

THE MESSENGER

ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH • RELIGIOUS EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 8
APRIL 2012

MISSION STATEMENT

To bring all children, youth and young adults closer to Christ and His Church through religious education, fellowship and various other events on a parish and national level.

A Blessed
Holy Week to all!
Καλή Μεγάλη
Εβδομάδα!

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HOLY WEEK & PASCHA 2012

In an age where many of us hear the phrase, "I am spiritual in my own way" and "I can worship at home", it is vital to take a moment to hear the words of Christ. During our private prayers, Christ says to, "go to our rooms, shut the door and pray" to God (cf. Mth. 6:6). Private prayer is, indeed, important; yet, our relationship with God doesn't end with mere private prayer. The same Jesus also says, "where two or three are gathered in My Name, I Am there in the midst of them" (Mth. 18:20) Therefore, any personal reflections and spiritual growth we might have by ourselves at home is always coupled together with the fact that we, as Christian Orthodox believers, grow as a community of Faith together. As brothers and sisters in Christ (and not as "strangers"), we walk towards the Kingdom of God, worshipping Him as a people who aspire to be united with Him.

It is with this very important truth that all of us will soon reach the great feast of Palm Sunday and Holy Week, a time where the Orthodox Church remembers and re-lives the events of our Lord's final days on earth: His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection from the dead. Every single day during Holy Week, the Church has services in order to keep our minds focused on prayer, reflecting on the great love our merciful God has for His creation: that He became man so that we can become saints, holy by grace.



On Palm Sunday, we receive the palm branches blessed by the Priest. During the prayer, the priest asks God to "keep and preserve us," asking Him that we celebrate "the life-giving Resurrection on the third day." From a joyous theme, the Church shifts to "joyful sorrow" during Holy Week.

The first three services of Holy Week (held on the evenings of Palm Sunday, Holy Monday and Holy Tuesday) are called the **Bridegroom** or **Νυμφίος** services. They are very sombre, with the believer thinking of how much Christ gave for His Church. The Church offers the comparison of Christ and the Church to a husband and wife (bridegroom and bride), where the bridegroom would offer anything for His Bride. These services serve as a living example for all Christians and what their love should be towards the Lord and neighbor – love without measure.

On Holy Wednesday, we have the **Ευχέλαιον** or **Sacrament of Holy Unction**, praying for healing of soul and body. This Sacrament serves to remind everyone that although we might seem healthy, we are sometimes ill spiritually – and we need to receive the proper "spiritual medicine". It reminds us that sin will never take a holiday and we should ask the Physician of our souls and bodies to help us. This



PODCASTS ON HOLY WEEK ON [IECCLESIA CANADA.COM](http://iEcclesiaCanada.com)

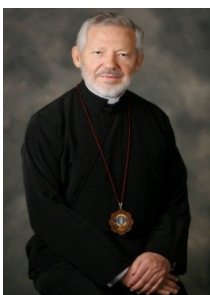
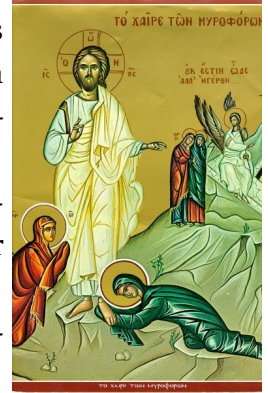
- FROM PASSION TO RESURRECTION: [PART 1](#) [PART 2](#)
- [YOU WERE CRUCIFIED FOR ME](#)
- [GLORY TO YOUR CRUCIFIXION, O LORD!](#)
- [JESUS: HOLINESS PERSONIFIED](#)



St. Paraskevi Girls Group

On the evening of the Akathist Hymn (Friday, March 30th), the St. Paraskevi Girls Group had its first-ever meeting at the hall of our Church. This first meeting was a chance for the girls to get to know the two Group leaders—Valerie Evans-Makropoulos and Militsa Hatzidemetriou-Fiuza—and to plan monthly activities. For this upcoming month, the Girls Group will be volunteering both at the upcoming **Youth Retreat** (to be held on the Roman Catholic Good Friday, April 6th at our Church) and as **Myrofores** throughout Holy Week.

