

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
12 PASCHA!!! Divine Liturgy 10:00AM Blessing Baskets, Youth Egg Hunt, Coffee Fellowship	13 Bright Monday Liturgy 9:30AM Wings at Wingstop to follow.	14 No Service	15 Bright Wed. Liturgy 9:30AM	16	17	18
19 St Thomas Sunday! Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10AM	20 Priest Convocation At Camp Nazareth in PA	21 Priest Convocation At Camp Nazareth in PA	22 6:00PM w/ Bible Study Catechesis	23 Priest Convocation At Camp Nazareth in PA	24	25
26 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM Blessing Graves 2:00PM	27	28	29 Daily Vespers 6:00PM w/ Spirituality Class	30	MAY 1	2
3 Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM	4	5	6th MidPentecost Liturgy 9:30AM Daily Vespers 6:00PM w/ Bible Study	7	8	9
10 Mother's Day Breakfast offered by Parish Matins 9:00AM Liturgy 10:00AM	11	12 Liturgy 9AM	13 Daily Vespers 6:00PM w/ Spirituality Class	14	15	16

+CONFESSIONS: Please call Fr. Jonathan to make an appointment. Confession is a sacrament of the Church through which we receive the forgiveness of our sins. Understanding sin as an illness of the soul, in confession we share our sins like we would an illness to a doctor and the priest offers the prayer of forgiveness and at times a word to encourage hope and may prescribe / suggest ways to invite Christ into needed areas of our life.

+PASTORAL NEEDS, HOSPITAL CALLS, NURSING/REHAB AND HOME-BOUND PARISHIONERS: If you have a pastoral need or emergency and would like to speak to Fr. Jonathan or know of someone who cannot make it to church and would like to schedule a pastoral visit, please contact Father by phoning at 815.721.4852

+ BOOKSTORE NEWS: We have books for all ages for your Lenten reading or Pascha gifts. Additionally, new prayer books are available for purchase, plus icons, and more!



+ NEW PARISH WEBSITE



New Online Giving Platform.



CHRIST THE SAVIOUR



ORTHODOX CHURCH

April 12th 2026
PALM SUNDAY BULLETIN

1802 Pershing Ave. Rockford, Illinois 61108 - Father Jonathan Bannon
Father's Cell Phone: 815-721-4952 e: jsbannon@gmail.com www.CTSRockford.org



Schedule of Services for Bright Week



CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!
CHRISTOS ANESTI! ALITHOS ANESTI!



CHRISTOS A INVIAT! ADEVERAT A
INVIAT! CHRISTOS VOSKRESE! VO
ISTINU VOSKRESE
ĀalmaSiH qām! Haqqan qām



Krishti U Ngjall! Vertet U Ngjall!

No Fasting for 40 Days

- **April 12th 2025 - Great and Holy Pascha, Resurrection of the Lord 10:00 AM -** Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Blessing of Pascha Baskets, Outdoor Community Fellowship with Tent, Youth Egg Hunt (FAST FREE WEEK)
- April 13th - 9:30AM Bright Monday Divine Liturgy w/ Paramony Gospels in four corners of Church
- April 15th - 9:30 AM Bright Tuesday Divine Liturgy
- **NEXT SUNDAY** April 27th Matins 9AM, Divine Liturgy 10AM

Fr. Jonathan Will be attending the annual Priest Convocation at Camp Nazareth in Mercer, PA from April 28th through May 1st. If there is an emergency please do not hesitate to contact Fr. Jonathan and he will respond accordingly. (Cell: 815-721-4952)

GRAVE BLESSINGS

- April 26th 2026 Grave Blessing at 2PM at Greenwood Cemetery
- 1011 Auburn St, Rockford, IL 61103

MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH

- May 10th - Matins 9AM, 10:00AM - Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
- MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH offered by the Brotherhood (men of the Parish.)

EXPLORING ORTHODOXY?

