

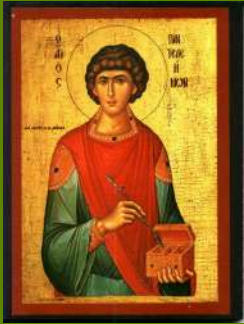
St. Panteleimon Orthodox Church

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest

Fr. Andrew Bartek, Rector V. Rev. Anthony Spengler, Attached

Protodeacon Robert Northrup Reader James Tilghman

Parish Council President: Nicholas Cavaligos



Sunday, April 17 2016
Gospel: St. Mark 10:32-25

Tone 5
Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT / St. Mary of Egypt

April Bulletin Sponsor

Father & Matushka Anthony Spengler for their Family

THE PRAYER OF ST EPHREM

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power and idle talk. (Prostration)

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to thy servant. (Prostration)

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. Amen. (Prostration)

O, God, cleanse me, a sinner. (12 times with deep bow then repeat above once)



Liturgical & Event Schedule

Sunday, April 17

- 9:10 am: Hours
- 9:30 am: D.L. / Mem'l Sunday / Ch School / Social
- 6:00 pm: Deanery Lenten Vespers @ Holy Theophany Chapel, Lake Geneva, WI

Monday, April 18

- 7:00 pm: Village of Summit Meeting

Tuesday, April 19

- 7:00 pm: Pan-Orthodox Akathist Hymn / w His Grace Bishop Paul Presiding @ Burr Ridge

Friday, April 22

- 7:00 pm: Vespers for Lazarus Saturday

Saturday, April 23

- 9:30 am: Divine Liturgy
- 4:00 pm: Assemble pussy willows & palms
- 5:15 pm: Reception of the Grabavoy Family into the Church
- 6:00 pm: Great Vespers w/ Litya (No Confessions to be heard after this service)

Sunday, April 24

- 9:10 am: Hours
- 9:30 am: D. L. / C. School / Social
- 11:45 am: Monthly Board Meeting
- 6:00 pm: Bridegroom Matins @ Holy Trinity Cathedral w/ Bishop Paul

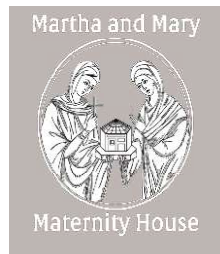
40 Days Eternal Memory

April 17: Mary Pradun & Olga Wyatt / Those who lost their lives in the Terror attacks in Brussels / Archpriest George

2016 - SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

April: Martha & Mary Maternity Home

This collection will take place during the Litany before the *Our Father*. Or you can speak to Steve Grabavoy to contribute.



TODAY'S CANDLE DONATIONS

Memorial Tray in memory of the Grabavoy Family by Mr. & Mrs. John Grabavoy

Small tray of Candles in back in memory of Lilian Novak by Mr. & Mrs. Petkewicz.

Small tray of Candles in back in memory Nylen, Dunkovich & Keyko Families by Paula Sestito & her family

Eternal Light & Altar Candles offered by Archpriest Anthony & Matushka Roberta Spengler.

Everyone Loves A Winner

by Father J. Sergius Halvorsen

Everyone loves a winner.

We celebrate athletes that run and jump, throw and catch better and faster than anyone else. We marvel at entrepreneurs who start companies that earn billions of dollars. We idolize the actors and musicians who are at the top of their craft. Everyone loves a winner.

We live in a culture that worships winners. It's all about winning elections, winning arguments, winning friends and influencing people. Winning may be our greatest obsession. What does it take to win? What strategy will give us an advantage over our opponent? What kind of training and preparation will give us the edge that we need to come out on top? We work and plan and scheme to figure out a way to win, and then we dream about the glory that will be ours.