For girls aged 12-19 that are interested in getting involved in the Girls Group, contact the group leaders at [stdemetrios@LivingOrthodoxy.com!](mailto:stdemetrios@LivingOrthodoxy.com)

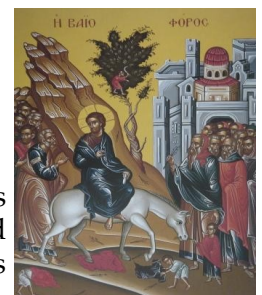


Metropolitan Sotirios visits our Parish Holy Monday evening, April 9th

The Bridegroom (or *Nymfios*) service is the first service of Holy Week. It is chanted for three days—on the nights of Palm Sunday, Holy Monday and Holy Tuesday. The hymnography is centred around the upcoming events of the Passion of our Lord and how He is the Bridegroom of the Church.

Presiding the service on **Holy Monday evening**—the second *Nymfios* service—will be His Eminence Metropolitan Sotirios of Toronto (Canada). His Eminence has been serving the Metropolis of Canada since 1962 as a Parish Priest in Edmonton and Montreal. He was elected Bishop on December 8th, 1973 and consecrated Bishop on January 27, 1974. He was later elevated to Metropolitan of Toronto (Canada) on September 24, 1996. He is fluent in Greek, English and French. Under his tenure, 53 communities and 2 monasteries have been founded, together with programs for Youth, Byzantine Music, Greek Orthodox Education and more.

We invite all parishioners to begin Holy Week at our Church and pray together for a blessed Holy Week and Pascha!



holy week

AT ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH

Palm Sunday April 8th	Holy Monday April 9th	Holy Tuesday April 10th	Holy Wednesday April 11th	Holy Thursday April 12th	Good Friday April 13th	Holy Saturday April 14th	Sunday of Pascha April 15th
8:45 am— 12:00 noon: Matins, Liturgy & Blessing of the Palms 7:00—8:30 pm: Bridegroom Service	7:00— 8:30 pm: Bridegroom Service	7—8:45 pm: Bridegroom Service ~ Hymn of St. Kassiani the Nun	8:45—10:30 am: Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts 6:00—7:45 pm: Holy Unction (Ευχέλαιον) 7:45—9:00 pm: Holy Thursday Matins	8:45—11:00 am: Liturgy of the Last Supper 7:00—10:30 pm: The Passion Service	9:00—10:30 am: The Royal Hours 2:00—3:30 pm: “Descent from the Cross” Service 7:00—10:00 pm: “The Praises” Service	8:45—10:30 am: “First Resurrection” Liturgy of St. Basil 10:45 pm— 2:00 am: Resurrection Service & Paschal Divine Liturgy	11:15 am— 12:00 noon: <i>Agape</i> Vespers

Come and Worship with us!

HOLY WEEK REFLECTIONS (CON'T FROM PAGE 1)

sacrament shows the community of faith coming **together** for the spiritual betterment of all. That is something no person's "private spirituality" can accomplish: a family of faith united in prayer.

Holy Thursday brings us to the **remembrance of the Last Supper**, where Christ offers Himself to His disciples (those in the Upper Room that day and all of us who choose to commune from the Chalice at every Divine Liturgy). The **Passion Service** that evening brings the believer to experience the Lord's love for humanity in seeing Him crucified and hearing the Gospel accounts of how humanity rejected the Benefactor – and how He loves us nonetheless.

On Good Friday, we will **stand by the Lord's tomb to weep but to also anticipate** the Resurrection. We will chant the Hymns of Praise (Εγκώμια) to the Lord, kissing the Επιτάφιο as if we are worshipping His body in front of us. This is why we should be very reverent in our churches, not pushing who will go first in line.

Holy Saturday is the end of Holy Week, with a proclamation of the **Resurrection** and the words "Christ is Risen from the dead" said by every believer present. It is the feast of feasts, festival among all the festivals, the greatest event of humanity – the moment of our forgiveness, the time of our re-birth, the defeat over death and the devil.

On the day of Pascha, we have the **Agape Vespers**, where the Gospel is proclaimed in many languages. This shows the Message of Christ – that Orthodoxy – is not restricted to one culture, to one creed, to one people: it is to be shared with all of humanity, so "all people can be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth." (1 Tim. 2:4)

Holy Week is a time to thank God for His great mercy on His people. It is a time to re-charge your spiritual batteries. It is a time to praise God, no matter what the time of the services and the hours of the day. This week, we are called to find time for God and to thank Him for saving us from corruption and for bringing us back into Paradise!

