



**ST. PETER & ST. PAUL
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**105 CLIFTON AVE
ANSONIA, CT 06401**

Rectory Phone 203-734-3895

Church Hall 203-732-2414

Fax 203-732-3191

Fr. Ed Cell 413-218-6404

Email: YoungE8073@aol.com

Web Site: www.stspucc.org.

Very Rev. Archpriest Edward Canon Young, Pastor

March 21, 2021

Leaders of the Apostles and teachers of the world, pray to the Master of all to grant peace to the world and great mercy to our souls.



Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast – Mary of Egypt, our Venerable Father and Confessor James, Bishop of Catania

Epistle: Hebrews 9: 11-14

Gospel: Mark 10:32 - 45

Tone: Sheet

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE

WEEKDAYS: MONDAY–FRIDAY 10:00AM

SATURDAY: Not Now! 4:00PM (Vigil Sunday-Eng.)

SUNDAY: 8:30 AM (Ukr.) & 10:00 AM (Eng.)

Confessions are heard before each Divine Liturgy:

Saturday 3:00PM to 3:30 PM

Sunday 8:00AM to 8:30AM and
9:30AM until 10:00AM

Religious Education – Saturday 10:00AM – 11:00AM
Call Alice O'Doy @203-734-3055 for more information.

Preservation – Please use the form in church vestibule, mail it to the church or bring it to Bob Jaskilka, Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

Address or Name Change/New Phone Number – Please update your records. See Bob Jaskilka, or Michael Wysowski, Jr. to update this info. Returned checks are subject to a **\$35.00 fee**.

Bulletin Notices – Notices for the bulletin must be **in writing** by Wednesday @6PM to be included in that week's bulletin.

Parish Council meets every 3rd Wednesday of every month @7:15pm in the church hall.

Rectory Office Hours - Thursday 10AM – Noon
or by Appointment on other days

******Please Note ******

Mass Offerings , Sorokousty

Mother's Day, Father's Day

Checks must be made out to the Fr. Young
not the Church ! Thank You...

Baptism Arrangement for baptism is to be made personally at the Parish Office. Please call rectory for an appointment.

Marriage – Arrangements for marriage are to be made at least **6 months prior** to the Wedding date. Please call rectory for an appointment.

Sick Calls – To arrange for Sacraments for the elderly and sick at home, please call Parish Office Fr. Young at 203-734-3895, **Please advise the rectory of any hospitalization.**

In your Estate planning – Remember Sts. Peter & Paul Church in your will.

Stewardship - "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). All Catholics, should give generous support—time, money, prayers, and personal service according to their circumstances—to parish and diocesan programs and to the universal Church

Special Share in the Eucharist *– Bread & Wine

offered for a week, month, or year. Donations: one week - \$20.00 Donors/intentions will be listed.

Bob Jaskilka, or Michael Wysowski, Jr or Fr. Edward Young

Eternal Light *– offered to light for a week \$10.00.

Bob Jaskilka, or Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

Virgin Mary's Lamp and Sacred Heart Lamp* also available for offering! Offered to light for a week is 10.00, each.

Bob Jaskilka, or Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

All start on Monday to Sunday!

***Offering must be made when dates are reserved!**

A **Welcome to St. Peter and St. Paul Parish** to all who are worshipping with us today. If you are over twenty-one years of age and have not yet registered, have moved or will be moving, or have a new telephone number, **please fill out the form below**. Each household **must be registered** at St. Peter and St. Paul and every adult receives a set of stewardship envelopes. Registration also entails an annual dues to the parish. If a parishioner is not registered, it is difficult for church authorities to issue him or her a sponsor certificate, reference, or any other certification.