We have an inquiring minds class on most Sundays following services around 12:30PM and on Wednesdays after our Bible Study. Please feel welcome to attend and bring any questions you may have. Enjoy the day of Pascha, and if you need a prayer rope or are interested in learning more about Cultivating a prayer routine, a heart of remembrance of God, Please feel confident to ask Fr. Jonathan. The name of The Lord is food and drink for the thirsty soul.



PASCHA 1945 IN DACHAU

This is my father's account of how he celebrated the feast in 1945.

April 27th: The last transport of prisoners arrives from Buchenwald. Of the 5,000 originally destined for Dachau, I was among the 1,300 who had survived the trip. Many were shot, some starved to death, while others died of typhus...

April 28th: I and my fellow prisoners can hear the bombardment of Munich taking place some 30 km from our concentration camp. As the sound of artillery approaches ever nearer from the west and the north, orders are given proscribing prisoners from leaving their barracks under any circumstances. SS-soldiers patrol the camp on motorcycles as machine guns are directed at us from the watch-towers, which surround the camp.

April 29th: The booming sound of artillery has been joined by the staccato bursts of machine gun fire. Shells whistle over the camp from all directions. Suddenly white flags appear on the towers - a sign of hope that the SS would surrender rather than shoot all prisoners and fight to the last man. Then, at about 6:00 p.m., a strange sound can be detected emanating from somewhere near the camp gate which swiftly increases in volume...

Finally all 32,600 prisoners join in the cry as the first American soldiers appear just behind the wire fence of the camp. After a short while electric power is turned off, the gates open and the American GIs make their entrance. As they stare wide-eyed at our lot, half-starved as we are and suffering from typhus and dysentery, they appear more like fifteen-year-old boys than battle-weary soldiers...

An international committee of prisoners is formed to take over the administration of the camp. Food from SS-stores is put at the disposal of the camp kitchen. A US military unit also contributes some provision, thereby providing me with my first opportunity to taste American corn. By order of an American officer radio-receivers are confiscated from "prominent Nazis" in the town of Dachau and distributed to the various national groups of prisoners. The news come in: Hitler has committed suicide, the Russians have taken Berlin, and German troops have surrendered in the South and in the North. But the fighting still rages in Austria and Czechoslovakia...

Naturally, I was ever cognizant of the fact that these momentous events were unfolding during Holy Week. But how could we mark it, other than through our silent, individual prayers? A fellow-prisoner and chief interpreter of the International prisoner's committee, Boris F., paid a visit to my typhus-infested barrack "Block 27" to inform me that efforts were underway in conjunction with the Yugoslav and Greek National Prisoner's Committees to arrange an Orthodox service for Easter day, May 6th.

There were Orthodox priests, deacons and a group of monks from Mount Athos among the prisoners. But there were no vestments, no books whatsoever, no icons, no candles, no prosphoras, no wine...

Efforts to acquire all these items from the Russian parish in Munich failed, as the Americans just could not locate anyone from that parish in the devastated city. Nevertheless, some of the problems could be solved: The approximately 400 Catholic priests detained in Dachau had been allowed to remain together

in one barrack and recite mass every morning before going to work. They offered us Orthodox the use of their prayer room in "Block 26", which was just across the road from my own "block". The chapel was bare, save for a wooden table and a Czenstochowa icon of the Theotokos hanging on the wall above the table -
Article Continued in back of bulletin...

an icon which had originated in Constantinople and was later brought to Belz in Galicia, where it was subsequently taken from the Orthodox by a Polish king. When the Russian Army drove Napoleon's troops from Czenstochowa, however, the abbot of the Czenstochowa Monastery gave a copy of the icon to czar Alexander I, who placed it in the Kazan Cathedral in Saint-Petersburg where it was venerated until the Bolshevik seizure of power. A creative solution to the problem of the vestments was also found. New linen towels were taken from the hospital of our former SS-guards. When sewn together lengthwise, two towels formed an epitrichilion and when sewn together at the ends they became an orarion. Red crosses, originally intended to be worn by the medical personnel of the SS-guards, were put on the towel-vestments.

