious Development (8-10)***

**Understanding of the Church:** At this point, church is mainly perceived as church services. Attitude to attending church services is considerably influenced by the degree of the child's active participation and understanding.

**Understanding of God:** Children try to see God in terms of their rather primitive rationalism, moving away from the realistic fantasy of earlier childhood. His omnipotence and justice, in rather primitive terms, is readily recognized. They tend to accept unquestioningly the existence of God, as well as simple "cause and effect" doctrine, but it is difficult for them to perceive the presence of God in their daily lives. Christ is perceived as a unique person who can work miracles. There is curiosity about the material means of the miracles more than about their meaning.

**Understanding of Prayer and the Sacraments:** The child's attitude to prayer wavers between formally observing rules imposed by parents and a belief in the magic power of prayer. The more mature children of this age are conscious of certain limitations for what one should pray. Thought most Orthodox children partake of the sacraments of the Eucharist and Confession, the meaning of the sacraments is not clearly understood.

**Understanding of Symbolism:** Children begin to understand the symbolism of parables and narratives if they deal with actions and feelings within their experience. They are ready to see that a story told about someone can apply to what I feel and what I do.

**Understanding of Moralism:** Clear-cut moral rules and standards are easily accepted and the authority of parents is readily recognized. Concept of justice is primitive and harsh. Attitudes are strongly egocentric. Gradually, however, the capacity to recognize one's own fault, to experience repentance and compassion, can become stronger. Evil is still evaluated according to its material gravity and social reprobation.

### ***In a nutshell:***

1. The main concept to teach here is that our church services have a structure and everything said and done has a meaning.
2. At this stage, it is appropriate to teach the meaning of familiar prayers (Lord's Prayer) in terms of their own life experience (i.e., *what happened when I was baptized? What can we bring as our gifts to God?*).
3. \*The purpose of studying the Lord's Prayer is not its memorization, but making the petitions come alive in examples from the children's experience.
4. Everything should be done to convey the importance and impressiveness of God giving a Law. Since children frequently ask about the Church's rules, they are ready for a concept of disciplined behavior. Its meaning for Christian growth has to be explained.

### ***Ideas for teaching:***

1. Teaching methods can include audio-visual aids to map out the structure and meaning of each part of the Liturgy.
2. Best teaching methods are to illustrate stories from Old and New Testaments about how God acts in our life - in the past and today creatively. Bible stories can include the story of Exodus, with emphasis on how God taught Moses to know Him; also, the study of the Twelve Great Feasts and their New Testament readings are useful for curriculum.
3. Children should be given the opportunity to see the sacrament of Baptism performed.
4. New Testament parables adapt themselves very well to dramatization by children. In acting them out, children express their own interpretation of the feelings involved.
5. mural concerning Exodus can involve the work of the whole class, or the students could make models of stone tablets, or the teacher could show a movie.

### ***Source:***

Koulomzin, Sophie. Our Church and Our Children. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 1975.

## ***Late Childhood Religious Development (11-13)***

**Understanding of the Church:** Children begin to perceive meanings beyond the external rites, but are still confused about them. More and more they need to involve themselves in action within the Church. Need to identify with a few friends or with an adult leader with the church. They experience conflict between their loyalty to their church and their loyalty to the society of their friends outside the church. They attempt to find rational explanations of the plurality of Christian groups and of religions. More and more they tend to feel that people believe in many different ways and that all ways can be good. The division between the world of the church and the world of everyday concerns grows sharper.

**Understanding of God:** Children have trouble in adjusting their earlier ideas of God as a kind of glorified Santa Claus to more spiritual concepts. There is danger of their beginning to see "god," "miracles," and "long ago" in contrast to "absence of God," "natural law," and "modern living," with little relation between these two worlds. Jesus Christ is perceived rather as a historical person than as a "Savior," with little sense of a personal relation to Him. Theological thought structures, if they are brief and clear, are readily perceived and accepted.

**Understanding of prayer:** Prayer as an imposed obligation tends to be discarded. "Magic" attitude is still quite strong. Prayers grow less selfish, needs of others are remembered. As children grow more conscious of life's pressures, prayers for protection, for becoming a better person, for forgiveness, become more meaningful and authentic. They are more ready to understand the meaning of sacraments as related to actual needs in daily life.

**Understanding of Symbolism:** Children are now ready to understand the true symbolism of rites and narratives. There is growing interest in discovering meanings, though these meanings must be well within the reach of their comprehension.

**Understanding of Moralism:** Moral sense is still mainly determined by approval or disapproval, but there is a clearer perception of the concept of love in relationships. Though the law of the group is still supreme, a subjectivism begins to develop, which may lead to the rejection of law. There is a tendency to feel dissatisfied with oneself. It is very difficult to establish standards of moral "good taste," given the pressure of standards imposed by our mass media and the desire of the youngsters to imitate older teenagers.

### ***In a nutshell:***

1. The greatest need in this stage is to be able to carry over into the realm of relationships (family, school community) the concepts of Christian faith.
2. Sin is more than "breaking a rule." They can begin to perceive the freedom of choice and the responsibility for the choice that they bear.
3. Moral values are best presented by telling about persons and their actions, then discussing moral rules.
4. This is the stage for the study of the sacraments (rites, meaning, and some historical background) as well as for introductory concepts of church history.
5. As a first step towards dealing with the problem of Christian plurality, we can help children overcome parochialism within the Orthodox Church. Visits, followed by discussions, can be arranged to other Orthodox churches (i.e., Russian, Antiochian, Ukrainian, etc).
6. Concepts to be touched upon at this age include who is God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; what is heaven; how does God show Himself to others and to me, etc.

### ***Ideas for teaching:***

- ✘ In an effort to make liturgical texts more meaningful, children can be encouraged to put them in their own words. Children's litanies, hymns and troparia can be made up.
- ✘ Children can also be encouraged to "re-tell" parables in terms of modern life, using objects and actions from today to express the symbolic meaning of the parable.
- ✘ The concept of the Trinity can be taught through the Genesis story of Creation; also, the Old Testament concept of God can be compared to how other religions of that time viewed God.
- ✘ Biblical situations involving moral conflict can now be presented (Noah's sons, tower of Babel, conflict of Jacob and Esau, Pontius Pilate, St. Paul) as well as lives of saints involving conflict.

## ***Adolescent Religious Development***

Make their own decisions, leading to a resentful attitude towards parents and adult authority in general. The teen needs "security in freedom," so the Church has to be protective without being repressive. Under the best of circumstances, the Church means to adolescents sympathetic adults whom they love and respect. Occasionally they begin to feel a deeper closeness to God during the church services. The sacrament of Confession becomes more difficult to approach and yet more meaningful. Church pluralism is recognized as a problem and it causes confusion.

**Understanding of God:** God is conceived in more abstract and spiritual terms. Divine communication is thought of rather as internal, subjective in the person receiving it. Yet the less intellectually mature students cling to their childish concepts. Many even stop thinking about religion before they consciously reject it. Content of much religious teaching is felt to be "childish."

**Understanding of prayer:** Adolescents are able to recognize the effect of prayer on the one who prays. Personal prayer, no longer imposed by parental discipline, is often given up as a daily habit, but occasional prayers can be sincere and deep.

**Understanding of Symbolism:** Religious symbolism, whether in liturgical services, in narratives or in doctrine, can be fully understood, especially towards the end of adolescence. Rational thought and symbolism can fruitfully complement each other in the presentation of Christian doctrine.

**Understanding of Moralism:** [There is a] tendency to discard moral standards determined by approval or disapproval of adults. Interest in discovering one's own standard of right and wrong.

### ***In a nutshell:***

1. An adolescent's church life either begins to wither, or can become a more personal and real experience. He should be exposed to experiences of worship made meaningful at his level.
2. The adolescent should begin to share in some real responsibilities of parish life. The meaning of participation in church life can be made clearer by exposing adolescents to experiences carried out on their level.
3. The major emphasis should be on the "why?" of moral laws. Can any of the rules of childhood be discarded? Which ones remain valid?

### ***Ideas for teaching:***

1. Thoughts about God can be clarified and nurtured by the study of biblical passages, both Old and New Testaments, about the action of God in the life of individuals.
2. The study of individual lives of saints (Paul, Seraphim of Sarov, Gregory Palamas) in whose lives God's action can be perceived.
3. Symbolism of the sacraments can now be studied not just as external rites, but also as images of the meaning of the sacrament.
4. Study of church history can provide some understanding of the church situation today.
5. Teenage retreats, with a complete daily cycle of worship involving their participation, are beneficial at this stage.
6. Other ideas: junior choir, duties during worship, volunteer work for church, other methods of being involved.
7. Another idea is to have adolescents compose prayers of their own, or re-word some of the liturgical prayers that are hard to understand.
8. Teaching content at this stage could include a study of short passages on prayer from the writings of Church Fathers and modern Orthodox writers.

