



SAINT INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Our Resurrection

BY FATHER THEOPHAN

We are over halfway through the Lenten fast and coming upon our most sacred season of Holy Week and Pascha, when we remember our Lord's self-emptying death and His glorious Resurrection in detail. St. Sophrony of Essex wrote of Christ's humble, self-emptying (kenotic) work using a spiritual image of an inverted pyramid. In St. Sophrony's teaching, the worldly pyramid points upward, symbolizing the pursuit of power, status, and self-exaltation. Our fallen human tendency is to want to climb and put ourselves in a position of power and control where we rule over others. Often, this pursuit is masked with good intentions or seemingly virtuous endeavors. All the disorders of our world are wrapped up in our individual and corporate pursuit of wrestling our way through others to conquer the summit.

Our Lord Jesus Christ revealed a different way and, according to St. Sophrony, inverted the pyramid so that the pinnacle points downward. During Holy Week, we will remember our Lord's journey of humility, love, and self-sacrifice as He descends to the bottom of the inverted pinnacle. Our Lord descended through the Cross into the depths of human suffering and even death. Without participating in them, Jesus took on responsibility for the sins of the whole world. As He descended in humility, He embraced the entire world in His heart and carried our sins and burdens in His great love. On the surface, this looked like a humiliating defeat.



As followers of Christ, we should always be reminded of the unique Way that Jesus revealed to us. The Christian way is not about winning, achieving, getting our way, or ruling over others. The work of taking up our Cross and following Christ is attempting to live a life where we are willing to descend with Christ to the bottom of the inverted pyramid rather than pursuing a life of worldly success. If we take up our Cross, our lives will be typified by self-emptying, humility, taking responsibility for the sins of others, forgiveness, carrying the world in our hearts, and selfless love. At times, our self-emptying will look like the humiliation of shameful defeat.

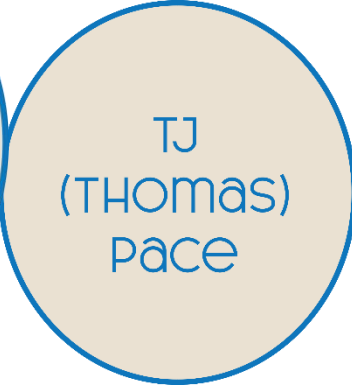
Our Lord promises us that “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Matt 23:12). Without our Lord’s self-emptying humiliation, there would be no exaltation in the Resurrection. As followers of Christ, this also holds true for us, without descending with our Lord in humility, there is no way for us to be raised up new.

At Pascha, we will joyfully celebrate our Lord’s defeat of sin, death, and the devil and His exaltation in the Resurrection. As we journey through the remainder of Lent to Holy Week and Pascha, may our Lord bless us to take up our Cross and follow Him in humility so that we, too, may be raised by the power of God.




KATHRYN
JOHNSON

**NEW
CATECHUMEN**



TJ
(THOMAS)
Pace

Welcome



**UPCOMING
BAPTISMS**

Lazurus Saturday
April 12th
8:30am

Paul Ories
Alex Wilkinson



**UPCOMING
CHRISMATIONS**

Palm Sunday
April 13th
9:00am

Jack Miller
Amelia (Mia) Bowers
Bethany Wilkinson



COFFEE HOUR

- Team 6 – April 6th
- Team 7 – April 13th
- Team 8 – April 20th
- Team 1 – April 27th
- Team 2 – May 2nd



MANY YEARS! BIRTHDAYS

- 2 – Mili Hayes
- 3 – Olga Collins
- 4 – Jessica Ennis
- 6 – Wyatt Pittman
- 9 – Dumitru Turner
- 11 – Brady Hough
- 11 – Stephen Marble
- 20 – Steven Davis
- 27 – Jeremy Plummer
- 29 – Gheorghe Codreanu
- 29 – Benjamin Truhn