Name _____ Phone# _____

Address _____ E-mail _____




City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(Please come down to the Basement to be properly registered after or before liturgy)

From Vespers of the Fifth Sunday of Lent the Sunday of Mother Mary of Egypt: Having worshipped at the holy places with great joy, O Mother Mary of Egypt you have received saving grace for the journey of virtue, and with all haste you have set out upon the good path you have chosen. Crossing the stream of the Jordan, with eagerness you have gone to live in the dwelling place of the Baptist. you have tamed the savagery of the passions through your ascetic way of life, and boldly you have broken the rebelliousness of the flesh, O Mother Mary of Egypt ever-glorious. Having gone to dwell in the wilderness, you had blotted out from your soul the images of your sensual passions, and marked upon it the God-given imprint of holiness. You attained such glory, blessed Mother Mary of Egypt as to walk upon the surface of the water, and in your prayers to God you were raised up from the earth. And now, all-glorious Mary of Egypt, standing before Christ with boldness, entreating Him for our souls.

Bread and Wine Offering - None Offered

03/20	Saturday Parish Mission	9:30 AM 10:00 AM 3:00PM 4:00 PM	Akathitos Saturday in Honor of the Mother of God 9:30 AM Children Confessions 10:00 AM Children Liturgy with Sermon by Fr. Philip 3:00 PM Confessions Father Philip This day is also a special of Remembrance for those who have died from Covid -19 4:00 PM Divine Liturgy offered for those who have lost their lives to Covid -19
03/21	Sunday Parish Mission	8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Pro Populo (For Parishioners) - За Всix Парафіян +Thomas Monks req. by Susan Monks & family
03/22	Monday		No Liturgy
03/23	Tuesday	10:00 AM	Funeral of +Barbara Lypen
03/24	Wednesday	6:00PM	Station of the Cross in English
03/25	Thursday	10:00 AM 7:00 PM	Feast of the Annunciation of the Mother of God A HOLY DAY of OBLIGATION Pro Populo (For Parishioners) - За Всix Парафіян +Anne B. Petriw req. by Scott & Jean Walker & Family
03/26	Friday	6:00 PM	Station of the Cross in Ukrainian
03/27	Saturday	10:00 AM	Lazarus Saturday + Frank Zelinsky
03/28	Sunday	8:30 AM 10:00 AM	The Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem: Flowery (Palm) Sunday Pro Populo (For Parishioners) - За Всix Парафіян +Antoinette "Toni" Jaskilka req. by Robert Jaskilka

ETERNAL LIGHT		<i>In loving memory of +Peter Symochko by John & Helen Zanowiak & Family</i>	
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP		<i>In loving memory of +Peter Symochko by John & Helen Zanowiak & Family</i>	
SACRED HEART of JESUS LAMP		<i>In loving memory of +Anna Rydzzyk by Stefania & Jan Gebuza & Family</i>	
BREAD & WINE OFFERING RESERVED DATES 4/12/21-4/18/21 5/3/21-5/9/21 11/1/21-11/7/21	ETERNAL LIGHT LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 3/29/21-4/4/21 4/5/21-4/11/21 4/12/21-4/18/21 4/26/21-5/02/21 5/3/21-5/9/21 5/10/21-5/16/21 5/31/21-6/6/21 6/14/21-6/20/21 8/2/21-8/8/21 8/9/21-8/15/21 9/6/21-9/12-21 9/20/21-9/26/21 11/22/21-11/28/21	BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 3/29/21-4/4/21 4/12/21-4/18/21 4/19/21-4/25/21 4/26/21-5/02/21 5/3/21-5/9/21 5/10/21-5/16/21 5/17/21-5/23/21 8/2/21-8/8/21 8/9/21-8/15/21 8/23/21-8/29/21 9/6/21-9/12-21 11/1/21-11/7/21 11/8/21-11/14/21	SACRED HEART OF JESUS LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 3/29/21-4/4/21 4/5/21-4/11/21 4/12/21-4/18/21 4/19/21-4/25/21 6/7/21-6/13/21 11/15/21-11/21/21

2021 & Past Church Dues (Blue Book) (Kollekta)

During Lent & every Saturday & Sunday dues current & past will be collected in the church hall after the 4:00 PM Vigil and 8:30 AM & 10AM Sunday Liturgies.