This is probably what Peter was thinking when he and the disciples entered Caesarea Philippi with Jesus. It was there, in that city with its famous pagan temple, that Jesus asked the disciples, "Who do men say that I am?" The disciples said, "Some people think that you are John the Baptist, some say that you are Elijah, and others say that you are one of the prophets." But then, Peter, going for the win, says, "You are the Christ, God's anointed, the Messiah!" Peter does not think of Jesus as some member of the supporting cast; he says that Jesus is the Christ, the one that God sent to deliver His people. But Jesus immediately commands them not to tell anyone about Him. Isn't that strange? Why does Jesus tell them not to say anything about Him? It is because Peter was wrong.

Yes, Jesus is the Christ, but what Peter has in mind when he says that Jesus is the "Christ" is completely off base. Peter thinks the Christ will be the great hero who ends up with more money and more power and is more feared than the Emperor of Rome. Peter thinks that the Christ will raise up an army to fight for the Hebrew people and crush their Roman oppressors. Peter thinks that the Christ is going to be a winner on the world's terms.

Jesus must have known exactly what Peter was thinking.

And this is why Jesus immediately starts telling His disciples that the Christ, the Son of Man, must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed, and after three days be raised.

Yes, Jesus is the Christ, but He's a different kind of Christ than the one Peter was looking for. After Jesus spells out

very plainly to the disciples that the Christ is not going to bring about victory on human terms, Jesus began to teach the disciples that the Son of man must suffer many things, that He would be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, that He would be killed, and after three days rise again. Jesus told them all of this in plain unequivocal language. But then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him. Peter takes Jesus aside and rebukes Him. Peter actually rebukes Jesus.

In other words, Peter speaks to Jesus like some sort of campaign manager, "Lord, what are you talking about? Rejection, suffering, being killed... are you kidding me?!? This is not what God's anointed is supposed to do, and this is certainly NOT what you are going to do!"

Peter thinks that he knows better than Jesus. Peter thinks that Jesus needs to be corrected about what it means to be the Christ. And how easy is it for us to make the same mistake. In our effort to win our own victories, how easy is it to tell God what to do and how to do it?

"Lord, make sure that I get a big payoff."

"Lord, make sure that my plans work out this time."

"Lord, do exactly what I want, so that I can win."

Sometimes we may think that God has strayed from the playbook; things aren't turning out as we planned, so maybe we need to give God a reminder about what God is supposed to do. Peter definitely thought that he had to tell Jesus what to do in order to achieve an earthly victory. That's why Jesus says to Peter, "Get behind me Satan. For you are not on the side of God but on the side of men." Jesus tells Peter and us that winning, according to the rules of this world, is a false victory. Christ says "Whoever would save his life would lose it." An earthly victory is a false victory because, for every army that marches home in victory, there are scores of widows and orphans who weep in the ashes and rubble of defeat. For every billionaire entrepreneur, there are millions of people living in poverty. For everyone who wins an argument, there is someone who is left in anger and resentment. And the bottom line is that *we don't always win*. More often than not, when we lose, or when our plans don't work out, in our desperation we can so easily turn against God and turn against the people we love.

This is exactly what happened to Peter when he denied Jesus on the night before the Crucifixion. In the cold darkness of that courtyard outside of the house of the high priest, Peter watched and waited, hoping that somehow his plans and schemes for the Messiah could still be salvaged. But when the bystanders said, "Hey, aren't you one of Jesus' friends;

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Winner Con't

Yeah, you are one of Jesus' disciples; You are a Galilean, you must be one of Jesus' followers," three times Peter denied that he knew Jesus, invoking a curse and swearing, "I do not know this man Jesus."

And when Peter realized what he had done, he broke down and wept. Everything had gone wrong, and in his desperation, he had denied and abandoned Jesus. Peter's life had become a living hell. To worship the false victory of this world is to live in hell. Perhaps in that moment, Peter remembered Jesus' words, "Get behind me Satan." But in that moment, maybe Peter *also* remembered what Jesus said right after that. Jesus says to His disciples, "Whoever desires to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." These are the same words that Jesus speaks to us on this third Sunday of Great Lent, the Sunday of the Cross.