### ***More resources on religious development***

#### ***Books:***

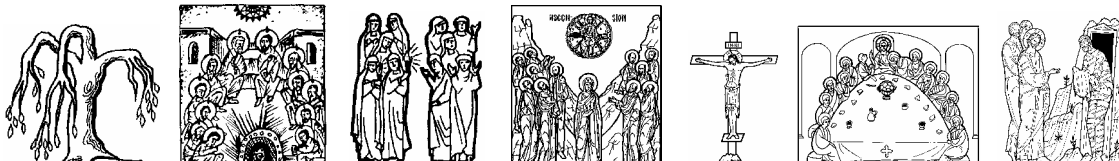
1. *Stages of Faith: Psychology of Human Development* by James Fowler
2. *The Spiritual Life of Children* by Robert Coles
3. *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian* by James Fowler
4. *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith* by Catherine Stonehouse
5. *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence* by Roehlkepartain, King, and Wagener

# JOURNEY THROUGH HOLY WEEK

## \* Test Your Knowledge

**DIRECTIONS:** *Column 1* lists the days when special events are celebrated in the life of the Orthodox Church. *Column 2* lists the events that occurred or we do on those days today in order to remember what did occur, but they are not in correct order. Match *Column 2* with the event in *Column 1* by placing the correct letter next to the matching number.

	<b>COLUMN 1 DAY OBSERVED</b>	<b>COLUMN 2 EVENT</b>
1. ___	Day before Palm Sunday	A. Christ ascends to the Father.
2. ___	Palm Sunday	B. Holy Unction
3. ___	Holy Monday	C. Christ rests in the tomb
4. ___	Holy Tuesday	D. Lazarus is raised from the dead.
5. ___	Holy Wednesday	E. Pentecost (The Holy Spirit Descends)
6. ___	Holy Thursday	F. Jesus enters Jerusalem as a king.
7. ___	Holy Friday	G. Christ rises from the dead.
8. ___	Holy Saturday	H. The Parable of the 10 maidens
9. ___	Pascha	I. A fig tree withers.
10. ___	40 days after Pascha	J. The Mystical Supper occurs.
11. ___	50 days after Pascha	K. Christ is crucified.
* HINT: check your church calendar		<i>Reprinted from the Educational Mailings of the Department of Christian Education, Orthodox Church in America, February 1990.</i>





## HEALING SAINTS REMEMBERED IN THE UNCTION SERVICE

[www.abbamoses.com](http://www.abbamoses.com) edited by Phyllis Meshel Onest

### † Holy and Wonderworking Unmercenary Cosmas and Damian of Asia Minor (3rd c.) Nov 1

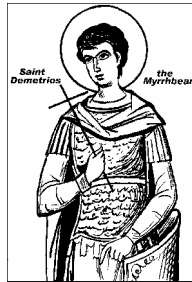


Three pairs of *Unmercenary Physicians (Anargyri)* named Cosmas and Damian are commemorated (also on October 17, and on July 1). The two commemorated

November 1 lived near Ephesus in Asia Minor. They were of noble birth and well-educated in all the branches of higher learning; but they turned away from worldly knowledge to practice medicine without charge for anyone who sought their help, caring for the rich as well as poor, and even for animals. They used none of the secular tools of medicine, but relied only on the Name of Christ, by which **they performed countless healings**. Both reposed in peace.

### † Holy, Glorious and Great Martyr Demetrios the Myrrhbearer (306) October 26

He was born of noble parents in the city of Thessalonica. His wisdom and distinction in battle earned him rapid advancement in the service of the Empire: in time, he was commander of all the Roman forces in Thessaly, and Proconsul of Hellas. Despite these worldly honors, Demetrios put his Christian faith before all and by his words and example brought many pagans to faith in Christ.



When the Emperor Maximian, a persecutor of Christians, came to Thessalonica, he appointed games and public sacrifices to celebrate his recent victory over the Scythians. Some jealous pagans used the visit to denounce Demetrios

to the Emperor. Maximian had Demetrios cast into a fetid [stinking] cell in the basement of some nearby baths. Maximian had brought with him a huge barbarian of tremendous strength named Lyaios, who fought many men in the arena and defeated them all, to the entertainment of the Emperor and the crowds.

A young Christian named **Nestor** determined to show the people that the only true strength is in Christ, visited Demetrios in his cell and asked his blessing to challenge Lyaios to combat. The Martyr made the sign of the Cross over Nestor and sent him to the arena with his blessing. Nestor, a young boy, cried out before the Emperor 'God of Demetrios, help me!' To the astonishment of the crowd, he quickly killed the mighty Lyaios. The infuriated Emperor had Nestor slain with his own sword and sent soldiers to Demetrios' cell, where they killed him with their spears.

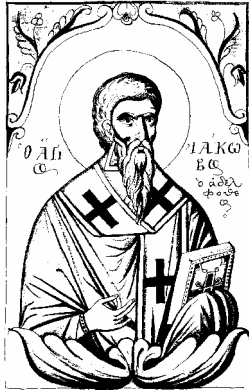
Demetrios' servant, a believer named Lupus, retrieved Demetrios' body and buried it with honor. He kept the Saint's ring and bloodstained tunic, and through them several miracles and healings occurred. When the Emperor heard of this, he had Lupus beheaded, too. As a sign of the grace that rested on the holy Demetrios, after his **death fragrant myrrh flowed abundantly from the Martyr's body, healing many of the sick**. St Demetrios has been a patron Saint of Thessalonica for many centuries.

### † Holy Hieromartyrs Hermolaus (305), Hermippus, and Hermocrates at Nicomedia July 26

These priests in Nicomedia. Hermolaus converted St Panteleimon (July 27) to Christ. When Maximian asked who had turned him from the idols, St Panteleimon named Hermolaus. (The Great Horologion notes that it had been revealed to Panteleimon that the time of Hermolaus' martyrdom was near at hand). St Hermolaus, along with Sts Hermippus and Hermocrates were arrested

when they proclaimed Christ to be the only true God. All were beheaded. **St Hermolaus, along with his disciple St Panteleimon, is counted as one of the Unmercenary Physicians.**

† **Holy Apostle James, the Brother of the Lord & First Bishop of Jerusalem**  
(63) Oct 23



His Hebrew name is Jacob. He was a close relative of Christ, and was therefore called, according to the Jewish usage of the time, his "brother." Some accounts say that he was a child of Joseph by his first marriage; others accounts say that he was the son of Joseph's brother

Cleopas and his wife Mary, who was first cousin of the Theotokos. He took the Nazirite vows of one completely consecrated to God according to the Law, and from a young age called "the Just." He is called James the Lesser in Scripture (Mark 15:40) to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee, "James the Greater." The Apostles appointed him first Bishop of Jerusalem. He presided at the earliest Council of the Church in Jerusalem, where he resolved the problem of how to receive gentile converts into the Church (see Acts 15). He wrote the New Testament Epistle bearing his name that primarily addressed Jewish converts to the Faith. About the year 62, he ascended to the peak of the Temple in Jerusalem on Passover, and there bore witness to Christ so effectively that the people cried out "Hosanna to the Son of David." At this, the Scribes and Pharisees, fearing that all the people would be converted to Christ, cast him down to the ground. By God's grace, he survived long enough to rise, kneel and pray, like his Master, "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do." He was then clubbed to death by one of the scribes.

**The first Epistle reading of the Unction Service, James 5:10-16, contains the verse related to anointing with oil. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." James 5:14**

† **Repose of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist St John the Theologian**  
September 26



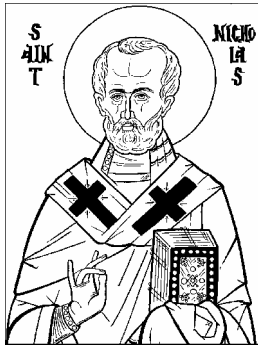
The holy Apostle was, by the world's reckoning, the nephew of our Savior, since his mother Salome was the daughter of St Joseph the Betrothed. Called 'the beloved disciple, St John was the only one of Christ's

disciples to follow Him to the Cross. The Savior entrusted the care of His most holy mother the Theotokos to John. He became like another son to her, providing for her care until the day of her repose. He preached the Gospel of Christ throughout Asia Minor, especially in Ephesus. During the persecutions of the Emperor Domitian, he was taken in bonds to Rome, where he was subjected to various tortures; but when he emerged from these miraculously unharmed, he was exiled to the island of Patmos, where he wrote the book of Revelation. After the death of Domitian, he returned to Ephesus and wrote his Gospel and Epistles. He is called the Theologian because of the theological expression in his New Testament writings.