Please bring your dues book to the church hall dues will not be collected in the rectory
Back on January 25, 2005 the Parish Council voted to increase the yearly dues to \$75.00 per member. This is the first increase since 1998. The number of upcoming projects that are needed to keep the church building in good repairs, such as painting, doors, walls, fixing the roof, warranted this increase. **Do not place dues in your weekly envelope offering!**

Please remember - this is not our church but YOUR church!

Please fulfill your responsibility to your Church!!



+In Memoriam

Please remember in your prayers parishioner +Barbara Lypen 91, of Ansonia, who feel asleep in the Lord on March 17, 2021. Visitation Monday 22nd 4-7pm at Wakelee Memorial. Funeral Services Tuesday 23rd @10am from our church and burial in our cemetery. *Vichnaya ij Pam'iat.*

ION BANK DONATIONS: Parishioners and friends who have a savings account at Ion Bank are encouraged to vote during the month of February thru March 31st, 2021 for **Saint Peter and Saint Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church**, so that our church would be able to receive a donation from the Ion Bank Foundation Community Awards Program. Ion Bank is a Connecticut Bank with a main office in Naugatuck and branches in Ansonia and Oxford. If you have any questions call Ion Bank at 203-729-4442.



PUSSY WILLOWS NEEDED FOR PALM SUNDAY: Parishioners who have pussy willows growing on their property are encouraged to pick them, place the branches in a container of water inside the house for a few days until the pussy willows have bloomed to the desired size, remove them from the water and trim them. Please bring the pussy willows to church on the Annunciation the Holy Day of Obligation for Ukrainian Catholic which is Thursday 25 March 2021, so that they will be available for blessing and distribution during Palm Sunday weekend. Thank You!



Prayer of Saint Ephrem the Syrian said during Great Lent Sunday evening to Friday evening, But not Saturday and Sunday.

+O Lord, and Master of my life, give me not the spirit of slothfulness, faintheartedness, lust for power, and vain talking; (Full bow to the ground)
+Instead, grant to me. Your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience and love; Full bow to the ground (Full bow to the ground)
+O Lord and King, grant that I may see my own transgressions, and not judge my brother, for You are blessed. Amen. (Full bow to the ground)

After this 12 small bows, praying:

God, merciful be me, sin.

God, cleanse my sins and have mercy on me.

I have sinned without a number, O Lord, forgive me.

+O Lord, and Master of my life, give me not the spirit of slothfulness, faintheartedness, lust for power, and vain talking; Instead, grant to me. Your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience and love; Full bow to the ground O Lord and King, grant that I may see my own transgressions, and not judge my brother, for You are blessed. Amen. (Full bow to the ground)

У часі Великого посту (чотиридесятниці) мовимо цю покайну молитву з поклонами:

+Господи і Владико життя мого, дух лінивства, недбальства, владолюбства й пустослів'я віджени від мене. *Доземний поклін.*

+Дух же доброчесності і смиренномудрія, терпіння й любові даруй мені, недостойному рабові твоєму (недостойній рабі твоїй). *Доземний поклін.*

+Так, Господи царю, дай мені бачити мої прогрішення і не осуджувати брата мого, бо ти благословенний еси на віки вічні. Амінь. *Доземний поклін.* Після цього 12 малих поклонів, молячись:

+Боже, милостивий будь мені, грішному (грішній).

+Боже, очисти мої гріхи і помилуй мене.

+Без числа нагрішив (нагрішила) я, Господи, прости мені.

Відтак: +Господи і Владико життя мого, духа лінивства, недбальства, владолюбства і пустослів'я віджени від мене. Дух же доброчесності і смиренномудрія, терпіння й любові даруй мені, недостойному рабові твоєму (недостойній рабі твоїй). Так, Господи царю, дай мені бачити мої прогрішення і не осуджувати брата мого, бо ти благословенний еси на віки віків. Амінь. *Доземний поклін.*

40 DAY CHALLENGE GREAT LENT



The Mission will be both in Ukrainian & English
Schedule of PARISH MISSION 2021 Lenten Mission March 19-21. 2021