Jesus does not say, "whoever desires to come after me should go out and get himself crucified." Jesus specifically says, "take up the cross and follow me" — which is the complete opposite of everything we know about winning. To carry your cross is to experience the absolute shame of defeat. It is like the condemned man who is commanded to prepare the noose for his own hanging. It is like the victims in the concentration camp who are forced to dig the pit that will become their own mass grave.

In Jesus' time, the ritual of forcing a condemned man to carry his cross was murderous mockery. Carrying the cross was part of the bloody Roman propaganda that said, "Behold this man, who disobeyed our commands. Look at how we crush him and strip him of his last shred of dignity. Look at how we force him to carry the cross that we will use to execute him. Look at the power of the Empire, look at how we have won."

And Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God, submits to the Cross willingly, to show that God's victory is *not* the victory of this world. Christ's death on the Cross is the sign that the power of God is greater than the most hideous power of this world. For in the very midst of the humiliation, and agony of crucifixion, as they nailed His hands and feet to the Cross, Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

And at that moment, the world was forever changed. Because the hateful power of this world was defeated by the Love of God.

By carrying His cross, Jesus shows that the evil of man is powerless against the mercy of God. By carrying His

cross, Jesus marches straight into the depths of hell and broke the bonds of sin and death. By carrying His cross, Jesus shows us a way out of the darkness of sin into the pure light of forgiveness. *This is the victory of Christ, and this is why we bow down before the Cross.*

Jesus' victory on the Cross is the most unlikely victory that the world has ever seen because, in the Resurrection, Jesus did not return to take vengeance on the people who betrayed Him and murdered Him. In the Resurrection, Jesus returned and forgave Peter. And then Jesus sent His disciples out to preach the good news to the very people who had killed Him, the gentiles, the Romans.

We see this so clearly in Acts, when Paul and Silas had been arrested and beaten and thrown into jail. There they are in that dark, dank prison, singing hymns and praising God, when all of a sudden there was an earthquake and the doors were opened, and all the chains of the prisoners were loosed. When the jailer woke up, and saw what had happened, he assumed that all of the prisoners had escaped, and in his despair, he was about to kill himself. But Paul cried out, "Don't harm yourself, we are all here." In that moment, it would have been so easy for Paul to have said, "Ha, let that jailer get what he deserves." But instead he saved the man from his despair. The jailer cried out, "What must I do to be saved?" And Paul told him about the love and mercy and power of Jesus, the Crucified Messiah.

This is the victory of the Gospel—those small, bright moments of reconciliation, when people who would otherwise be enemies, turn and embrace one another in the love of Christ. This is what it means to take up the cross and follow Christ.

Paul and Silas, and Peter and all the other disciples took up the Cross and followed Christ. They were given divine courage to endure the same kind of humiliation that Christ endured, and to share the love and mercy of God with everyone.

And today, as we fall down before the Holy Cross, as it is lifted up and we praise it in our hymns and songs, we are strengthened with the same divine courage. We face the evil and the anger of this world and we take up our cross and follow Christ, showing mercy and forgiveness to everyone around us, glorifying Jesus Christ. For Jesus' victory, His victory on the Cross, the victory of God's love, is our one true and lasting victory.

Priest Dr. J. Sergius Halvorsen received his M. Div. from St. Vladimir's Seminary and completed his doctoral dissertation at Drew University in 2002. From 2000 to 2011 he taught at Holy Apostles College and Seminary, Cromwell, CT, where he also served as Director of Distance Learning. He was ordained to the priesthood in February 2004 and currently serves on the faculty of St. Vladimir's Seminary as Assistant Professor of Homiletics and Rhetoric and Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO...!