**May 8** commemorates a miracle that took place at his grave every year in Ephesus. The Apostle reposed when he was more than one hundred years old; he was the only one of the Apostles not to die a martyr. Knowing that his death approached, he took seven of his disciples and told them to dig a grave in the form of a cross. He then lay

down in the grave and died, and was buried by his disciples. When the faithful later opened his grave, they found it to be empty. **However, on this date every year a fine powder, called manna by the people, poured forth from the grave, and was used by the faithful for healing of ailments of body and soul.**

† Saints Nicholas the Wonderworker,  
Archbishop of Myra (345) December 6



Our beloved Holy Father Nicholas is, along with St George (and second to the All-holy Theotokos), probably the best-loved Saint of the Church. **His miracles on behalf of the countless Christians who have called on him through**

**the ages are numberless.**

He was born in Lycia (in Asia Minor) to pious Christian parents around the end of the third century. From early youth he was inclined to solitude and silence; ... ordained a priest by his uncle, Archbishop Nicholas,

When his parents died, he gave away all of his inheritance to the needy, and thereafter almsgiving was his greatest glory. He always took particular care that his charity was in secret. Perhaps the most famous story a debt-ridden man who had no money to provide dowries for his daughters, On three successive nights the Saint threw a bag of gold into the window of the man's house, saving him and his daughters ...

**God honored his faithfulness by granting him unparalleled gifts of healing and wonderworking.** Several times, he calmed storms with his prayers and saved the ship in which he sailed. Through the centuries, he has often done the same for sailors who called out to him, and is thus considered the *patron of sailors and all who go to sea.*

His election as Bishop of Myra occurred not long before the great persecutions under Diocletian and Maximian

(c. 305). Although imprisoned, he continued to encourage his flock in the Faith. When the Arian heresy besieged the Church not long after Constantine came to the throne, St Nicholas was one of the 318 Bishops who gathered in Nicea in 325. ...

While still in the flesh, he *sometimes miraculously appeared in distant places to save the lives of the faithful.* He once saved the city of Myra from famine by appearing to the captain of a ship full of grain, telling him to take his cargo to the city. ...

The holy bishop reposed in peace around 345. His holy relics are in a church built in his honor in Myra. Pilgrims come to venerate his relics every year. In 1087, after the Saracens conquered Myra, the Saint's relics went to Bari in southern Italy, where they are venerated today. **Every year, quantities of fragrant myrrh collect from the casket containing his holy relics.**

† Holy Great-Martyr and Healer  
Panteleimon (305) July 27

Panteleimon was born in Nicomedia; his father was a pagan, his mother a Christian. She taught him the Christian Faith and St Hermolaus baptized him (July 26). He became a physician, and practiced his art with compassion and generosity, **healing many more through his**



**prayers as by his medicines.** His parents had named him Pantoleon ("in all things a lion"), but because of his great compassion, he was re-named Panteleimon ("all-merciful"). He once healed a man of blindness by calling on Christ, which led the once-blind man to embrace the Faith. When asked how he was healed, he named Panteleimon as his healer and proclaimed his newfound faith in Christ. For this, the pagans executed him, and then arrested Panteleimon, who after many tortures beheaded him in 305. He is counted as the **foremost of the Unmercenary Physicians.**



# PASCHA SYMBOLS

Symbols are a shorthand method of evoking an idea or an object. There are all kinds of symbols: flags, maps, traffic signs, etc. Even colors have symbolic meanings: white for purity, black for mourning, purple for royalty, yellow for cowardice. The Rainbow is a symbol, too.

Symbols are visual reminders that call to mind concrete and abstract ideas. A symbol has only the meaning which people give it. They are powerful because of their associations. The symbols chosen here extend from Palm Sunday through Pentecost.

The definitions follow the symbol cards. Go to [www.phyllisonest.com](http://www.phyllisonest.com) / Games / Feast Day Game Options - Spring '04 ([PDF](#)). These classroom activities and games can be adapted for use with the PASCHA SYMBOLS.

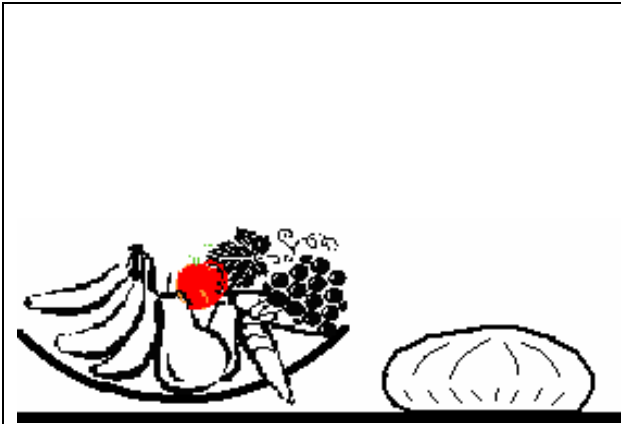
## MATERIALS - Suggestions

1. Bible for reading the verses.
2. SYMBOLS copied onto card stock. Laminating
3. Colored markers or pencils to color the pictures of the symbols.
4. Paper cutter or Scissors to cut the symbols cards.
5. A rubber band, zipper lunch bag, envelope or appropriate container to keep the cards together.
6. Place the SYMBOL DEFINITIONS in Sheet Protectors to keep them clean, easy to find, able to file in a notebook.

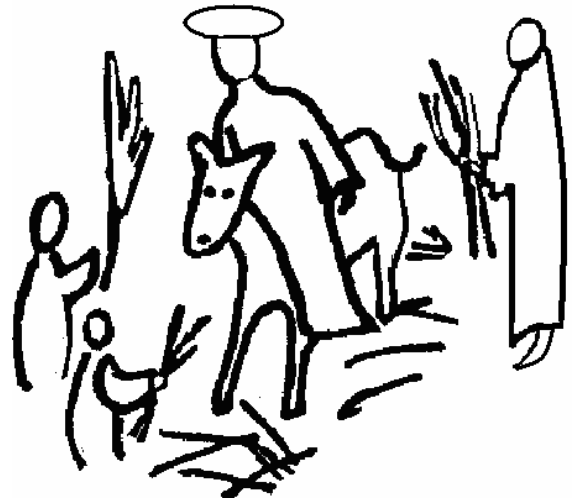
## DIRECTIONS:

1. Color the cards,
2. Cut the 24 cards into uniform size - 3"x5".
3. Laminate or place between 2 sheets of clear contact paper, or 3"-4" wide clear packaging tape. [Take care the tape is not creased.]
4. Read over the variety of Pascha Symbols Games and select what will work best for your students.

Joan J. Philosophos of Chicago, IL developed this project, providing all the original drawings and text as it appeared in *A Resource Handbook for Great Lent and Pascha* compiled by Phyllis Meshel Onest in 1989 for the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Pittsburgh. Pauline Shiolas Sarantopoulos, Religious Education Committee Chair. This version of the project has updated artwork and edited text by Phyllis Meshel Onest, Director of the Office of Religious Education, Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, 2009. Joan Philosophos' drawings: 2,4,5,6,7,10,11,12,13,14,19,22,23.