Saturday March 20, Akathistos Saturday in Honor of the Mother of God

- 9:30 AM Children Confessions
- 10:00 AM Children Liturgy with Sermon by Fr. Philip
- 3:00 PM Confessions Father Philip

This day is also a special of Remembrance for those who have died from Covid -19
4:00 PM Divine Liturgy offered for those who have lost their lives to Covid -19

Sunday, March 21, 5th Sunday of Great Lent The Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt

- Father Philip will be hearing confessions before and after the Liturgies
- 8:30 A.M. Divine Liturgy & Mission Sermon
- 10:00 A.M Divine Liturgy & Mission Sermon



5 Parts of the Confession

1. Know your Sins
2. Be sorry for your sins.
3. Try not to sin again.
4. Tell your sins to the priest in confession.
5. Accept and do your Penance.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST / LENT

SUNDAY COMMEMORATING OUR MOTHER, THE VENERABLE MARY OF EGYPT

Epistle - Hebrews 9: 11-14 ~ Gospel - Mark 10:32 - 45 - Tone 1

On the Fifth Sunday of Lent the Church commemorates our Righteous Mother Mary of Egypt. The feast day of Saint Mary of Egypt is April 1, however, she is also commemorated on this Sunday due to her recognition by the Church as a model of repentance.

Whenever we experience guilt and shame because of something we have done wrong, we need to ask ourselves a question. Do we feel that way because we are sorrowful that we have disobeyed God or because we cannot stand being less than perfect in our own eyes or those of others? The first kind of humiliation is spiritually beneficial and may lead to repentance, but the second kind is simply a form of pride that easily paralyzes us



in obsessive despair. At this point in our lives, most of us probably experience some mixture of these two types of shame. As we grow closer to Christ, the first must increase and the second must decrease.

When we wonder if there is hope for the healing of our souls in this way, we should remember St. Mary of Egypt. She stands as a brilliant icon of how to repent from even the most shameful sins. Mary experienced a healthy form of guilt when her eyes were opened to how depraved she had become through her life of addiction to perverse sexual pleasure. Through the intercessions and guidance of the Theotokos, she venerated the Holy Cross at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and received Communion on her way to decades of ascetical struggle in the desert. When the monk Zosima stumbled upon her almost 50 years later, he was amazed at her holiness. He saw this holy woman walk on water and rise up off the ground in prayer, but like all the saints she knew only her own sins and perpetual need for the Lord's mercy.

Perhaps what makes St. Mary of Egypt's story such a beautiful icon of true repentance is that she was genuinely humble before God. She was not sorrowful for her sin out of a sense of wounded pride, obsessive self-centered guilt, or fear of what others thought of her. Instead, she said earnestly to the Theotokos "*Be my faithful witness before your Son that I will never again defile my body by the impurity of fornication, but as soon as I have seen the Tree of the Cross I will renounce the world and its temptations and will go wherever you will lead me.*" And she did precisely that, abandoning all that she had known for the long and difficult journey that led to the healing of her soul. Her focus was completely on doing whatever it took to reorient her life toward God, to purify her desires so that she would find true fulfillment in Him. Today the Church calls us all to follow her example of repentance, regardless of the details of how we have sinned in thought, word, and deed.

An honest look at our lives, as we should all take during Lent, dredges up shame and regret in various forms. St. Mary of Egypt reminds us to accept humbly the truth about our failings as we confess our sins, call for the Lord's mercy, and do what is necessary to find healing. Her example reminds us not to be paralyzed by prideful obsessions that block us from being freed from slavery to our passions. Even her depraved way of life did not exclude St. Mary of Egypt from acquiring remarkable holiness. If she did not let a perverse form of pride deter her from finding salvation, then no one should be ashamed to kneel before Christ in humility. The Savior did not reject her and He will not reject us when we come to Him as she did.

Indeed, her repentance began in the context of venerating the Holy Cross at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The rest of her journey required profound faith, sacrifice, and courage. To undo with God's help the harm that she had done to herself through years of debauchery must have been incredibly difficult. But sustained by the Lord's mercy and the intercessions of the Theotokos, that is precisely what she did over the remaining decades of her life.