On Easter Sunday, May 6th (April 23rd according to the Church calendar), - which ominously fell that year on Saint George the Victory-Bearer's Day, Serbs, Greeks and Russians gathered at the Catholic Priests barrack. Although Russians comprised about 40 percent of the Dachau inmates, only a few managed to attend the service. By that time "repatriation officers" of the special "Smersh" units had arrived in Dachau by American military planes, and begun the process of erecting new lines of barbed wire for the purpose of isolating Soviet citizens from the rest of the prisoners, which was the first step in preparing them for their eventual forced repatriation. **In the entire history of the Orthodox Church there has probably never been an Easter service like the one at Dachau in 1945.** Greek and Serbian priests together with a Serbian deacon adorned the make-shift "vestments" over their blue and gray-striped prisoners uniforms. Then they began to chant, changing from Greek to Slavonic, and then back again to Greek. The Easter Canon, the Easter Sticheras - **everything was recited from memory. The Gospel - "In the beginning was the Word" - also from memory.**

And finally, the Homily of Saint John Chrysostom - **also from memory.** A young Greek monk from the Holy Mountain stood up in front of us and recited it with such infectious enthusiasm that we shall never forget him as long as we live. Saint John Chrysostomos himself seemed to speak through him to us and to the rest of the world as well! Eighteen Orthodox priests and one deacon - most of whom were Serbs, participated in this unforgettable service. Like the sick man who had been lowered through the roof of a house and placed in front of the feet of Christ the Saviour, the Greek Archimandrite Meletios was carried on a stretcher into the chapel, where he remained prostrate for the duration of the service.

The priests who participated in the 1945 Dachau Easter service are commemorated at every Divine Service held in the Dachau Russian Orthodox Memorial Chapel, along with all Orthodox Christians, who lost their lives "at this place, or at another place of torture" ("na meste sem i v inykh mestakh mucheniya umuchennykh i ubiennykh"). The Dachau Resurrection-Chapel, which was constructed by a unit of the Russian Army's Western Group of Forces just before their departure from Germany in August, 1994, is an exact replica of a North-Russian "tent-domed" (Shatrovyie) church or chapel. Behind the altar-table of the chapel is a large icon depicting angels opening the gates of the Dachau concentration camp and Christ Himself leading the prisoners to freedom. Today I would like to take the opportunity to ask you, Orthodox Christians all over the world, to pass on the names of fellow Orthodox who were imprisoned and died here in Dachau or in other Nazi concentration camps so that we can include them in our prayers. Should you ever come to Germany, be sure to visit our Chapel on the site of the former concentration camp in Dachau and pray for all those who died "at this place, or at another place of torture".

Khristos voskrese! Christos anesti! Christ has risen! El Messieh Qahm!



Where do we go from here?

Was Lent just a time the Church wanted us to eat less and pray more?

From a distance, it might seem that way. But Lent was far more than a diet or a spiritual to-do list. It was a time to regain our footing, to remember who we are as God's children. Wrapped up in the cares of this world, we so easily forget that Heaven is our true home, a destination that requires our attention and intentional choices now, while we still have time.



Great Lent was the Church's way of calling our hearts and minds back, like lost sheep returning to the fold. It reminds us how good the Lord is, how rich His mercy can be when we're attentive to Him.

But now what?

We enter *Paschaltide*, the joyful season that follows Pascha (Easter). The Church, in its wisdom and balance, shifts the tone: for 40 days we fasted, knelt in repentance, and labored in prayer. Now we hear the invitation:

"No more kneeling until Pentecost!"

"Rejoice and celebrate the Lord's Resurrection!"

Let the spirit of Lent become a springboard into the rest of your life.

Did you find beauty in the stillness and in deeper prayer? Then keep praying. Make room for stillness. The quickest road to Christ is a still a humble heart, so be humble, and give God the chance to speak. Do we have a prayer corner at home? Give God the space to speak. Why do people go to coffee shops to do work? Being around others has been studied to offer an ease of stress and increase in areas of healing because we are not islands, we are people of relationship. If a coffee shop helps in an unspoken way then how much more are we made to be in communion with each other around the chalice of Christ?