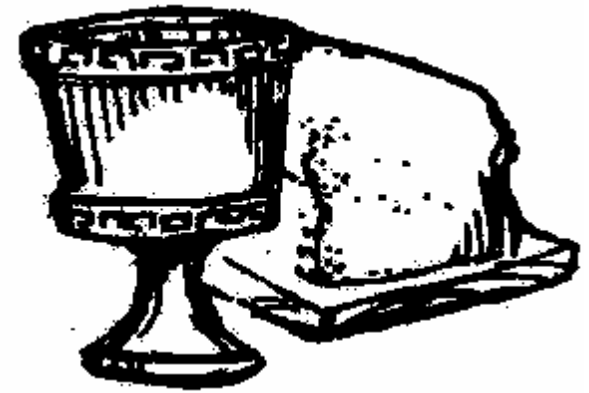
1



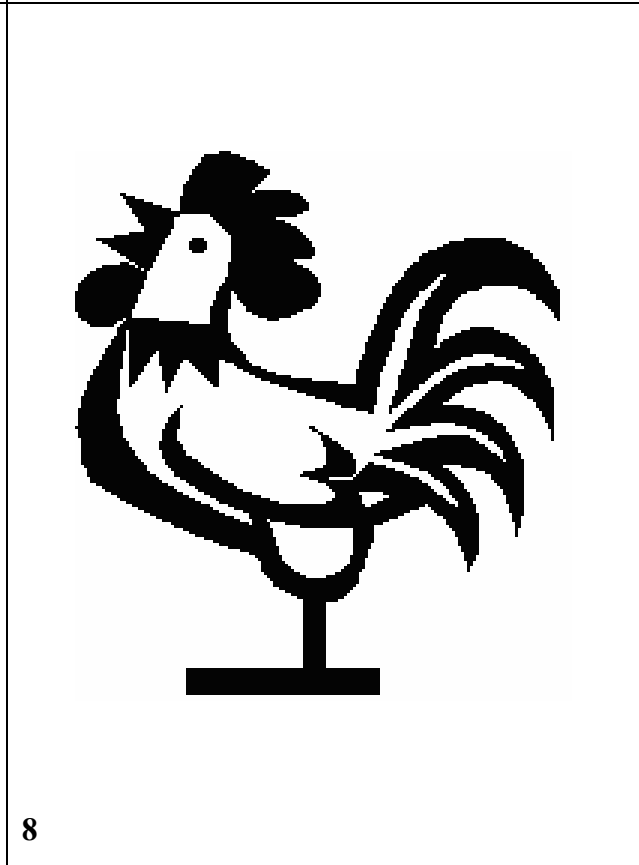
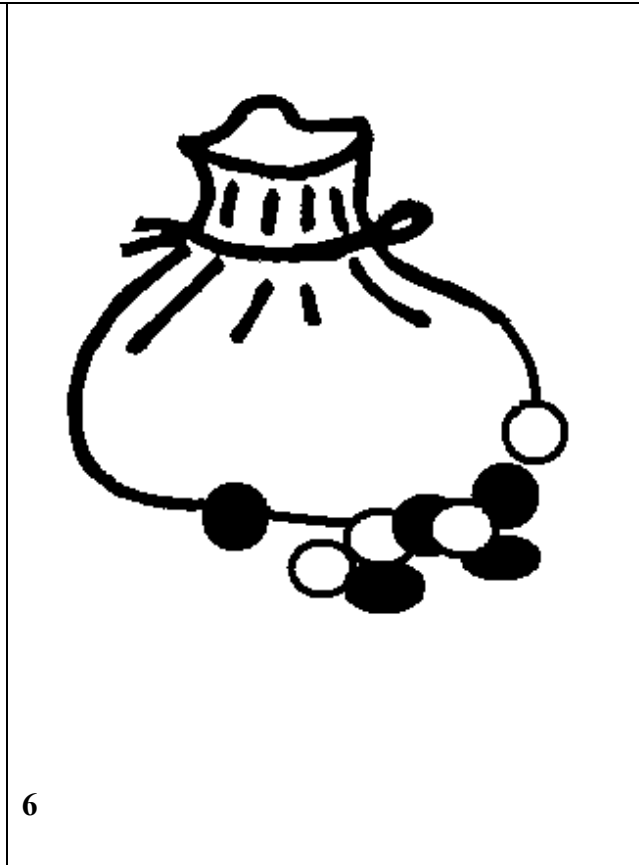
2