Today, so near the end of the Great Fast / Lent and only a week from Palm Sunday, we see that this is the path we must take also. In order to follow it, we must not be paralyzed in prideful shame about anything we have said, thought, done, or otherwise experienced or participated in at any point in our lives. Instead, we must have the brutal honesty and deep humility of St. Mary of Egypt, a woman with a revolting past who became a shining beacon of holiness. That is how she found healing for her soul and it is how we will find healing for ours also. The good news of this season is that the Lord makes such blessedness possible for us all through His Cross, His descent into Hades, and His glorious Resurrection on the third day. But in order to participate in the great mystery of His salvation, we too must get over our pride, accept His mercy, and actually repent. If St. Mary of Egypt could do that with her personal history, we can too. (*Excerpts from <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/>*)

THURSDAY, MARCH 25 - HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION:

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY EVER VIRGIN MARY

From the Stichera of Litiya: *Tone 2: Now and forever: Today Gabriel announces the good news to the Woman full of Grace: Rejoice, O Virgin who has not known wedlock: do not fear the strangeness of my appearance, for I am an Archangel. Formerly, the serpent was the cause of grief to Eve, but now it is great joy that I announce: You shall remain a virgin and yet you shall give birth to the Lord.*

From the Hymn of Matins: *Tone 3: Today all creation rejoices, for the archangel says to you "Rejoice, O Blessed, precious and most pure Mother of Christ our God". Today the pride of the serpent is brought low and the bond of Adam's curse is being loosed. We, therefore, call to you unceasingly: Rejoice, O Lady Full of Grace*

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS Blessed Virgin Mary, the Theotokos, we come to you to implore a great grace on behalf of the people of earth. Awaken among the young generation a willingness to serve God alone. Implore for us numerous vocations for the priesthood and the religious life. O Mother, confirm the faith of all our priests, deacons and those in the Consecrated Life, that in every area of social, professional, cultural and political life that they may work according to the truth and the law which your Son has proclaimed to humanity in order to lead all to eternal salvation and, at the same time to make life on earth more human now and ever and forever. Amen

Continue to pray during the Great Fast that those who feel a call to and desire for priesthood or religious life may find the courage to say yes to what God asks of them. Pray that those who are called will answer God's call

LENTEN PRAYER CAMPAIGN CONTINUES VOCATION CRISIS

As a Vibrant Parish Faith Community and as we draw closer to the Feast of the Resurrection, may we continue to keep the resolve and goal to devote our personal prayer to offering them for Vocations to our Church. We need to continue our effort to promote vocations.

During these final weeks of the Fast, our awareness and prayer for vocations should continue even more fervently and with the commitment to keep our prayers focused on the Vocation Crisis. We ask you to continue to fully commit to deep, sincere prayer for vocations to the priesthood, the diaconate, the monastic and religious life. During these final weeks that are bringing us closer to the Feast of the Resurrection, we as a community should strive that our prayers be raised in unity ~ unity in mind, heart and soul, praying that the will of God will send workers into His vineyard.

We Pray and Fast for a reason and for this season of the Great Fast, may our reason be for an increase in Vocations to the Priesthood, the Diaconate, the Monastic and Religious lives.

***** DAILY PRAYER INTENTIONS *****

MONDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate

TUESDAY'S INTENTION - Prayers for all Seminarians to sustain their Vocations

WEDNESDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Redemptorists

THURSDAY'S INTENTION - **VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD**

FRIDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Sisters of St. Basil the Great

SATURDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Order of St. Basil the Great

SUNDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Missionary Sisters of the Mother of God

~ Daily, please add your private and personal intentions for our Church, our Hierarchy, Clergy, Religious and all who lead and serve Christ and all His faithful.