- John & Marcia Grabavoy for their donation of a washer for the Rectory.
- Duke & Carol for their donation of a small coffee pot for the church and a copy printer for the Rectory.
- The entire Sisterhood for all their hard work over the years for the glory and betterment of this House of God.
- All the men who are giving of their time and talent to beautify this House of God.
- Lt. Paul Bojan of the Summit Fire Department who is giving of his time & talent helping with the reconstruction of the church basement.
- Matushka Susan and all the choir members who pray in song at all the worship services, beautifying them, especially as we approach Holy Week and Pascha.
- Protodeacon & Nick, my right hand guys, not only in the Sanctuary but in the parish.
- All of you who give your time, treasures and talents. This parish is growing and becoming more beautiful because of all of your efforts, prayers and dedication.

As we approach Holy and Great Week - the Passion Week - once again I ask forgiveness if I have offended anyone in anyway. If I have been too aggressive in my pushing the church, please forgive me. If I have not been a good example, please forgive me. I'm truly blessed to be part of this Spiritual community of St. Panteleimon.

God bless all of you & your efforts!

PAN ORTHODOX AKATHIST HYMN

Tuesday April 19 @ 7:00pm

North: New Gracanica Serbian Orthodox Monastery
35240 W Grant AV- Third Lake, IL
Route 45, 1 mile south of Route 132 / Grand

South: Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church
6980 County Line Rd
Burr Ridge, IL 60527

New on-line Orthodox resource encourages autism awareness, ministry

The Orthodox Church in America's Department of Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid [CSHA] has joined US and international advocates in recognizing April 2016 as Autism Awareness Month.

"Autism Spectrum Disorder [ASD] is a lifelong developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication and behavioral challenges," said Donna Karabin, CSHA Chair. "Each year, there are increasing numbers of children diagnosed with an ASD. Recent studies show one in 68 children has an Autism Disorder, with boys four times more likely than girls.

"If our Orthodox parishes do not already have autistic children, adolescents or adults in their communities, it is highly likely they will in the future," Mrs. Karabin continued. "It is vitally important for clergy, Church School educators and fellow parishioners to learn about Autism – what it is and what it is not."

To this end, a new educational resource—the [Autism and Your Parish Video Series](#)—was recently developed by Maura Oprisko, a wife and mother of three children, one of whom is her seven-year-old autistic son, William. Maura and her family attend Saint Stephen Church [OCA], Crawfordsville, IN, where their pastor, Priest Joel Weir, is grateful for the steps Maura has taken to help the parish better understand their shared challenges.

"Maura is doing great work to raise awareness and equip parishes to better serve persons on the autism spectrum," Father Joel said. "I know as a priest I've benefited greatly from her willingness to educate me and our parishioners on autism so we can better minister to her son and support her and her family."

Maura designed the free, downloadable video program to help parishes incorporate Autism Awareness Month into their educational programs. She suggests workshop formats and offers printable worksheets, available on her web site blog, [The Least of These](#).

The themes of the 10–15 minute videos include an introduction titled [What is Autism?](#) [Two additional videos](#)—the Function of Autistic Behaviors: What Looks Strange has a Purpose and Meltdowns: Why They Happen and What to Do—are also available.

"While initially designed for use as a three-part workshop during Lent, the program is valuable any time of the year," Mrs. Karabin adds. "As Maura says, 'I want to talk about raising an autistic child in the Church. I want to discuss things we can do to improve our experience and lighten our burden by being part of our Church community. I want to find out and discuss the wisdom of Holy Scripture and the saints when it comes to parenting special kids. I want, above all, to point my kids in the direction of the Kingdom of God. So let's figure this out, together.'"

Prayer List : UPDATED 2-28-16

Priests: Anthony Spenglar, John Kuchta, James Gleason (*Fr.'s spiritual father*), ***Ted Bobosh**, ***Moses Berry**, ***John Magramm**, John Duranko, Lev Holowoty, ***Anastassy Fehr**, ***Leonid Kishkovsky**, ***Fr. Daniel Rental**, ***Fr. Stephen Hrycyniak**

Matushka: ***Carol Janacek**, ***Christina Kolenda**, Pani Patricia Duranko,

Parishioners: Karen Muzyka, Ronald Stachowiak, Rebecca Eggers, Jason Kirnbauer, Sonja Harris