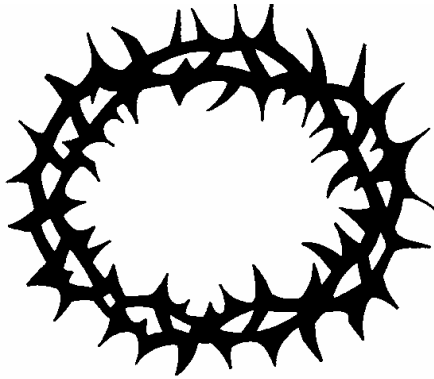


3

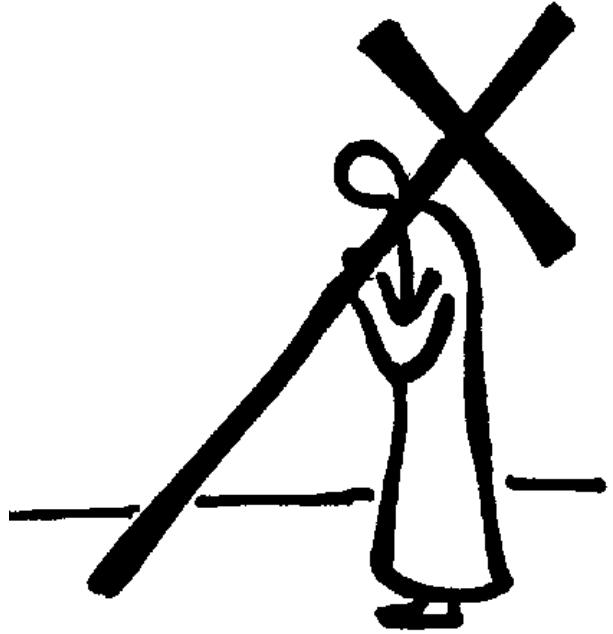


4





9



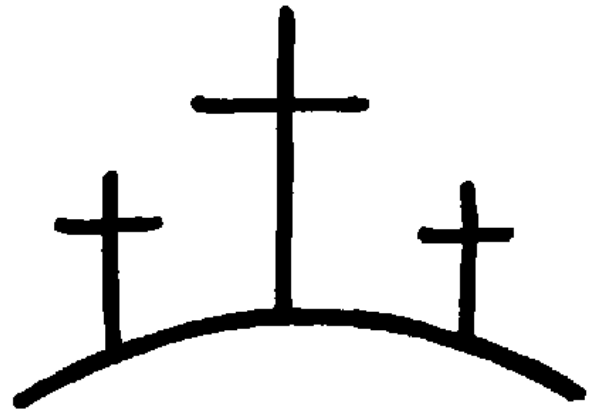
10

**I.N.R.I.**

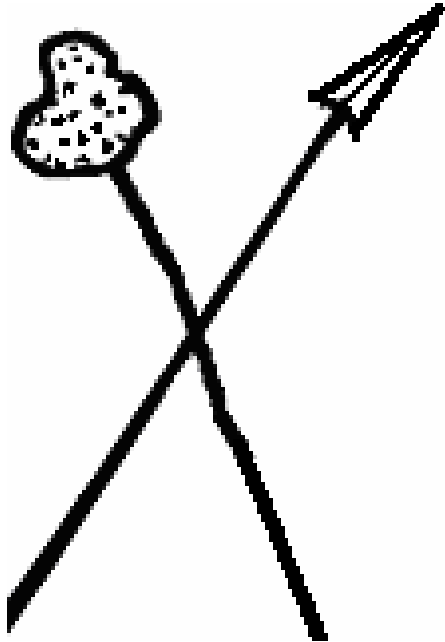


**I.X.B.I.**

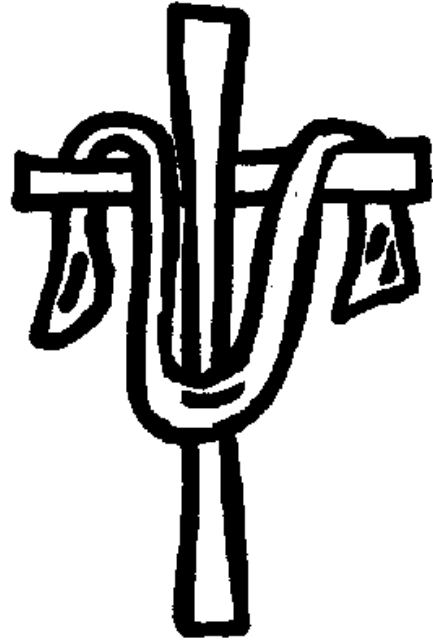
11



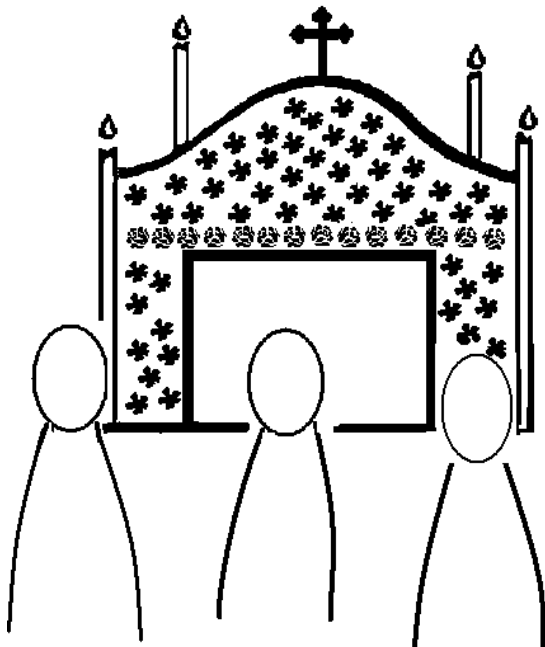
12



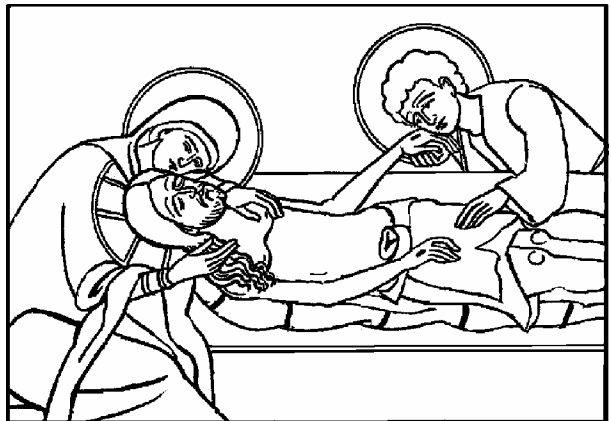
13



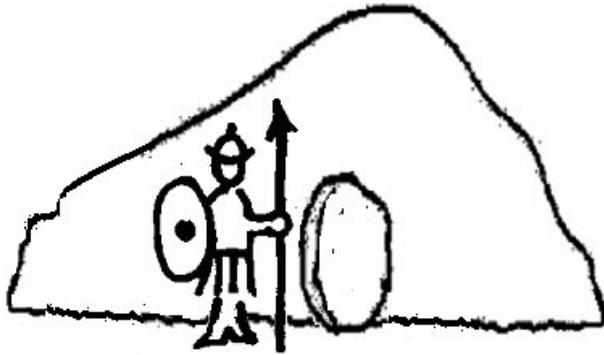
14



15



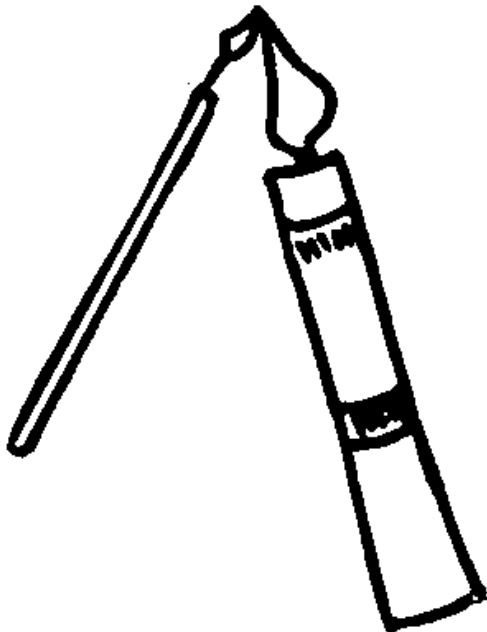
16



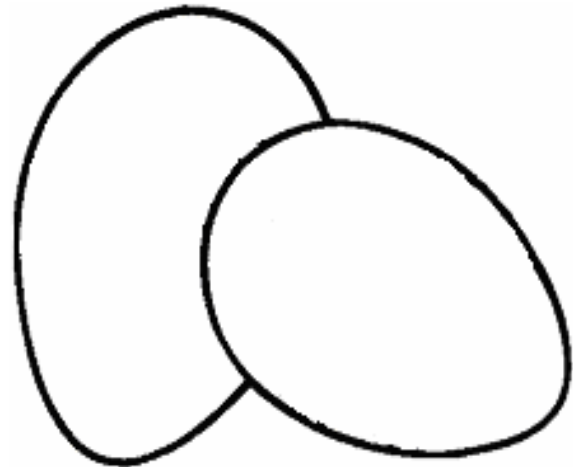
17



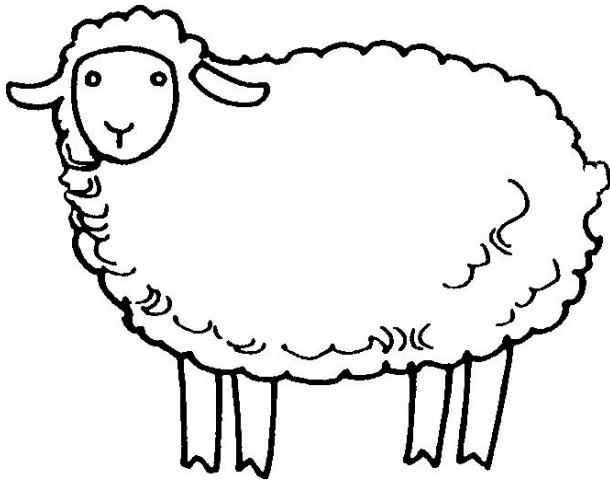
18



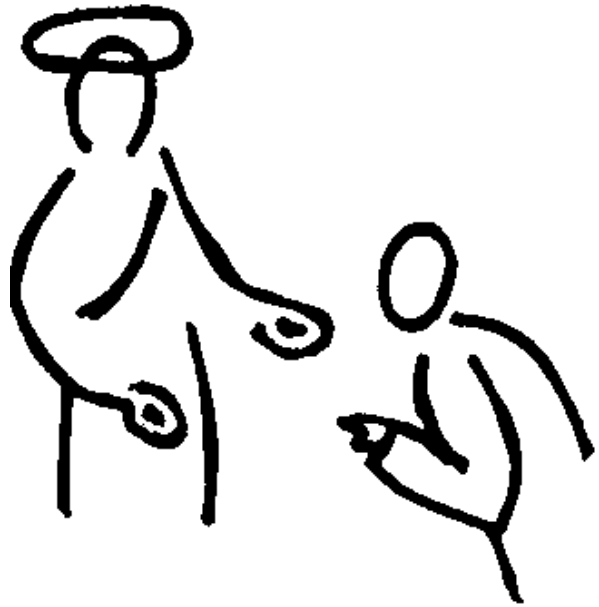
19



20



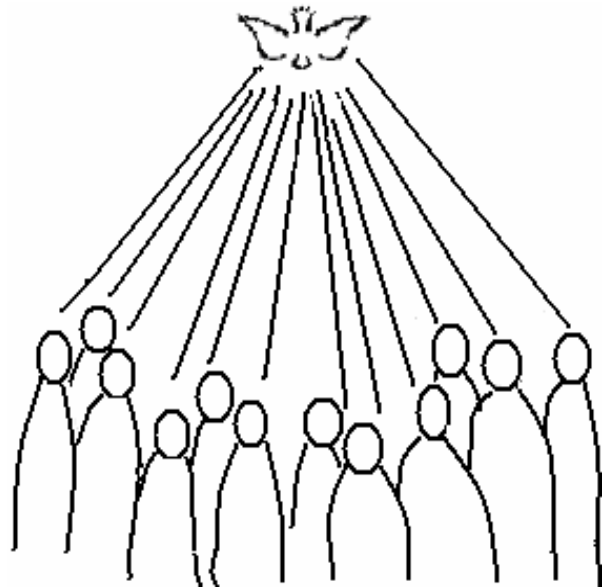
21



22













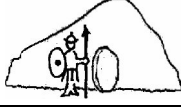


23



24



## MEMORY VERSES for PASCHA SYMBOLS

 <p><b>ASCENSION</b></p>	<p>"So the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God (the Father)." Mark 16:19</p>
 <p><b>COCK</b></p>	<p>"Truly, I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times." Matthew 26:34</p>
 <p><b>CROWN OF THORNS</b></p>	<p>"They made a crown out of thorny branches and placed it on his head." Matthew 27:29</p>
 <p><b>DOUBTING THOMAS</b></p>	<p>"Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." John 20:29</p>
 <p><b>EMPTY TOMB</b></p>	<p>"Do not be afraid, you seek Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified. He is risen!" Mark 16:6</p>
 <p><b>EPITAPHIOS</b></p>	<p>"Every generation comes to Your grave bringing its dirge of praises, dear Christ." Holy Friday Hymn</p>
 <p><b>GETHSEMANE</b></p>	<p>"My father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." Matthew 26:39</p>
 <p><b>PALM SUNDAY</b></p>	<p>"Praise God! (Hosanna!) 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'" John 12:13</p>
 <p><b>PENTECOST</b></p>	<p>"They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak." Acts 2:4</p>
 <p><b>RESURRECTION CANDLE</b></p>	<p>"Come, receive the unwaning light and let us glorify Christ who is resurrected from the dead." Pascha liturgy</p>
 <p><b>SEALED TOMB</b></p>	<p>"So they went and made the sepulcher secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard." Matthew 27:66</p>
 <p><b>SPEAR &amp; SPOON</b></p>	<p>"One of the soldiers, however, plunged his spear into Jesus' side, and at once blood and water poured out." John 19:34</p>
 <p><b>WINDING CLOTH</b></p>	<p>"And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud (sheet) and laid it in his own tomb." Matthew 27:59</p>



# SYMBOLS OF THE SEASON

Text by Joan J. Philosophos

Edited by Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div.

## **PASCHA / Easter**

We know that Jesus entered Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish **Passover**, “Pesach” in Hebrew. This feast reminded the Israelites of the night before Moses led them out of Egypt (slavery) to freedom and “passed over” the homes with first-born sons. (See PASSOVER for more information.) When the Hebrew holy texts were translated into Greek, the Hebrew word for “Pesach” became “PASCHA.”

When we use the term “**PASCHA**” we acknowledge that our Christian Passover from death to life is a successor to the Jewish Passover. What Moses, the prefigure of Christ in the Old Testament, inaugurated for the people of Israel on the temporal level, Christ inaugurated for all people on the eternal level. Christ not only fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies, but also became the “Passover” Himself.