April 25, 2021 – World Day of Prayer for Vocations

CATECHISM - CHRIST OUR PASCHA - TODAY'S EPISTLE / GOSPEL LESSON :

SALVATION: Page 19, Section 30; Page 243, Section 744-746 SUFFERING: Page 79, Section 218; Page 81, Section 225-227

Sixth Week of Great Lent

Monday	Isaiah 48:17-49:4; Genesis 27:1-41; Proverbs 19:16-25
Tuesday	Isaiah 49:6-10; Genesis 31:3-16; Proverbs 21:3-21
Wednesday	Isaiah 58:1-11; Genesis 43:26-31; 45:1-16; Proverbs 21:23-22:4
Thursday	Isaiah 65:8-16; Genesis 46:1-7; Proverbs 23:15-24:5
Friday	Isaiah 66:10-24; Genesis 49:33-50:26; Proverbs 31:8-31
Saturday of Saint Lazarus the Righteous	Hebrews 12:28-13:8; John 11:1-45
The Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem: Flowery (Palm) Sunday	VESPERS: (1) Genesis 49:1,2,8-12; (2) Zephaniah 3:14-19; (3) Zechariah 9:9-15. MATINS: Matthew 21:1-11,15-17. LITURGY. Philippians 4:4-9; John 12:1-18



Schedule of GREAT and HOLY WEEK 2021

Monday, March 29, Great & Holy Monday

10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Tuesday, March 30, Great & Holy Tuesday

10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Wednesday, March 31, Great & Holy Wednesday

10:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Thursday, April 1, Great & Holy Thursday

10:00 AM Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

6:30 PM Passion Gospels

Friday, April 2, Holy & Great Friday, Strict Fast from Meat & Dairy Products - Строгий Піст без м'яса та набілу

10:00 A.M. The Royal Hours SIXTH HOUR

12:00 Noon to 2:00 P.M. Confession

3:00 P.M. VESPERS of GREAT FRIDAY Procession with Holy Shroud ПОЛОЖЕННЯ ПЛАЩАНИЦІ

6:00 PM to 8:00 P.M. Confession Church will be closed at 8:00 PM

Saturday, April 3, Great & Holy Saturday

9:00 A.M. Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Blessing of Paschal Foods - Blahoslovennia pasok

3:00 pm (In English), outdoors near Rectory Garage (If there is Inclement Weather then in the Church)

4:00 pm (in Ukrainian) outdoors near Rectory Garage (If there is Inclement Weather then in the Church)

Confessions will be heard after each of the blessings of Easter Food

Church will be closed at 8:00 PM

Sunday, April 4, Easter – Resurrection of Our Lord, Свята Пасха – Воскресіння Христове,

6:30 AM NADHROBNE / НАДГРОБНЕ ПРИ ГРОБІ

(Removal of the holy shroud to the altar)

7:00 AM PROCESSION & RESURRECTIONAL MATINS ОБХІД ХРАМУ І ВОСКРЕСНА УТРЕНЯ

8:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY / ВЕЛИКОДНІ СЛУЖБИ БОЖІ

GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY

Blessing of the ARTOS after the Ambon Prayer.

10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY



THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD (BYZANTINE TRADITION)

"Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery."

TROPARION For the first three centuries the liturgical worship of our Lord Jesus Christ concentrated around the feast of His glorious resurrection, the Holy Pasch, exalted by the Fathers as "the Feast of Feasts" (St. Gregory of Nazianzus). During the fourth century another fundamental mystery from the life of our Savior, namely His nativity, was introduced into the cycle of liturgical celebrations by the Church. With it the celebration of our Lord's incarnation, the feast of the Annunciation, made its way into the liturgical year. Originally the Annunciation was considered as a feast of our Lord, commemorating His mysterious incarnation. Later, however, after a proper evaluation of the Blessed Virgin's role in the mystery of the incarnation, they decided to celebrate the feast on March 25, as a Marian feast.

1. When discussing the Annunciation, we must make a clear distinction between the mystery and its liturgical celebration as the feast of the Annunciation. The mystery of the Annunciation concentrates on the incarnation of the Word of God when, by the "power of the Holy Spirit," the Word "became flesh" (In. 1 :14) in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as described in the Gospel of St. Luke. (LK. 1 :26-38).