Parishioner's Friends / Family: Donna Parhas (*Nick's Cousin*), Ron (*Mark's Friend*), Mary Ann Magerko, John Magerko, Stephen Holly & Walter Litzie (*Fr.'s cousin*), George Cavaligos (*Nick's brother*), Christos Parhas (*Nick's cousin*), Constantine Cavaligos (*Nick's dad*), John Hartel (*Joann's Step-dad*), Sandra (*Karen's sister*), Erika Northrup, Danielle Krush, Mark Svava, Mary Northrup, Dianne Northrup, Raymond Northrup, Joey Krush, Carol Bregin (*Friend of Lynn*), Ann Lazo (*Friend of Lynn*), George Lazo (*Friend of Lynn*), Bruce (*Fr. Kurt's brother*), Christine & her new born Patrick, Chrissy Marron, Daniel Tiani (*friend of Beccky Eggers*), Vivian (*friend of Beccky Eggers*), Julianna (*Hruban Family*), John (Spengler family), Robert (Spengler family), Aubrey, James, June & James (*Hruban Friend*), Jacob (*Spengler Family*), Emilian (*Spengler Family*), Joyce (*Spengler Friend*), William & Dana Nosek (*Fr. Kurt's family*), Mark, Eve (*Mat. Robert's Family*), Tommy, Jimmy.

Other Requests: Lucille (*Duke*), Dianne (*Bill Rudolph*), Elizabeth Lilos, Jemsey Pradun, Mae Joanna Bass, Hermenegil (*Neighbor*), Lidiya (*Neighbor*), Cathleen Rebollar, Patricia Schuster, ***John Sedor**, * **Daria Petrykowski**, Emily & Scott preparing for Marriage, Brandon & Chrissy preparing for marriage, ***Cynthia Koranda**, Adrianna & her unborn baby

Military: Amber, Caleb, Nicholas, David, Timothy, Robert, Kristen, Matthew, Brian, Daniel, Joseph, Joseph (*Fr.'s cousin*)

Captives: Metropolitan Paul (*Orthodox Archdiocese of Aleppo*), Archbishop John (*Syriac Archdiocese of Aleppo*)

For the UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers in & around Syria / Those suffering persecution in Iraq, Syria, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and throughout the world / Those held captive throughout the world.

Additions or removals from the list? Please notify Fr. Andrew. (***Bishop Request**) **New:**

OCA/OCMC team returns from mission trip to remote Mexican villages

During the week of March 26-April 2, 2016, the Mexico Mission Team cosponsored by the Orthodox Church in America and the [Orthodox Christian Mission Center](#) visited the indigenous Orthodox Christian Aztec communities in San Esteban, Hidalgo and Pisaflores in Veracruz.

With the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop Alejo of Mexico City, the team built upon earlier outreach efforts in this remote region northwest of Mexico City.

For the fourth year, Archpriest Antonio Perdomo, Rector of Saint George Church, Pharr, TX, led the team, which included Priest David Moga, Pastor of Saint Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church, Cedarburg, WI; Subdeacon William Almy III and his daughter Susan from Kansas; Arthur Dossey from California; Fernando Arango from Florida; and Hanna Valentine from Iowa.

Before setting out on the arduous journey to the remote mountain villages, the team attended the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at the OCA's Cathedral of the Ascension, Mexico City, where they received Archbishop Alejo's

blessing coupled with words of encouragement and thanks.

"Archbishop Alejo has a great vision for the Orthodox Church in Mexico, to put into practice what we say in the Nicene Creed—to be the 'One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church,'" said Father David. "He sees that the harvest is great and wishes to bring Orthodoxy to the Mexican people, and not just serve the ethnic enclaves that exist in Mexico. This vision, I believe, energized us individually, which resulted in the coalescing of us as a team."

Upon their arrival in Pisaflores, team members were welcomed by Father Serafin, who serves the region's missions. The following morning they continued their journey to San Esteban, which was to become "Mission Central" for the next week. Due to the villages' remote locations, there is no public transportation.