Come to *Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church*, where we're not looking to fill pews with numbers. We want to grow together, as a family in Christ, learning from one another and loving our Lord, just as He commanded.

We love our Church, and we'd love for you to come and see.

- Christ is Risen!

Fr. Jonathan

Our Hierarchy:
**His Eminence
Metropolitan
Gregory of Nyssa**

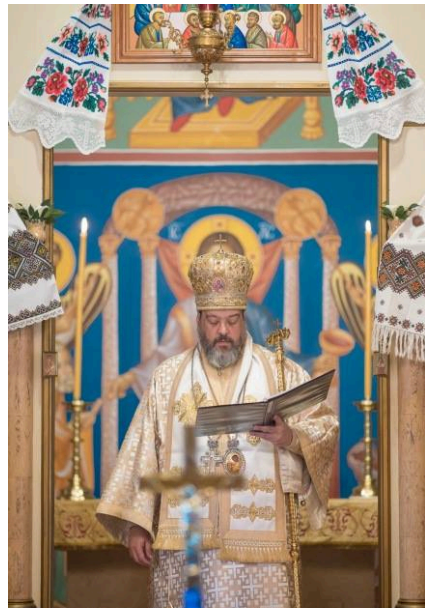
Consider sending
our beloved
hierarchy a Pascha
letter / card.

**312 Garfield Street
Johnstown, PA**



Begin all letters with *"Master Bless! Your Eminence Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa,"*

These photos are from the 60th anniversary Church/Altar Consecration when His Eminence brought and sealed relics of saints in the altar and blessed our church. It was SUCH an incredible weekend and we are thankful for the love our hierarchy shared with us. Let's invite our Metropolitan to visit us again soon!



A PASCHAL HOMILY

by Melito of Sardis

Christ rose up from the dead, and cried aloud with this voice: Who is he who contends with me? Let him stand in opposition to me. I set the condemned man free; I gave the dead man life; I raised up the one who had been entombed.

102. Who is my opponent? I, he says, am the Christ. I am the one who destroyed death, and triumphed over the enemy, and trampled Hades under foot, and bound the strong one, and carried off man to the heights of heaven, I, he says, am the Christ.

103. Therefore, come, all families of men, you who have been befouled with sins, and receive forgiveness for your sins. I am your forgiveness, I am the passover of your salvation, I am the lamb which was sacrificed for you, I am your ransom, I am your light, I am your saviour, I am your resurrection, I am your king, I am leading you up to the heights of heaven, I will show you the eternal Father, I will raise you up by my right hand.

104. This is the one who made the heavens and the earth, and who in the beginning created man, who was proclaimed through the law and prophets, who became human via the virgin, who was hanged upon a tree, who was buried in the earth, who was resurrected from the dead, and who ascended to the heights of heaven, who sits at the right hand of the Father, who has authority to judge and to save everything, through whom the Father created everything from the beginning of the world to the end of the age.

105. This is the alpha and the omega. This is the beginning and the end—an indescribable beginning and an incomprehensible end. This is the Christ. This is the king. This is Jesus. This is the general. This is the Lord. This is the one who rose up from the dead. This is the one who sits at the right hand of the Father. He bears the Father and is borne by the Father, to whom be the glory and the power forever. Amen.”

PASCHAL MESSAGE OF ST AMBROSE OF MILAN

*Timeless words from our Father among the Saints,
Ambrose the Bishop of Milan who himself peacefully
fell asleep in Christ at dawn on Pascha in the year
397:*

What use is there to celebrate Holy Pascha (which means “a passing over”) for those who observe it only externally? What benefit do they receive if they themselves do not pass over and partake of the Paschal Lamb? They deserve every pity and the Church prays for them that our Lord Jesus Christ, our eternal Pascha, set them on the right path and bring them to their senses. And so I too implore you, brethren, to celebrate Pascha in a manner worthy of its significance. Let us sinners celebrate it by passing over from a sinful life to a virtuous one; let those who think of themselves as perfectly righteous celebrate it by passing over from their degree of righteousness to a still higher degree, from piety to greater piety, from perfection to perfection, so that none would remain without passing over to something better, and from that to something far better, ‘forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before’ (Philip. 3:13). Celebrating Pascha in this manner, we will remain true Christians, observing our Pascha in a worthy fashion. May the One responsible for the present Feast, and Who Himself lives and reigns in endless time for ever and ever, help us through His grace.