The incarnation was always considered a principal mystery of our faith and was inserted by the Nicene

Fathers into the Symbol of Faith in 325 A.D. Since then, all Christians profess that our Lord Jesus Christ "for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and Mary the Virgin, and became man."

The liturgical celebration of this mystery as a special feast of the Annunciation came later, in connection with the feast of the Nativity of our Lord, and was simply considered as the feast of our Lord's incarnation. Later, however, during the sixth century, the emphasis shifted to the Blessed Virgin, exalting her all-important role in the mystery of incarnation.

Thus the Byzantine Church began to celebrate the feast as a Marian feast under the name the Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God.

2. The solemn celebration of the greater number of the feasts was initiated in Jerusalem, after the proclamation of religious freedom by Emperor Constantine the Great in 313 A.D., when numerous pilgrims began to crowd the holy places. Provided with magnificent basilicas due to imperial generosity, these holy places gradually became a stage setting of the most impressive liturgical celebrations.

In the middle of the fourth century a beautiful basilica of the Annunciation was built in Nazareth, on the spot where it is believed that the house of the Blessed Virgin stood. Thus the celebration of the feast of the Annunciation had begun.

According to time computations, the annunciation preceded the nativity of our Lord by nine months and was to be celebrated on March 25.

However, there were some liturgical difficulties in celebrating the feast on that day. Ordinarily, March 25 coincided with the lenten season, during which all festive celebrations were forbidden by the Council of Laodicea (can. 51). Therefore, the feast of the Annunciation was celebrated during Advent as a liturgical preparation for Christmas, placing the emphasis of the feast on the incarnation of our Lord.

3. After the recognition of the Blessed Virgin as the Mother of God by the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D., Mary's role in the work of salvation began to come to the foreground. By the sixth century the emphasis shifted to Mary and the feast of the Annunciation was recognized as the Marian feast to be celebrated without any exception, on March 25. Thus the Council of Trullo, celebrated in 692 A.D., overrode the previous prohibition and decreed the solemn celebration of the feast of Annunciation with the Divine Liturgy on March 25, even if it coincided with Holy Week (can. 52).

The Paschal Chronicle of Constantinople, written at the beginning of the seventh century, clearly states that the entire Byzantine Church by "the tradition of the holy teachers" celebrates the feast of Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God on March 25 (c.f. Migne, Patrologia Graeca, vol. 92, col. 488). Therefore today, according to Byzantine discipline, we celebrate the Holy Liturgy even on Good Friday if it happens to fall on March 25.

It was Pope Sergius (687-701), of Oriental descent, that introduced the feast of the Annunciation in Rome, from where it gradually passed to the entire West as part of "Roman tradition."

4. Although St. Proclus of Constantinople (d. 446) in his //I Oration talks about the Annunciation as a "solemn celebration" (c.f. Migne, Patr. Gr., vol. 65, col. 703-708), he nevertheless concentrates his attention on the hypostatic union of the two natures (human and divine) in Christ, considering the mystery of the annunciation as the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the same time, i.e. from the middle of the fifth century, we have another and quite long sermon of Bishop Basil of Seleucia, On the Annunciation of the All-Holy Mother of God (et. Migne, Patr. Gr., vol. 85, col. 425-452), which greatly influenced the author of the Akathistos Hymn. In his sermon, however, Basil of Seleucia is also preoccupied with the explanation of the mystery of the annunciation, without even mentioning the celebration of the feast.

The oldest authentic homily dealing with the annunciation as a solemn feast celebrated on March 25 should be ascribed to St. Abraham of Ephesus (d. about 553), which was delivered at the time of Emperor Justinian. Discovered not long ago, it was published by Professor M. Jugie in 1922. In the seventh century the homilies on the Feast of Annunciation considerably increased in number; they confirm what has been said about the development of the solemn celebration of the feast.