Our method of calculating the date of **PASCHA / Easter** involves the date of Passover.

**EASTER** is another word used to identify the resurrection of Christ. According to the Venerable Bede (673-735 AD), a monk who wrote about Anglo-Saxon mythology, Pascha Sunday was called “Easter” in connection with the Anglo-Saxon goddess Eostre/Ostara, a Teutonic goddess of spring, or from the Teutonic festival of spring called “Eostur.” This festival came at the spring equinox. Eostre was nearly always accompanied in legend and art with a hare (rabbit). It was a magical hare that could lay eggs. (“the Cadbury bunny”)

## **EACH SYMBOL INCLUDES A DESCRIPTION OF THE MATCHING**

### **1. THE GREAT FAST / LENT**

#### **[Bread, Vegetables, Fruit]**

The Orthodox Church has four Lenten periods:

1. the Nativity Fast (November 15-December 25)
2. the Great Fast before Pascha (the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after the Spring Equinox, after Passover)
3. the Fast for SS Peter & Paul (the Monday after All Saints – June 30)
4. the Dormition Fast for the Theotokos (August 1-15)

Since the Paschal Fast is the longest, has the strictest fast rules and specific services only done during that season of the year, it is referred to as **GREAT FAST**. The Great Fast is also referred to as Great Lent.

As a season, the **GREAT FAST/ Great Lent** was originally a period of preparation for the baptism of catechumens at Pascha / Easter. The catechumens fasted and prayed during this time of instruction. The climax of their preparation came at the all-night vigil of Pascha Eve when they were Baptized and Chrismated, followed by the celebration of Christ’s Resurrection.

As time passed, all church members joined the catechumens as a way of renewing their baptismal preparations, and preparing for Pascha. The Great Fast became a season of intense prayer, reflecting on one’s spiritual life, good works (alms) as well as fasting.

### **POINTS OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE GREAT FAST:**

- ✘ The liturgical color is purple.
- ✘ Adam and Eve disobeyed God by refusing to fast from the forbidden fruit and became slaves of their own desires. Now through fasting, through obedience to the guidelines of the Church regarding the use of spiritual and material goods, we may return to the life in Paradise, a life of communion with God.
- ✘ Jesus fasted for 40 days in the wilderness following His baptism, during which time He was tempted. (Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13) When we fast during the Great Fast, we follow Jesus’ example of fasting 40 days.
- ✘ St. Basil tells us that fasting is not abstaining only from food; it is first, abstaining from sin.
- ✘ Fasting has a liberating effect on us because it detaches us from earthly goods and realities. Fasting is also abstinence from bad habits and sin.
- ✘ In the words of St. John Chrysostom, fasting means “abstinence not only from food but from sins. The fast should be kept not by the mouth alone but also by the eye, the ear, the feet, the hands and all the members of the body; the eye must abstain from impure sights, the ear from malicious gossip, the hands from acts of injustice.”
- ✘ The primary aim of fasting is to make us conscious of our dependence upon God.

- ✘ Fasting liberates our body from the burden of excessive weight and makes it a willing partner in the task of prayer, alert and responsive to the voice of the Holy Spirit.
- ✘ The Church Fathers' guiding principle is never eat to fullness, but always rise from the table feeling we could have eaten more, so that now we are ready for prayer.
- ✘ The basic Rule for Fasting is abstinence from meat, dairy products and olive oil. We are each to do the best we can, given our age and health. Ask your Spiritual Father/Parish Priest what "Rule of Fasting" he believes is best for you this Lenten season.



## 2. PALMS (Major Feast Day)

### [Jesus Riding On A Donkey]

Branches of **Palm** trees - which in Jesus' time symbolized victory - are symbols of His Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem. John 12:12-14 [Note: (a) Victorious athletes at the Olympic games in ancient Greece were given crowns made of olive branches. (b) People laid olive or palm branches before the path of conquering heroes.]

- *"The next day a great crowd who had come to the (Passover) feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, crying, 'Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!'"* John 12:12-14
- ✘ The crowds were anxious to see Jesus because they heard He raised Lazarus from the dead the previous day. The Disciples brought Jesus a foal (young donkey) of a donkey and rode on it just as the prophet Zechariah foretold.
  - *"Do not be afraid, city of Zion! Here comes your king, riding on a young donkey. Rejoice, rejoice, people of Zion! Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you! He comes triumphant and victorious, but humble and riding on a donkey - on a colt, the foal of a donkey."*
- ✘ In Orthodox countries where palms do not grow, pussy willows or other branches are used.

## ✘ **PASSOVER**

### [Blood Painted on the Doorframes]

According to St. John's Gospel, Jesus came to Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish festival of **Passover**. On the day of preparation, Jesus and the Disciples participated in the Mystical Supper / Last Supper. He was crucified the next morning (Friday). Because Jewish days begin at sundown, Christ's crucifixion and death occurred when the paschal lambs were sacrificed for **Passover**.

- ✘ The first three Gospels give the impression that the Mystical / Last Supper was a Passover meal. Had it been a Passover meal, our prosphora would be flat, unleavened as the bread prepared by the Jews in their haste to leave Egypt.
- ✘ Since it was not **Passover**, the bread contained yeast, was therefore raised and our Prosphora is also raised with yeast.
- ✘ **Passover** is a Pilgrimage Festival. If possible, Jews were to go to Jerusalem for Passover.
- ✘ All the Gospels mention there were great crowds in Jerusalem for the Passover.
- ✘ **Passover** is a memorial of the deliverance of the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt.
  - The blood of the lamb that was killed for the original **Passover** was painted on the doorposts and over the doors of the houses occupied by Israelites.
  - This was the sign for the Angel of Death to "pass over" these houses on his errand to slay the first-born of the Egyptians. (Exodus 12)
  - God told the Hebrews to celebrate the festival each year in a specific way, & they still do.

## 4. BREAD & WINE / BODY & BLOOD

### [Chalice & Loaf of Bread]

**Bread and wine** are symbols of the **Mystical / Last Supper** and the **Holy Eucharist**.

- ✘ At the **Mystical / Last Supper**, when Jesus gave His disciples the chalice of wine, He said, *"This is my blood."*
- ✘ He then took a loaf of bread, broke and said, *"This is my body."*
- ✘ These words are repeated at every Divine Liturgy. During the consecration, the priest asks the Holy Spirit to "come down upon us and upon these gifts" changing the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- ✘ It still looks and tastes like bread and wine, but it is not.

## 5. GETHSEMANE

### [Jesus Praying Upon Some Rocks]

The **Garden Of Gethsemane** was the scene of the "Agony in the Garden" and the "Betrayal." Peter, James and John were with Jesus, but

- "He came to the disciples and found them sleeping..." Matthew 26:40
- "Then He went off from them about the distance of a stone's throw and knelt down and prayed... In great anguish He prayed even more fervently; His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground." Luke 22:41,44
- Jesus praying in Gethsemane is also found in Mark 14:32-42 & Matthew 26:36-46.

## 6. COINS [Bag Of Coins]

Judas Iscariot betrayed Christ for **thirty Silver Coins**, making it a symbol of the Passion. Judas went to the chief priests and asked,

- "What will you give me if I deliver Him to you? And they paid him thirty pieces of silver." Matthew 26:15
- "When Judas, His betrayer, saw that He was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, saying, 'I have sinned in betraying innocent blood.'" Matthew 27:3-4

## 7. WASHING OF THE HANDS

### [Hands Over a Bowl, Drops of Water Falling from the Pitcher]

The **Washing of the Hands** symbolizes innocence. Pilate publicly washed his hands after Jesus' trial.

- "So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood.'" Matthew 27:24.

This event has become an idiom in our language meaning "a person does not have anything to do with what is happening."

## 8. COCK [Crowing Rooster]

The **Cock Crowing** is a symbol of Peter's three denials. After Peter asserted his loyalty to Jesus,

- "Jesus said to him, 'Truly, I say to you, this very night, before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.'" Matthew 26:34 (Mark 14:30, Luke 22:34, and John 13:38)

"Before the cock crows" became an expression meaning "early in the morning."

## 9. CROWN OF THORNS

### [Crown Of Thorns]

The **Crown of Thorns** placed on Jesus' head by the mocking soldiers symbolizes the Passion and Crucifixion. It stands for a royal crown; and the reed they gave Him, for a king's scepter. In icons, Christ usually wears the **Crown of Thorns** until taken down from the Cross.

- "And plaiting a **crown of thorns**, they put it on His head, and put a reed in His right hand. And kneeling down before Him they mocked Him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'" Matthew 27:29

## 10. CARRYING THE CROSS

### [A Man Carrying a Cross]

The Gospel of St. John tells of Jesus carrying His own cross to Golgotha. (John 19:17)

The other three Gospels say that someone else carried the Cross.