"This is why we need a good car, so that all of Archbishop Alejo's work will not go to waste," said Father Serafin, referring to the Archbishop's missionary work in the region in which he resided and ministered in the early 2000s. "We need to be able to visit more frequently, but it is hard to get to these villages. The people are good and they have a lot of faith—we cannot lose them." **Con't Page 7**

A P R I L

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

NAMES DAY

1-Patricia Svara	2- Fr. Andrew
5- Linda Davik	8- Anna Hernandez
9- Theodore Grabavoy	9-Lynn Kirnbauer
20- Laura Grabavoy	24-Edward Northrup
28- Kylie Marron	28- Luis Posada

22- The Most Rev. Nathaniel, Archbishop of Detroit & the Romanian Episcopate
25- The Most Rev. Mark, Archbishop of Eastern PA
30- Reader James Tilghman

Anniversary
30- Bishop Matthias, retired Bishop of Chicago 5th Ann. Of Consecration

If there are those names to be added or removed, please contact Fr. Andrew. He would like to list all members of your family Orthodox and non-Orthodox.

In blessed repose: A P R I L

1-Helen Smolarek (99)
2- Petra Vasilevska (86)
2- Suzanne Davik
4- Ruby Stevens (08)
5- Stella (Anastasia) Spakowski (97)
8- Benjamin Howard Sr. (89)
10- Julia Ginalick Yarmoluk (86)
11- Archbishop John (82)
15- Anna Bennett (99)

21- Olga P. Kozal (04)
21- Mary Iverson (15)
23- Thelma Gazelle (99)
25- Paul Switch (06)
28- Sophie Bloschynsky (03)

1944: Afrida Glushko (3 yrs old) Theodore Sviridiuk	1945 Gregory Golubey
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Remember those who have gone before us in prayer. If there is a name missing from the above list, please speak to Fr. Andrew to have them added.

Bulletin Sponsor: Would you be interested in being a bulletin sponsor in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one or friend? Sponsors will be remembered during Divine Services for that month. Donation: \$40 for the month.

Memorial Candle(s): (*Give names to Fr. Andrew*)

Option 1: The Tray of Candles under the Cross is now the area of remembrance for the deceased. If you would like the tray of candles placed in memory of a deceased loved one, the suggested donation is \$30. The Sponsors will be remembered during the Divine Services for that Sunday.

Option 2: One of the small Tray's under the Theotokos in the back of the Church. Donation \$25

Option 3: If this tray is full, one or more candles may be gotten at the candle desk & be placed in the sand box.

Candles for the Health of a Loved One (*Speak to Fr. Andrew to make arrangements*)

Option 1: One of The small tray's of 40 candles in front of the icon of woman saints in the back of the Church - donation \$25.

Option 2: The altar candles in the Sanctuary & Eternal Light candle - donation \$20.

Option 3: If Candles are filled more candles may be gotten at the candle desk & placed in the sand box.

Monthly Panachida Service: The third Sunday of each month there will be a Panachida. If you would like your loved one(s) to be remembered, please give a list of names to Fr. Andrew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month. If there is a remembrance (newly departed or 40th day remembrance) of your family or friends we will remember them on the closest Sunday otherwise they will be remembered on the third Sunday. If it is an remembrance not related to our parish family we will just sing Memory Eternal on the 40 Day remembrance.

Hospitalization/Shut-ins: If anyone goes into hospital, or is a shut-in, please let Fr. Andrew know as soon as possible so he can attend to them and their family members.

Celebration? Achievement?: Your spiritual family would like to share in your achievement, celebration, and accomplishment. Send in a picture or email to Fr. Andrew, by Wednesday @ 5:00 pm so he can place it in the bulletin!

Mexico Con't

The roots of the village communities dates back to the early 1920s, when a Father Armin ministered in the region. By 1960, a dozen parishes, including those in San Esteban, Pisaflores, Benito Juarez, and elsewhere, had been established. Father Armin is buried in Pisaflores, where community members care for his grave and hold his memory in great esteem. After Father Armin's death, Father Jesus Gutierrez arrived and served the people until his death in 1986.

