



## Quarterly Bulletin of Saint John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Church

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Diocese of the West - Orthodox Church in America

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His Beatitude, Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada

### Paschal Epistle

To the Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America,

My Beloved Children in the Lord,

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

*Now all is filled with light: heaven and earth and the lower regions. Let all creation celebrate the rising of Christ: in Him we are established.* (St. John Damascene, Paschal Canon, Ode Three)

Today we greet the most radiant feast of feasts, the king and lord of days, the Pascha of Christ our true God. Standing in the light of the Resurrection, we glimpse the true and unfading joy of the life to come. To be sure, even on this chosen and holy day of light-bearing festival, my own heart remains heavy as I look out upon the world and behold wars and terrorism, unjust imprisonment and persecution, civil strife and political divisions. Indeed, “the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of iniquity” (Ps. 73:20). The world and its troubles present a threefold temptation to Christians who behold this multitude of “dark places”: we are tempted to despair; we are tempted to indifference; and we are tempted to conform and subordinate our holy Orthodox Christian faith to

some worldly political program or ideology. However, with his Pascha, Christ offers us a different response: a hope beyond this world, yet already present in this world. As we sing in the Paschal Canon of St. John of Damascus, everything is filled with the light of the Resurrection, even the lower regions. Life has burst forth from the grave; a light has shone in darkness (Jn. 1:5). We dwell in a world of real trouble, real sorrow, real pain. The Lord came down into this world and became a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, and he felt pain in his heart—on the night in which he was given up, his soul was “exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death”—and pain in his flesh (Is. 53:3; Mt. 26:38). But out of pain, the Lord has brought forth healing; out of sorrow, he has wrought an incorruptible source of joy. He died, but now he lives forever, and he offers us the same hope: eternal life. And the eternal life that he offers is not just an extension of life in this world, with its ups and downs, sorrows and joys, sins and foibles and accidents. Rather he offers us abundant life, true life, by restoring our communion with God, who is the Source of life. This true and incorruptible life, a life of constant trust and love and joy, is not only available in the world to come. Whenever we believe in Christ and his Resurrection and accept the joy of his Pascha, we are already, through faith and hope, getting a foretaste of that life—a life without fear of suffering or death, that sees sorrow as a source of joy, since even in sorrow, Christ, the Man of Sorrows, is there, ready to draw near to us in a union of love. It is because of this that the holy Psalmist could write: “If I go up into heaven, thou art there; if I go down into hell, thou art present. If I take up my wings at dawn and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand guide me, and thy right hand shall hold me” (Ps. 138:8–10). Wherever we are, whatever troubles we experience in our lives, whatever troubles we behold in this world, Christ is there with us, suffering with us in our suffering and offering us the hope of the unfailing happiness of his Pascha, inviting us to be in the world and not of the world, storing up all our hope and all the treasure of our hearts with him, in the kingdom that has no end, where neither moth nor rust can destroy and where no thief can break in and steal (Mt. 6:20). May he who rose from the dead on the third day, kindling the light of hope for all the world, always shine upon our hearts with Paschal light, filling us with a joy-making desire for the good things to come and changing all our troubles and cares into opportunities to hope and trust.

To him, the Risen Lord, be all glory and adoration, together with his Father and his All-holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages!

Yours in the Risen Christ,

+ TIKHON

Archbishop of Washington,

Metropolitan of All America and Canada

## **Namesdays, Birthdays, and Anniversaries**

May 13- Namesday of Santiago Drexler

May 14- Namesday of Tamara Mikhailovsky

May 15- Namesday of Boris Gerlovin

May 20- Namesday of David Lozes

May 21- Namesday of Lilia Govorovskaia

June 3- Namesday of Konstantin Timokhin and Helen Pouschine

July 13- Birthday of Santiago Drexler

July 24- Namesday of Olga Tinina

*If you would like your namesday, birthday, and/or anniversary included in the future, please contact Fr. Edward at [revedwardhenderson@gmail.com](mailto:revedwardhenderson@gmail.com).*

## **Saint Eugene's Orthodox Summer Camp**

June 24-29

located at:

Archbishop Varche Hovsepian Camp

45000 Kings Canyon Road

Dunlap, CA 93621

[www.steugenecamp.org](http://www.steugenecamp.org)

For several decades, Orthodox youth (ages 7-17) have come together for a week to play and pray at our diocesan summer camp. Offering all the activities of a summer camp, in addition, attendees have the opportunity to meet other Orthodox kids, be encouraged in their faith in a solid Christian environment, and grow spiritually. Moreover, our parish has offered to sponsor two youths, covering the entire camp tuition (please contact Fr. Edward for sponsorship).

For more information, contact the Camp Director, Fr. Andrew Smith at [director@steugenecamp.org](mailto:director@steugenecamp.org)



# Schedule of Services

**Sundays:** Divine Liturgy at 10:00am

**Saturdays:** Vigil *or* Great Vespers at 5:00pm

## May, June, July services

Wednesday, June 12	Leave-taking of Pascha	Vigil	6:00pm
Thursday, June 13	Ascension	Liturgy	10:00am
Thursday, July 11		Vespers	6:00pm
Friday, July 12	Saints Peter and Paul	Liturgy	10:00am

More detailed service schedules are available on the parish website and at the candle desk.

## Upcoming Events

### July 1-12: Apostles' Fast

“Let God’s people then recognize that they are a new creation in Christ, and with all vigilance understand by Whom they have been adopted and Whom they have adopted. Let not the things, which have been made new, return to their ancient instability; and let not him who has ‘put his hand to the plough’ forsake his work, but rather attend to that which he sows than look back to that which he has left behind. Let no one fall back into that from which he has risen, but, even though from bodily weakness he still languishes under certain maladies, let him urgently desire to be healed and raised up. For this is the path of health through imitation of the Resurrection begun in Christ, whereby, notwithstanding the many accidents and falls to which in this slippery life the traveller is liable, his feet may be guided from the quagmire on to solid ground, for, as it is written, ‘the steps of a man are directed by the Lord, and He will delight in his way. When the just man falls he shall not be overthrown, because the Lord will stretch out His hand.’ These thoughts, dearly-beloved, must be kept in mind not only for the Easter festival, but also for the sanctification of the whole life, and to this our present exercise ought to be directed, that what has delighted the souls of the faithful by the experience of a short observance may pass into a habit and remain unalterably, and if any fault creep in, it may be destroyed by speedy repentance.” - Saint Leo the Great