- "As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene named Simon, and the soldiers forced him to carry Jesus' cross." Matthew 27:32
- "And they compelled a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry His cross." Mark 15:21
- "And as they led Him away, they seized one Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, and laid on him the cross, to carry it behind Jesus." Luke 23:26

This scene is often recreated in Jerusalem on Holy Friday when many pilgrims walk the "Way of the Cross," some **carrying wooden crosses**.

## 11. I.N.R.I. | I.N.B.I.

These initial letters placed on a board at the top of the Cross stand for the initial letters of four Latin words

- "Pilate also wrote a title and put it on the cross; it read, 'Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews,' ... and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin and in Greek." John 19:19-20
- ✘ This trilingual inscription signified for St. John the Evangelist the universal mission of Christ. Originally, if the inscription was used in art, at all, it was written out in full.
- ✘ Italian artists in the thirteenth century reduced the inscription to the familiar abbreviation. (Since each of these letters is an initial of a word, it is proper to put a period after each letter.)

## 12. GOLGOTHA or CALVARY

### [Three Crosses]

The name **Golgotha** is used in the Gospels for the place of crucifixion outside the walls of Jerusalem. This Hebrew word means "skull."

- ✘ **Calvary** refers to the same place, but it is taken from the Latin word for "skull." For this reason, some icons of the Crucifixion show a skull below the cross.
- ✘ Another reason for the skull is a tradition that Adam was buried there and it is his skull.
- ✘ Christ, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam, redeems humanity who is handicapped by the "Fall" of the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam.
- ✘ The other two crosses represent the two criminals who were crucified at the same time.

## 13. SPONGE and SPEAR [Spear & Sponge on the End of a Long Rod]

In the account of the Crucifixion we read,

- "A bowl was there, full of vinegar (cheap wine); so a **sponge** was soaked in the vinegar, put on a stalk of hyssop, and lifted up to His lips." John 19:29 (Mark 15:36)
- "One of the soldiers, however, plunged his **spear** into Jesus side, and at once blood and water poured out." John 19:34

These symbols of the Passion of Christ are used in preparing the Gifts for the Divine Liturgy.

- ✘ The **spear** (lance) is used to cut the (Host/Lamb) from the seal on the Prosforo.
- ✘ As the priest recites "One of the soldiers plunged his **spear** into Jesus side," he pierces the square of bread from the center of the loaf referred to as the Host.
- ✘ As the priest recites the last part of the quotation, "and at once blood and water poured out," he pours water and wine into the **chalice**.
- ✘ The **sponge** is used to clean the particles of bread off the Paten and into the Chalice.

## 14. LINEN CLOTH [Cross with Cloth Draped Over It]

Before a Jew was laid in the tomb, the body was wrapped in a burial cloth or winding cloth. Those who were wealthy, like Joseph of Arimathea, would be wrapped in **Linen**. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus

- "Took Jesus' body and wrapped it in **linen cloths** with spices according to the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial." John 19:40 (Luke 23:53, Mark 15:46, Matt.27:59)
- ✘ The bodies were not embalmed in those days. The women who went to the tomb on Pascha

morning with spices and myrrh for anointing the body. (Thus, the "myrrh-bearing women.")

- ✘ At the vespers of the "Descent from the Cross" on Holy Friday afternoon, the priest takes Jesus' body down from the Cross and wraps it in **Linen**, and puts it in the altar, where it stays until Ascension. At that time the body is placed once again on the Cross that stands directly behind the altar table.
- ✘ On the altar table itself, there are three cloths. The middle one is made of **linen**, symbolic of the cloth in which Jesus body was wrapped.

## 15 & 16. EPITAPHIOS

### [Icon of Jesus Laid in the Tomb, Theotokos & John]

The Epitaphios (Shroud) is a tapestry-icon depicting Christ being laid in the tomb. With Him are His mother, the Theotokos, and John, the beloved Apostle.

- ✘ During the Vesper service on Holy Friday afternoon, the **Epitaphios** (Shroud) is placed in the sepulcher / kouvouklion decorated with flowers.
  - ✘ At the evening Lamentations service, the sepulcher / kouvouklion is carried in procession outside of the Church. (In some Orthodox traditions, only the **Epitaphios** (Shroud) is carried in procession.) As we enter the church, we go under the **Epitaphios** to symbolize our burial with Christ. Romans 6:3-6
    - "For surely you know that when we were baptized into union with Christ Jesus, we were baptized into union with His death. By our baptism then, we were buried with Him and shared His death. Thus, just as Christ was raised from death by the glorious power of the Father, we might live a new life. For since we have become one with Him in dying as He did, in the same way we shall be one with Him by being raised to life as He was. And we know that our old being has been put to death with Christ on His cross, in order that the power of the sinful self might be destroyed, so that we should no longer be slaves of sin."
  - ✘ In the Greek practice, at the end of the service, as the faithful come forward to venerate the **Epitaphios**, the priest distributes the flowers that decorate the tomb to the people.
  - ✘ At the beginning of the Resurrection service, the **Epitaphios** is placed on the altar until Ascension and every Liturgy is celebrated on it during that time.
- After Ascension, the **Epitaphios** is kept in the altar until the next Holy Friday.

**17. SEALED TOMB & GUARD**  
**[Roman Soldier by the Sealed Opening]**

Matthew 27: 62-66 gives an account of the chief priests and the Pharisees meeting with Pilate.

- ✘ The Pharisees asked that a **guard** be placed at the tomb so the Disciples could not steal Jesus' body and say He was raised from the dead.
- ✘ Therefore, they took a guard, put a **seal on the stone**, and left the guard to watch. (**The Seal**: hot wax poured where the rock touched the doorway. If anyone broke into the tomb, it would be known because the wax ring would be broken.)



**18. EMPTY TOMB [The Open Tomb, the Myrrhbearers, an Angel]**

The **tomb with the stone rolled away** is a symbol of Christ's Resurrection.

- Matthew 28:1-6 says that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb and saw an **angel** of the Lord.
- Luke 24:1-9 says the **women** went at dawn to the tomb and saw **two men in dazzling apparel**. The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other **women**.
- John 20:1-2 says that Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and **saw two angels**.
- Mark 16:1-8 records that Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Mary the mother of James going to the **tomb** when the sun had risen and they saw **a young man sitting in a white robe**.
- The **angel** appeared to the **women at the tomb** and announced, "He is risen!"
- When we greet each other with this announcement, the response is "Truly He is risen!"
- ✘ The angel or angels are always described as dressed in white. The white garments are appropriate to the joy of Christ's Resurrection.
- ✘ True to their intended function, they are our messengers from God.
- ✘ Since the altar in Church is symbolic of the Tomb, the Royal Doors of the Iconostasis remain open from Pascha to Pentecost, symbolizing the **empty, open tomb** of our Risen Lord.

**18. RESURRECTION OR PASCHAL CANDLE**

Just before midnight at the Resurrection Liturgy, the Church is darkened. At midnight the priest comes out of the Sanctuary (altar area) carrying a lit **Paschal Candle**, and says, "*Come, receive the unwaning light and let us glorify Christ who is resurrected from the dead.*"

- ✘ This candle symbolizes Christ "the Light" who has overcome the darkness of the world.
- ✘ Everyone in the Church then lights his/her candle from this candle or others it has lit.
- ✘ The **Paschal Candle** burns at all services through Ascension, which terminates the Paschal season.

**19. DOUBTING THOMAS**

**[Jesus, hands out, Thomas]**

We remember **Doubting Thomas** on the Sunday after Pascha. Between the Resurrection and Ascension Jesus made eleven appearances to His followers. The first time that He appeared, Thomas was absent. When those saw Jesus told Thomas, he said to the others,

- "*Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe.*" John 20:25
- ✘ The account in John 20:24-29 continues with Jesus appearing for the second time, and letting Thomas touch His wounds. Jesus responded with,
  - "*Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.*" John 20:29
- ✘ A "**Doubting Thomas**" is an idiom in English language referring to a person who needs to see something before he/she will believe it is true.

**20. ASCENSION** (Major Feast Day)

**[Jesus above the Clouds]**

Jesus' **Ascension** to heaven occurred 40 days after His Resurrection. In Acts we read,

- "*And when He had said this, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.'*" Acts 1:9-11
- ✘ Brief accounts of the **Ascension** are recorded in Mark 16:19-20, Luke 24:50-51.

**21. PENTECOST** (Major Feast Day)  
**[Dove Emitting Rays to the 12  
 Apostles Below]**

The word **Pentecost**, which means “fiftieth day,” is used for both the Jewish and Christian festivals / holy days.