- quoted from the Easter Greeting of Bishop Basil of Wichita

Ministries of our Parish

- **PROSFORA:** Pani Marianna
 - Prosfora offered today by Amber Hackiewicz
- **CHOIR:** Caroline Erber
- **ATRIUM (Montessori):** Laura Warmke
- **SCRIPTURE CLASS:** Kevin Shedd
- **LIBRARY & BOOK STORE:** Amber Hathcock, Christine Blanco, & Fr. Jonathan
- **HOSPITALITY/ COFFEE HOUR:**
Point Persons: Manal & Maurice AlMassad, and Curtis Barnes
- **SISTERHOOD WOMEN’S GROUP:**
President: Sophie Brucki
Vice President: Jenna Shedd
Treasurer: Irena Larson
- **Candle Ministry:** Curtis Barnes
A day for making candles will be scheduled.
Share your interest with Curtis!
- **Incense Ministry:** forthcoming. This is looking promising, Ask Ben and Amy if you want an update.
- **MEAL TRAINS:** Jenna Shedd, Savannah Diaz
- **OCLife Sanctity of Life Group:** Dan Daub, Tyler and Savannah Diaz
- **Venison Ministry!** Deer Meat locally bow-hunted and offered to care for others.
- **Love in Deed: (Current Needs: Snow removal)** (Caring for our Oldest Members): Christine Blanco, Vashawn Harshman, Curtis & Pam Barnes
- **Church Maintenance:** Victor Nafranowicz with Jesse Gruber, Jackson McCumber.
- **College Student Ministry:**
OCF Chapter: Rockford Region
Spiritual Advisor: Fr. Jonathan
Are you a college student and seeking fellowship and the programs OCF provides? Speak with Fr. Jonathan and check out OCF.net
- **Serving Our Neighbor Food Pantry:** Non-Perishable Food Care for our immediate neighborhood: Naomi Reid, Curtis and Pam Barnes, Gerhard and Nicole Meier, and all who would like to join the conversation with designing the cross / container that will hold the items for those in need.
- **PARISH BOARD / COUNCIL:**

Parish Priest: Fr. Jonathan Bannon
Parish Board President: Maurice AlMassad
Parish Board V. President: Curtis Barnes IV

Treasurer: Jenna Shedd
Financial Secretary: David Shinn
Recording Secretary: Amber Hackiewicz

- Coffee Hour Set Up and Clean Up? Sign Up Online.
- **Interested in serving your God and His Church?** Ask your priest, a board member, and anyone of the main contacts of these growing ministries.

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS

We are happy you have joined us today. It is our pleasure to have you in our presence this morning and we wish God’s Blessings to all who visit with us today & hope you stop in again soon!

You have just experienced the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. It is our ordinary service of worship on regular Sundays in the Orthodox Church. The Liturgy - as experienced this morning- stems from the 4th century though its practices were inherited from the time of the Apostles in the book of Acts. It also represents a time when all Christians worshipped in One Undivided Church. If you have any questions in regards to our worship or the Orthodox Church in general please see Fr. Jonathan and he will gladly answer any of your questions to the best of his ability. He looks forward to meeting you.

At our best, we are known for our welcoming attitude, hospitality generosity and compassion. At our worst, we are sinners, but we’re working out our salvation together and could use your help. If you are looking for a church home, and a church where we work on our own hearts first we hope you prayerfully consider making Christ the Savior’s that place. Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory Be Forever!

SPEAKING WITH YOUR PRIEST:

Please know you can call me anytime if there is something troubling you. It is not a sign of weakness to share something that may be heavy on your heart or mind. As a priest and Father to our parish, I want you to feel invited to have confidence in calling if you need someone to listen or to pray for you. My cell: 815-721-4952. Every heart has a cross and you do not need to carry it alone. - Fr. Jonathan



Office of the Metropolitan

*312 Garfield Street
Johnstown, PA 15906*

April 12, 2026

Protocol No. 6/2026

PASCHA ARCHPASTORAL LETTER

To the Very Reverend Protopresbyters, Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers, and Faithful (Young and Old) of our God-Protected Diocese:

CHRIST IS RISEN!