A Blessed Holy Week to all! We hope that you can join us at Church so we may praise the Lord's Name together!



LEARN MORE ABOUT PASCHA...ONLINE!

The **Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America** has a special website that people can access information about all the feasts, Scriptural Readings, Prayers and Services, Articles and Discussions, Messages of the Ecumenical Patriarch, Hymns, Videos and much more about Great Lent, Holy Week and Pascha. The website is <http://lent.goarch.org>.

Mystagogy is the weblog of John Sanidopoulos, graduate of Holy Cross Orthodox School of Theology. A place filled with great articles and information about the Orthodox Church, it has a special section for Holy Week and Pascha. Access the info by going to <http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2011/04/holy-week-resource-page.html>

Finally, go to our website, www.LivingOrthodoxy.com to find information about the schedule of services, articles and much more about Holy Week and Pascha!



Kali Anastasi
from everyone at



Livingorthodoxy

Our Sunday School Students on iEcclesia Canada!!



On the first week of Lent, three youth from our parish (Eleni K., Jordan F. and Jamie F.) were featured on an episode of *iEcclesia Canada*, the official podcast of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto (Canada). The episode, *Orthodoxy in 2012*, was a discussion about the place of the Church in the 21st century. To listen to the podcast, click [here!](#)

To listen to other podcasts, go to iEcclesia Canada's website at ...

www.iEcclesiaCanada.com



**St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church
Religious Education Newsletter**

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**WANT THIS NEWSLETTER IN
YOUR INBOX? E-MAIL US!
STDEMETRIOS@GMAIL.COM**

The third Greek Orthodox Church in Toronto, St. Demetrios Church was founded in 1962. Since then, our Church has been the spiritual home of many Orthodox faithful from Toronto and vicinity. Our Church is a constituent member of the Greek Community of Toronto [www.greekcommunity.org] and under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Toronto (Canada) [www.gometropolis.org].

The Religious Education programs are attended by children, youth and young adults. Our tireless staff works to promote the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Parish Priest
Parish Council President
Philoptochos President
Religious Education Director
Young Adult League Leaders
Altar Servers Group
St. Paraskevi Girls Group

Greek Bible Study
Re-Catechism (English
Orthodox Discussion Group)

Rev. Fr. Konstantinos Pavlidis
Mr. A. Haros
Mrs. T. Koutsoubou
Mr. B. Polidoulis
Mrs. V. Vokas, Mr. N. Sotiropoulos
Dr. N. Vozoris, Mr. T. Prattas
Mrs. M. Hatzidemetriou-Fiuza,
Mrs. V. Evans-Makropoulos
Mr. B. Polidoulis
Mrs. F. Kapsalis, Mr. J. Kapsalis,
Mr. C. Makropoulos, Mr. T. Prattas

St. Demetrios Sunday School Lenten Youth Retreat 2012



**HAVE A
QUESTION?**



**SEE YOUR QUESTION IN ONE OF
OUR UPCOMING ISSUES BY
E-MAILING US AT
[STDEMETRIOS@
LIVINGORTHODOXY.COM](mailto:STDEMETRIOS@LIVINGORTHODOXY.COM)**

**Fr. Konstantinos, the Parish Council, Philoptochos,
Sunday School Teachers, Chanters, Choirs,
Altar Boys, & the staff of our Church wish you a
SPIRITUALLY UPLIFTING HOLY WEEK & BLESSED PASCHA!**

*Christ
is
Risen!*



**St. Demetrios
Sunday School**

30 Thorncliffe Park Drive
Toronto, ON M4H 1H8
Tel: 416-425-2485
stdemetrios@livingorthodoxy.com
www.livingorthodoxy.com

Who: Children and Youth (up to 19 yrs. old)
Where: St. Demetrios G.O. Church
When: Friday, April 6th (Roman Catholic Good Friday)
9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

FB Event: "St. Demetrios Lenten Youth Retreat 2012"
FB Group: "St. Demetrios Toronto is my Church!"