CATECHUMEN



- Peyton Bass
- Amelia Bowers
- Anthony Gomez
- Carson Howell
- Kathryn Johnson
- Reid Johnson
- Ryan Kroger
- Tyler & Perlita McKoon
- Ryan Merkle
- Van Mickelson
- Jack Miller
- Paul Ories
- TJ Pace
- Nadia Stephens
- Jonathan & Stephanie Teel
- Joseph Thrasher
- Alex & Bethany Wilkinson
- Logan Willis

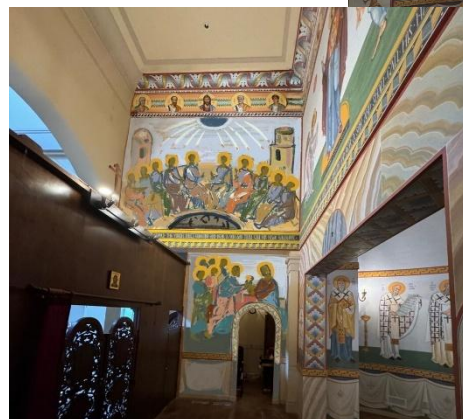
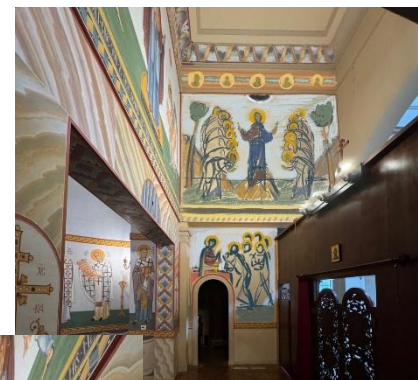


ICON CORNER

When one steps into an Orthodox church, one should feel as if one has entered a realm that celebrates the beauty of God's creation, a testament to His love for humanity. The traditional iconography gracing an Orthodox church's interior is a cornerstone of this celebration. Icons have always served as a medium of education in the Orthodox church, imparting the teachings of the Gospel through art. They are a powerful tool for conveying the Gospel's message, particularly the icons of Christ, which affirm the Incarnation.

We thank God that Vladimir and Olga Grygorenko recently completed and installed the first phase of iconography at St. Innocent (May 2024). It has significantly enhanced the beauty of our church. Vladimir has expressed his desire to move on to the second phase by 2026 (possibly earlier), allowing us time to gather the necessary funds.

We kindly request your generous donations to bless our second phase of iconography. It will enlighten those who already worship at St. Innocent and those who may "Come and See" in the future.



Donations can be made on the SIOC Website or on Realm.

PARISH WORKDAY

**Saturday, April 5th
9:00am-12:00pm
All are Welcome!**

It is Spring Cleaning time at the Parish.
Come join us ready to get dirty preparing our space
for the risen King!



HIGHLIGHTS

PANCAKES AND PALMS

**Saturday, April 12th
11:30am**

Join us for a Brunchy Lunch
following the
Lazarus Liturgy!

- Bundling palms and pussy willows
- Younger kids coloring a banner
- Adult and older teens making Palm Crosses
- Adults and older teens decorating the Nave for Palm Sunday.

**SAINT MARY OF EGYPT
CHILDREN’S CONFESSION**

**Sunday, April 6th
4:00**

Help your kids prepare by having a conversation
about Confession here are some helpful tips:

- Explain why we do Confession
- Explain how Confession works
 - During Holy Confession, we talk to our priest about everything we did that we are sorry for.
 - For older children you can have them think in categorical terms: Sins against God, Sins against Others, and Sins against Ourselves.
 - Our priest then prays for us, and our Lord forgives us.
- Give examples
 - Actions or sins that could be mentioned at Confession.
- Read a Psalm that is relative to Confession.

ST JOHN TEEN GROUP

**Tuesday, April 22nd
7:00 – 9:00pm**

S’mores Bar & Fire Pit Night

Where: Pelt Residence

How: We will meet at
Bright Week Vespers and go
together following the service



REMEMBER

**ARE YOU ON
REALM?**

We would love to have
you join us there! It is a
great way to keep up to
date with all that we are
doing at Saint Innocent.