"There was a lack of clergy to serve the local faithful until 2000, when Father Antonio—now Archbishop Alejo moved to Pisaflores for one year and traveled by foot and horseback to serve the faithful," said Father Antonio. "After he was reassigned to Mexico City's cathedral in 2001, he continued to serve area missions weekly for the next three years, traveling over nine hours each way by bus, boat, foot and horseback."

Having settled into their quarters in San Esteban—a house erected on earlier mission trips through the efforts of Father Antonio and Archpriest Theodore Pisarchuk, Rector of Saint Justin Martyr Church, Jacksonville, FL—team members set out on their mission, which involved the celebration of well attended daily liturgical services, catechetical sessions for all ages, presentations for children and parents alike, discussions and talks, and a good measure of fellowship with local residents.

"We got to know some of the townspeople, who treated us with much respect and formality," said team member Fernando Arango. "We noticed how happy they were that Father Antonio had returned, and everyone wanted to greet him personally and listen to what he had to say.

"The days were miraculous, full of God's grace," Fernando continued. "The children were especially happy to participate, and their eyes shone like the heavens. It was as though the Holy Spirit had filled us with joy as we all felt the presence of God's divine grace."

The children—who were on spring school break and thereby able to fully participate in the week's activities and services—learned much about the faith through various craft projects.

"Susan and Hanna formed a special relationship with the children, who enjoyed praying and discussing the importance of prayer," said Fernando. "Hanna helped them make sun catchers with the image of the risen Christ and decorate crosses. The children also learned about the life of Jesus, the importance of Holy Communion, icons, and many other aspects of our faith."

"Each morning, we offered the children activities related to the Cross, the Resurrection and the Ascension," Hanna added. "Despite our varying abilities to speak the Spanish language, we embraced the children with the love of Christ in words as well as in action, and the church's walls rang with the children's voices as they colored their images of the Cross. Later, the church's courtyard was filled with laughter as the children learned how to throw frisbees!"

"We priests blessed the people with holy water each evening after service," Father David added. "One evening, we anointed everyone for the healing of body and soul, and on Thursday morning—our last full day in San Esteban—we celebrated the Divine Liturgy. Arthur read the Epistle in Spanish, while the faithful drew near to partake of the Holy Mysteries 'with the fear of God and with faith and love.' Here we were, all sharing the same Body and Blood of Christ despite linguistic and ethnic differences. We truly became the 'One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church' of which Archbishop Alejo spoke when we began our mission."

After the Liturgy, the faithful, bearing icons, processed through the town to mark their parish's 92nd anniversary.

"As anyone who has taught before can attest, we think we are going on such trips to teach, but we end up learning more than we could ever share," said Fernando. "This experience helped me grow in my faith. I recommend a missionary trip to anyone who would like to share his or her faith with others. You will not forget it!"

A gallery of photos is accessible on the OCA [web site](#) and [Facebook page](#).

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

Jesus said, "Simon, I have something to say to you.." "Tell me, Teacher," he said, "Two people are in debt to a certain creditor; one owed five hundred days' wages and the other owed fifty. Since he forgave it for both, which of them will love him more?" Simon said in reply, "The one, I suppose, whose larger debt was forgiven." He said to him, "you have judged rightly." Luke 7:40-43

QUESTIONS TO PONDER ON WEEK FIVE OF THE GREAT FAST

- Have I ever meditated on the mercy of God?
- Have I realized my uncleanness before God or am I afraid to soil Him?
- How great is my love and / or forgiveness in today's society?

Hieromartyr Simeon the Bishop in Persia, and those with him in Persia

Commemorated on [April 17](#)

The Hieromartyr Simeon, Bishop of Persia, suffered during a persecution against Christians under the Persian emperor Sapor II (310-381). They accused the saint of collaborating with the Roman Empire and of subversive activities against the Persian emperor.