- ✘ For the Jews, **Pentecost**, originally known as the “Feast of Weeks,” was the fiftieth day after their celebration of Passover and honored the beginning of the wheat harvest in Israel.
- ✘ Later it became a commemoration of God giving Moses the Torah at Mount Sinai. It is now called “Shavuot” and, like Passover, is one of the Pilgrimage Festivals.
- ✘ Counting the Sundays at each end of the seven weeks, **Pentecost** is the fiftieth day after Pascha. (Acts 1 & 2) The Holy Spirit manifested Himself to the Apostles at Pentecost as “*tongues of fire.*”
- ✘ Fire is an ancient symbol of divine appearance. God appeared to Moses in the “*burning bush*” (Exodus 3:2) and again in fire and smoke on Mount Sinai. (Exodus 19:18)
- ✘ The usual symbol of the Holy Spirit is the descending dove. In a more general sense, the dove indicates the power of God at work in men.
- ✘ Liturgical color: Red, which represents the flames, in the Greek tradition. Green, which represents life and the Holy Spirit is the “Giver of Life,” in the Slavic tradition.



**22. LAMB [Lamb]**

The **Lamb** is a symbol for Jesus, the “*Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world*” - the name given by John the Baptist. John 1:29-36

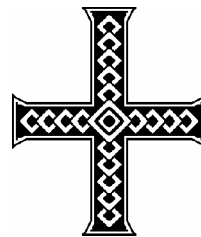
- ✘ The symbolism goes back to Isaiah 53:7 – “*like a lamb that is led to the slaughter*” - where the **lamb** is a type of explicit suffering.
- ✘ The **Paschal Lamb** eaten at Passover by the Jews symbolized God’s deliverance of His people. (Refer to PASSOVER.) The Jews sacrificed an **unblemished lamb** during their traditional Pass-over ceremony in the Temple of Jerusalem.
- ✘ Early Christians interpreted the sacrifice of the **Paschal Lamb** as a prototype of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross.
- ✘ For people from the Balkan countries, **Lamb** is the traditional food at Pascha.

**23. EGGS [Eggs]**

**Eggs** have been a Pascha/Easter symbol for a long time. The **red egg** goes back to St. Mary Magdalene. Traditions hold that after Christ’s ascension she traveled to Rome.

“When Mary visited the Emperor Tiberius Caesar in Rome, holding a plain egg in her hand, she greeted him with the words; ‘Christ is Risen!’ The Emperor exclaimed: ‘How can someone rise from the dead? It is just as likely that Christ rose from the dead as it is likely that the egg you are holding will turn red.’ Even as he spoke the egg’s color began turning into a brilliant red.” (TRIODION AND PENTECOSTARION edited by Fr. David Kidd & Mother Gabriella, HDM Press, Rives, Junction, MI, 1999, p. 186.)

- ✘ The custom of **exchanging eggs** began in ancient times.
- ✘ Eggs are dyed different colors
  - Early Christians of Mesopotamia were the first to use **colored eggs** for Pascha.
  - Some people **color eggs** in various colors, like the hues of sunrise.
  - In the Greek tradition, eggs are a dyed a deep **red**, symbolizing that the new life came through the shedding of Christ’s blood. Eggs are dyed on or before Holy Thursday.
  - Orthodox in Slavic countries intricately decorate their **eggs** - “**pysanki**”- with symbols.
- ✘ **Eggs represent**
  - the new life that returns to nature in the Spring, about the time of Pascha, or
  - a symbol of the Resurrection because the chick entombed in the shell breaks forth to life. The fertilized egg looks dead, but contains the promise of life.
- ✘ **Eggs** are distributed to the faithful at the end of the Resurrection Liturgy.
- ✘ When families gather for the Pascha meal, the custom of **egg-cracking** begins. As each person cracks the other’s egg, he/she says “Christ is Risen!” The second person responds with “Truly He is Risen!”



# A Resurrection Play

Written and Presented at

St. George Greek Orthodox Church, Massillon, OH 2001

Since this play was presented in Church, the stage directions refer to parts of the church interior.

**Narrator:** The resurrection of Jesus, which was foretold in the Old Testament, is the most important part of our belief in Him. Jesus had told his friends, the Apostles that he would suffer, die, and that on the third day after his death he would rise again. We celebrate Pascha/Easter as the day he fulfilled that promise. We will reenact the story of the first Pascha/Easter morning and other appearances of the resurrected Jesus as they are found in the Gospel.

*All sing "Lord of the Dance"*

After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joses bought spices to Jesus' tomb to anoint His body.

*(As all sing, "Someone's crying, Lord..." the two Mary's enter the solea from the pews on the left, approaching the tomb located on the left. At least one holds jar of myrrh for anointing. Soldiers are sleeping at their places.)*

**Mary Magdalene:** Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?

**Mary the mother of James and Joses, i.e. the Theotokos:** God will show us the way.

*If there are more girls to play the roles, the other Myrrhbearers were:*

**Salome** [daughter of Joseph, guardian of the Theotokos, from his first marriage. She was the wife of Zebedee and the mother of John the Theologian and the Apostle James. *Joseph had four sons: James (the less), Joses, Simon & Jude; & three daughters: Esther, Tamara and Salome the wife of Zebedee.* Thus Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses was the Theotokos their (stepmother).]

**Joanna** [the wife of Chuza, the administrator and steward in the house of King Herod Antipas.]

**Mary the wife of Cleopas** [he walked with Jesus to Emmaus.]

**Susanna, Mary of Bethany and Martha of Bethany,** Lazarus' sisters

*("Someone's praying, Lord..." is sung in the background.)*

**Narrator:** And behold, there was a great earthquake. An angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. Its face was like lightning and its clothing as white as snow. The guards shook for fear of it, and became like dead men. The angel spoke to the women.

*(Angel appears from behind "stone" or \_\_\_\_\_ and rolls back the stone, and then addresses the two Mary's.)*

**Angel:** Do not be afraid! I know you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. He is risen as He said He would. Come; see the place where the Lord had laid. Go quickly and tell his disciples that He is risen from the dead, and is going before you into Galilee. There you will see him. Behold, I have told you.

*("Someone's singing, Lord..." is sung in the background as women embrace.)*

**Narrator:** The women ran quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, to bring His disciples the words of the Angel. As they went to tell His disciples, Jesus met them.

*(Jesus emerges from a deacon's door and addresses women. Depending on the structure of your church, Jesus may be able to enter from the side.)*

**Jesus:** Rejoice!

**Narrator:** they came, held Him by his feet, and worshipped Him.

**Jesus:** Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee and there they will see me.

*(Women exit from center of the solea and return to their pew on the left. Jesus disappears through the same deacon's door through which he appeared.)*

**Narrator:** Of course, not everyone was pleased at this news. Some of the guard went into the city and reported to the chief priest and the elders all the things that had happened.

*(Soldiers leave the tomb as elders leave assigned pews and enter from opposite side of the solea. They meet in the center.)*

**Soldier 1:** I have never seen anything like it! The earth shook and someone dressed in white came down from the sky!

**Soldier 2:** It is true. He rolled the stone away from the tomb. We were so scared we could not move. When we looked inside, the body was gone.

**Elder 1:** Do not tell anyone what you saw.

**Elder 2:** Just say, "His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept."

**Elder 3:** Here, this money should help you remember what to say.

*(Elders and soldiers return to assigned pews, remove extra clothing in order to appear as the disciples. All disciples but Thomas gather on the solea.)*

**Narrator:** When the disciples heard the news of Jesus' resurrection, they wondered. Many of them did not believe Jesus was raised from the dead and was alive again. Then Jesus came and spoke to them.

*(Jesus appears from the deacon's door.)*

**Jesus:** Peace to you. *(He shows them the prints in his hands, then says,)* As the Father has sent me, I also send you. Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to observe all the things I have commanded you. I am with you always, even to the end of the ages.

*(Jesus returns through the deacon's door. Thomas approaches disciples on the solea.)*

**Narrator:** Now Thomas was not with the rest of the disciples when Jesus came, so they told Thomas of His appearance.

**Disciple 1:** We have seen the Lord.

**Disciple 2:** Yes, He came and spoke with us.

**Thomas:** Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.

**Narrator:** Eight days later, the disciples were gathered together and Thomas this time was with the rest. Jesus appeared to them.

*(Jesus appears through the deacon's door and addresses disciples.)*

**Jesus:** Peace to you. Thomas, reach your finger here, look at my hands, reach your hand here, and put it into my side. Do not be unbelieving. Believe!

**Thomas:** My Lord and my God!

**Jesus:** Thomas, because you have seen me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

**Narrator:** After Jesus had spoken to the disciples for the last time, He was received into heaven, and sat at the right hand of God. And the disciples worshipped Him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. Then they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through signs. These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

*(All exit, 2-by-2, down center aisle and then up sides, singing, "We are one in the Spirit." The last verse is performed all together back on the solea. Then all sing Χριστος Ανεστη – Christ is Risen!).*

#### **PROPS**

*Tomb*

#### **COSTUMES**

*Roman Soldiers*

*Elders*

*Disciples*

*Myrrhbearers*

*Angel*

#### **MUSIC**

*Lord of the Dance*

*Someone is singing Lord*

*Χριστος Ανεστη – Christ is Risen!*