**DO YOU GET THE
BULLETIN AND
NEWSLETTER
EMAILS?**

If not and you would like
to be added to the email
list, contact Sarah
Andrews

**DON’T FORGET THE
HOLY WEEK
OR
PASCHA
CELEBRATION
SIGN-UPS**

Both can be found in your
email or on Realm

PALM SUNDAY WEEKEND, HOLY WEEK AND BRIGHT WEEK EVENTS & SERVICES

Friday 4/11	6:30-8:00pm	– Lazurus Sat. Matins
Saturday 4/12	8:30-9:30am	– Baptisms
	10:00-11:30am	– Lazurus Liturgy
	11:30a-1:00p	– Pancakes & Palms (It's not just for the kids)
	6:00-8:00pm	– Palm Sunday Vigil
Sunday 4/13	9:00-9:30am	- Chrismations
	10:00-11:30am	– Palm Sunday Liturgy
	11:45a-12:45p	– Coffee Hour
	1:15-2:45pm	– Bridegroom Matins
Monday 4/14	6:30-8:00pm	– Bridegroom Matins
Tuesday 4/15	6:30-8:00pm	– Bridegroom Matins
Wednesday 4/16	6:30-8:30pm	– Holy Unction
Thursday 4/17	10:00a-12:00p	– Vesperal Divine Liturgy
	6:30-9:00pm	– Matins with 12 Passion Readings
Friday 4/18	10:00a-12:00p	– Royal Hours
	12:00-3:00pm	– Bier Decorating (Ladies)
	3:00-4:30pm	– Holy Friday Vespers
	6:30-8:30pm	– Holy Saturday Matins (Flower Girls wear White)
Saturday 4/19	10:00a-12:00p	– Holy Saturday Liturgy
	12:00-2:00pm	– Pascha Service Preparation
	11:30p-12:00a	– Pascha Midnight Office
Sunday 4/20	12:00-3:00am	– Pascha Matins and Liturgy
	3:00-4:00am	– Blessing of Baskets & Fellowship
	1:00-2:00pm	– Agape Vespers
	2:00-5:00pm	– Pascha Party & Egg Hunt
Monday 4/21	OFFICE CLOSED	
Tuesday 4/22	6:00-7:00pm	– Bright Week Vespers
	7:00-9:00pm	– Teen Group Gathering
Wednesday 4/23	9:00-10:30am	– Bright Week Liturgy
	6:30-8:30pm	– Men's Group Gathering
Thursday 4/24	6:00-7:00pm	– Bright Week Vespers
Friday 4/25	9:00-10:30am	– Bright Week Liturgy



MARCH MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Our Meeting in March was on Saturday March 22 @ 3:30pm

Dena Sue Watts has stepped down from Parish Council. We thank her for the time that she was able to give, she will be missed. We are looking ahead and discussing who can fill her spot for the remainder of the year.

Nicole Thomae has been researching different charities in the area that Saint Innocent can get involved with. She is specifically looking into charities that would give us the opportunity to serve, not just donate to. She provided us with a list to consider and will be meeting with Father to create a game plan going forward.

We gave our feedback from the Parish Expansion discussion on the 16th and looked more in depth at the survey results. It is clear, the parish body is not on the same page in terms of how they feel about expansion or starting a mission. We will not move forward on either front until, we determine if it is possible to expand our temple AND the parish agrees on how we should move forward. In the meantime, we will make small changes within the nave to help create more space and determine if the temple can be expanded. We are growing at a steady pace and will need to make some big decisions sooner rather than later. It is a hard place to be in, but God has grown and guided us this far, we will keep praying and following His lead.

We also talked about the Lilly Grant Meeting that was on the 1st. We had about 15 people that came to the meeting. The theme of the sabbatical is renewal, not just for the priest, but also the parish. A plan for parish renewal needs to accompany the plan for priest renewal. So, we will be looking at ways to increase the health of the church to be included in the grant package. We are currently researching ways to assess the parish to discover areas where the health of the parish can be strengthened, renewed, and better supported. Moreover, there is a need for a strong lay leadership team to take on all the extras Father does outside of his "priest only" duties. The next Lily Grant Meeting will be May 3rd @ 4pm.