INDEED HE IS RISEN!

CHRISTOS VOSKRES!

VOISTINNU VOSKRESE!

CHRISTOS ANESTI!

ALITHOS ANESTI!

“Christ is Risen from the dead, trampling down death by death,
and to those in the tombs bestowing life.”

Today I greet you with great love and joy in the Name of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ following His glorious Resurrection. On Great and Holy Pascha, we behold the triumph of Christ, as He rose from death to life, from darkness of the tomb into the Light. With the Resurrection of Christ, all Creation is filled with a new Light of life and joy. On this Feast of Feasts, this Holy Day of Holy Days, we all proclaim the only truth that matters, the Truth that Christ is Risen!

We gather together as family and friends, in joy and in love, celebrating the presence of the Risen Lord in our midst, and singing with one voice the triumphant hymn "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and to those in the tombs bestowing life."

This day of the Resurrection marks the beginning of an explosion of joy that comes immediately after the spiritually intense period of Great Lent and Holy Week. This beautiful hymn captures in three verses the fundamental message of the Feast of the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a message of victory, of love, and of hope in everlasting life. On this day, and throughout the Paschal season over the next forty days, we proclaim this message of victory, love, and hope together in song through this beautiful hymn at the beginning of every divine service in our Church. This hymn, simple in form yet deep in power, is worthy of study as we seek to fully understand its meaning

The first verse of this hymn expresses the reality of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, "Christ is risen from the dead." This reality of the Resurrection has been a distinguishing feature of Christianity from the beginning. St. Paul expresses this idea to the Corinthians "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (I Corinthians 15:17). He declares unequivocally that Christ has been raised from the

The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of North America
ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

dead, that He appeared after His resurrection to as many as five hundred people at one time, most of whom were still alive when St. Paul was writing. (I Corinthians 15:6). The reassuring words of this Epistle continue to provide us with their intended effect, which is that our faith in Christ is not futile at all and that, because of the reality of His Resurrection, we are no longer held captive to our sins.

The second verse of the Paschal hymn explains to us the extraordinary manner by which Christ conquered death's dominion over us once and for all: "Trampling death by death." When Jesus was crucified, He took on the sins of all humanity and suffered the intensity of which remains truly incomprehensible to us as human beings. This demonstrates the unending love of our God, Who took on human flesh and Who died on a Cross for our salvation. By submitting Himself to death, Christ not only annihilated sin but also death. The final defeat of the archenemy death could not happen but only through death itself, not an ordinary death however, but the death of God who became man.

The third and final verse reveals the very essence of the feast, for it encapsulates the full consequence of Christ's Resurrection from the dead: "And to those in the tombs bestowing life." To all of us on this day then, this is a day of promise and of hope for life everlasting with Him. This last verse reiterates the message that St. Paul was communicating to the Romans when he wrote that as Christians we are dead to sin but alive in Christ: "We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). This is the message of our Orthodox Christian faith which we celebrate on this day, and indeed every day of our lives here on Earth. It is a message that proclaims our ultimate victory over all forces of darkness that attempt to impede our progress on the road to salvation and eternal life with Jesus Christ.

It is in this spirit that our repeated singing of this beautiful triumphant hymn for 40 days will enable us to come closer and closer toward understanding the power of its message:

CHRIST IS RISEN!

INDEED HE IS RISEN!

May the Clergy and Laity, Friends and Supporters of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese experience the love, joy, and excitement of the early followers of Christ when they first saw Him after His Resurrection. Christ is Risen!

Working in the Risen Lord's Vineyard with much love,

+Metropolitan Gregory of Nyssa

To be read as the sermon in all churches of the Diocese at the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ!

The American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of North America
ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE OF CONSTANTINOPLE