5. The liturgical compositions for the feast are most inspiring and filled with great joy, constantly repeating the angel's greeting, Rejoice!, as they describe the incarnation of the Word of God, the divine motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the initiation of God's plan for our salvation. It took almost three centuries until the liturgical compositions and services were properly arranged and took their definitive form.

The hymnographers who greatly contributed to the beauty and solemnity of the feast by their inspiring compositions included : St. Andrew of Crete (d. about 740), St. John Damascene (d. 749), St. Cosmas of Maiuma (d. about 760), St. Theophane Graptos (d. 845), Anatolius of Thessalonica (d. ninth century), and Emperor Leo VI the Wise (d. 912), hiding under his pen name of Byzantios.

The Canon of the Matins for the Feast, composed by St. Theophane, is unique in Byzantine hymnography since it is arranged in the form of a dialogue between the Archangel and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

To grasp its beauty and its deep theological thought let us turn our attention to the Eighth Ode of the Canon:

"Hearken, O pure Virgin, the handmaid of the Lord, while Gabriel tells you about the eternal plan of the Most High coming to its fulfillment: 'Make ready to receive God, for through you the Incomprehensible comes to dwell with mortal men. Therefore, rejoicing I cry out : Bless the Lord, all His works!

"The Virgin replied: 'All mortal thought is overwhelmed as it ponders the strange wonders which you are telling me. Your words are filling me with joy, yet I am afraid that you might deceive me, as Eve was deceived, and lead me astray. Yet, behold, you cry out : Bless the Lord, all His works!

" Put your mind at ease, Gabriel responded, – It is true that this matter is hard to grasp, then obey the words of your own lips. Do not doubt as though I say this to deceive you, but rather believe that I am telling the truth, for rejoicing I cry out : Bless the Lord, all His works!

"The Virgin, being without reproach, answered: 'Childbirth comes from mutual love; such is the law God has given to men. But I know not at all the pleasure of marriage, then how can you say that I shall bear a child? I am afraid that you are deceiving me, and yet you cry out : Bless the Lord, all His works!

"In reply the Angel said: 'You speak to me, o holy Virgin, of the ordinary way in which birth takes place. But I tell you of the birth of the true God. He shall take flesh from you in a way beyond any expression and understanding, in a way that He alone knows.

Therefore, I cry out' rejoicing : Bless the Lord, all His works!

"It seems to me that you are telling the truth, the Virgin answered, – for you have come as a messenger, bringing joy to all. Since the Holy Spirit has purified my soul and body, let it be done to me according to your word; and may God dwell within me. To Him I cry out together with you : Bless the Lord, all His works!"

This brief description of the feast of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God is concluded with the inspiring words of the same hymnographer:

"Today is revealed to us the mystery that is from all eternity. The Son of God becomes the Son of Man that, by sharing in what was our worst, He may make us share in what was the best. In the old times Adam was deceived ; he desired to become like God but did not succeed. Now God becomes man that He may make Adam like God. Let all the creation rejoice and let the nature exult, because the Archangel stands before the Virgin in awe and, by greeting her 'Rejoice, changes our sorrow into joy. O Son of God, Who in the mercy of Your compassion have become man, glory to You!"

(Matins at the Praises). o Most Holy Mother of God, save us!

**CUTTING EDGE
LANDSCAPING, LLC**

For your AD info,
message Call
203-734-3895 or
YoungE8073@aol.com

Support those who
advertise in our
bulletin!

**WAKELEE MEMORIAL
FUNERAL HOME**

John S. Zaleski
Director
Virginia K. Hylwa
Administrator

203.734.1490
*Parishioners Serving
Parishioners Over 80 Yrs*



Little Angels Home Care LLC



Ewa Grzymala

Providing: Elderly Care, Hourly,
Companion, Live-in Caregivers,
Weekends
Reg.# HCA0000732

240 Myrtle Street • Shelton, CT 06484
203-278-1436

www.littleangels-homecare.com
E: littleangelshomecare48@yahoo.com

We take Long Term Life Ins. & State
Cases

For your AD info, message
Call
203-734-3895 or
YoungE8073@aol.com

Support those who
advertise in our bulletin!