In the year 344, the emperor issued an edict which imposed a heavy tax upon Christians. When some of them refused to pay it, this was regarded as an act of rebellion, so the emperor began a fierce persecution against Christians.

St Simeon was brought to trial in iron fetters as a supposed enemy of the Persian realm, together with the two hieromartyrs Habelai and Ananias. The holy bishop would not even bow to the emperor, who asked why he would not show him the proper respect. The saint answered, "Formerly, I bowed because of your rank, but now, when you ask me to renounce my God and abandon my faith, it is not proper for me to bow to you."

The emperor urged him to worship the sun, and he threatened to eradicate Christianity in his land if he refused. But neither urgings nor threats could shake the steadfast saint, and they led him off to prison. Along the way the eunuch Usphazanes, a counsellor of the emperor, saw the saint. He stood up and bowed to the bishop, but the saint turned away from him because he, a former Christian, out of fear of the emperor, now worshipped the sun.

The eunuch repented with all his heart, he exchanged his fine attire for coarse garb, and sitting at the doors of the court, he cried out bitterly, "Woe to me, when I stand before my God, from Whom I am cut off. Here was Simeon, and he has turned his back on me!"

The emperor Sapor learned about the grief of his beloved tutor and asked him what had happened. He told the emperor that he bitterly regretted his apostasy and would no more worship the sun, but only the one true God. The emperor was surprised at the old man's sudden decision, and he urged him not to abjure the gods whom their fathers had revered. But Usphazanes was unyielding, and they condemned him to death. St Usphazanes asked that the city heralds report that he died not for crimes against the emperor, but for being a Christian. The emperor granted his request.

St Simeon also learned about the death of Usphazanes, and he gave thanks to the Lord. When they brought him before the emperor a second time, St Simeon again refused to worship the pagan gods and confessed his faith in Christ. The enraged emperor gave orders to behead all the Christians in the prison before the saint's eyes.



If you would like your loved ones remembered in health or repose at the Paschal Divine Liturgy, please let Fr. Andrew know. The cost of the flowers, as in past, will be \$20.

Fr. Andrew- 5 Flowers

- In Memory of his ordaining Bishop Metropolitan Nicholas
- In Memory of his parents, George & Dorothy and all of his family
- For the Health of all our Parishioners & Friends of the parish
- For the Health of all the Summit Fire & Police personnel
- For the less fortunate of the Village of Summit

Muzyka Family- 3 Flowers

- In Memory of the Leonchik, Kozak & Muzyka Family.
- In Honor of Sandra Alex
- For the health of the Leonchik, Kozak & Muzyka Family

Svara Family- 2 Flowers

- In Memory of Lillian, Frank, Josephine and Frank
- For the Health of Pat, Ron, Frank, Gina, Megan, Kyle, Mark and Wendy

John Grabavoy Family- 2 Flowers

- In Memory of the Grabavoy Family Merle & Thelma & Dana Gazelle & Dave Carlson
- For the health of the entire Grabavoy Family

Without fear the Christians went to execution, blessed by the holy hierarch, and they bent their heads beneath the sword. St Simeon's companion, the Priest Habelai, was also beheaded. When they came to the Priest Ananias, he suddenly trembled. Then one of the dignitaries, St Phusicus, a secret Christian, was afraid that Ananias would renounce Christ, and he cried out, "Do not fear the sword, Elder, and you will see the divine light of our Lord Jesus Christ."

St Phusicus betrayed himself by this outburst. The emperor gave orders to pluck out his tongue and to flay the skin off him. Along with St Phusicus, his daughter Askitrea was also martyred. St Simeon was the last to go before the executioner, and he placed his head on the chopping-block (April 13, 344). Executions continued all during Bright Week until April 23.

St Azates the Eunuch, a close official to the emperor, also received the crown of martyrdom. The sources indicate that 1,150 Martyrs perished because they refused to accept the Persian religion.