We also gave our feedback on the Lenten Retreat. We all enjoyed Dr Tibbs sessions and felt she was a breath of fresh air. It was well attended by both us and Holy Cross. We will be looking into temporary drapes that can be put up to cover windows for lighting and or distraction purposes for the future.

Our final discussion topic was finances and the Treasurer's Report. As mentioned during the Annual Parish Meeting, we have paid off our parish hall bank debt with Planters First Bank. Throughout March, we clarified that we still owe the Diocese of the South \$87,500 in parish hall debt. The Diocese sent us a proposal to help us pay down this amount over a four-year term. They recommended that we apply \$42,000 from our savings deposited with the Diocese, which includes our emergency fund and building fund. In return for this payment, they offered us a tithe credit of \$34,000 to be applied to our loan over the next four years. This plan will save us \$34,000, and we will be fully paid off in four years, or possibly sooner, depending on donation levels. We have agreed to the Diocese's proposal and will continue to use the funds that people have designated for paying off the parish hall until it is fully settled. If you have any questions, please feel free to speak to Fr. Theophan or someone on the Parish Council.

Our next Meeting will be Wednesday, May 7th at 7:00pm

APRIL 2025 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Mar 30 St. John Climacus 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:30pm Orthodox Spiritual Life	Mar 31 10:00am Presanctified Liturgy for St. Innocent's Repose	1	2	3	4	5
6 St. Mary of Egypt 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:20pm Altar Server Pascha Practice Youth Confession Day	7 (Office Closed)	8	9	10	11	12
13 PALM SUNDAY 9:00am Chrismations 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy with Palm Procession 11:45am Food and Fellowship 1:15pm Bridegroom Matins	14 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins	15 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins	16 6:30pm Holy Unction	17 10:00am Mystical Supper Vesperal Divine Liturgy 6:30pm Passion Matins	18 10:00am Royal Hours 12:00pm Decorate the Bier 3:00pm Vespers 6:30pm Lamentation Matins	19 10:00am Harrowing of Hades Vesperal Divine Liturgy 12:00pm Set up for Pascha 11:30pm Pascha Midnight Office
20 PASCHA 12:00am Pascha Matins 1:30am Paschal Divine Liturgy 3:00am Blessing of the Pascha Baskets 1:00pm Agape Vespers 2:00pm Parish Pascha Celebration	21 (Office Closed)	22 6:00pm Bright Week Vespers 7:00pm Youth Group	23 9:00am Bright Week Liturgy 6:30pm Men's Fellowship	24 6:00pm Bright Week Vespers	25 9:00am Bright Week Liturgy	26 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
27 St. Thomas Sunday 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Radonitsa Panikhida w/ blessing of graves 12:15pm Food and Fellowship	28 (Office Closed)	29	30 6:00pm Daily Vespers 7:00pm Catechism	May 1	May 2	May 3 9:00am Loaves and Fishes 4:00pm Lilly Grant Meeting 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession

MAY 2025 CALENDAR - TENTATIVE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Apr 27 St. Thomas Sunday 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Radonitza Panikhida w/ blessing of graves 12:15pm Food and Fellowship	Apr 28 (Office Closed)	Apr 29	Apr 30 6:00pm Daily Vespers 7:00pm Catechism	1	2	3 9:00am Loaves and Fishes 4:00pm Lilly Grant Meeting 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
4 Holy Myrrhbearing Women 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	5 (Office Closed)	6	7 6:00pm Daily Vespers 7:00pm Parish Council	8 St. John the Theologian 9:00am Divine Liturgy	9	10 12-5pm Men's Grill Out 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
11 Mother's Day St. Cyril and Methodius 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	12 (Office Closed)	13 6:00pm Daily Vespers for Mid-feast 7:00pm Catechism	14 9:00am Divine Liturgy for Mid-feast	15	16	17 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
18 Samaritan Woman 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	19 (Office Closed)	20	21 6:00pm Daily Vespers 7:00pm Catechism	22	23	24 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
25 Blind Man 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	26 Memorial Day (Office Closed)	27	28 6:00pm Vigil for the Ascension	29 ASCENSION OF THE LORD 9:00am Feetal Divine Liturgy	30	31 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession