

ST. DEMETRIOS

Volume XXXVII, No 4

Saco, Maine

APRIL 2026

The Lord's Pascha! 2026

The Resurrection Service **in "the middle of the night"**

"This holy and great Lord's day of Pascha
we celebrate **the actual**
life – bearing **resurrection of our Lord, and God, and Saviour Jesus Christ**".

Shortly before midnight on Holy Saturday.... We begin!

The Priest will light his candle and will sing: "**Come receive light from the light that never sets, and come glorify The Christ, The One Who is risen from the dead**". Then taper by taper and candle by candle the people receive the holy light, and the darkness of night is flooded by light.

And this sea of lit candles, which is blown about by the spring night breeze, is the reply of the believers to the nonsense and empty words of disbelief and agnosticism, the answer to the wretchedness of doubt and of atheism.... Now we all slowly exit the church....

We read the Gospel Resurrection passage: "**He is not here, He is Risen!**" Then, after "Christ is risen-Χριστος Ανεστη" the hymn of joy, has been chanted again and again, we return to the door of the church which is closed, and the dialogue, used during the consecration of the church, starts up:

***"Open your gates you princes, and be lifted you eternal gates,
and the King of Glory shall enter.***

Who is this King of Glory?

The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Open your gates you princes..."
(Psalm 23, Septuagint).

And at the end, at the third question, together with the reply "The Lord of might. He is the King of Glory!...", the door is pushed hard wide open by the Priest, who enters the Holy Temple with grandeur, chanting, in the joyful first Tone the most sweet "Canon" of the Resurrection, a composition of St. John Damascene: "This is the day of Resurrection, let us be radiant O people, it is Pascha the Lord's Pascha..."

There is no sweeter, gracious, brighter, enjoyable festive or melodious hymn of the Orthodox Church than this “Canon”, where the Theology of two chief Fathers, Saint Gregory the Theologian and Saint John Damascene is interwoven. St. John Damascene was the one who also composed the stanzas to it, “Now everything is filled with light, heaven and earth and the nether regions.”.

“Yesterday I was buried with you. O Christ, I will rise with you today with your resurrection...”

“This chosen and holy day, the one after the Sabbath, the royal and sovereign one, is the celebration of celebrations, and festival of festivals...”

“O Christ, the great and most holy Pascha (Passover); O Wisdom and Word and power of God, grant us that we may most clearly participate in the never-ending day of your Kingdom...”

And in between the stanzas of the Canon is chanted “**Christ is risen – Χριστός Ανέστη**”, and again many times “Christ is risen”... So that the ear can satiate itself, that the soul having experienced the heaviness of the Cross of Great Friday can refresh itself, so that the redeeming message can saturate all the cells of the body....

The priest reads the famous Catechetical homily of St. John Chrysostom “If anyone is pious and God-loving, let him enjoy this good and bright festival...”

The golden mouth of the Church, St. John Chrysostom, calls us to the “banquet of faith”. **“Let no one grieve at his poverty, for the universal Kingdom has been revealed. Let no one lament their transgressions, for forgiveness has dawned from the grave. Let no one fear death, for the Saviour’s death has freed us”**.

Forgiveness of sins.... freedom from the power of death.... eternal life.

Now then “death where is your sting?” “Hades where is your victory?”

“Christ is risen, and you are overthrown. Christ is risen, and demons have fallen. Christ is risen, and Angels rejoice. Christ is risen and life is eternal. Christ is risen and there are no dead in the tombs”! Because Christ arose from the dead, became the beginning, the offering, the ransom of the dead! To Him belongs glory and dominion to the ages of ages.

In the late morning or the afternoon of the Sunday of Pascha we celebrate with all formality the Vespers of Love, during which it is customary to read the Gospel reading in many languages, so that the message of Christ’s Resurrection can be understood by all.

*“Jesus having risen from the grave, as He foretold,
has granted us eternal life and great mercy”.*

“Let no one mourn that he has fallen again and again;
for forgiveness has risen from the grave.”

— Saint John Chrysostom

About the Resurrection Seen in a different, LIGHT!

Paradise Is Communion, Not a Place

Paradise is not merely a place. It is a state of being in communion with God.

Saint John of Damascus writes:

“Where God is, there is heaven. Where God is not, there is hell.”

Thus, heaven and hell are not defined by geography but by relationship. Paradise means being with God, sharing His life, His light, and His love.

The Lord said to the thief on the cross:

“Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.” (Luke 23:43)

The key words are **with Me**. Paradise is to **be with Christ**.

This is the heart of Orthodox Christianity: communion with the living God through Christ.

The Vision As Communion With All Saints

To see the Face of Christ is not a private event but a communal experience.

The Book of Revelation describes the multitude of the redeemed:

“After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes.” (Rev 7:9)

Saint Symeon the New Theologian says:

“The saints behold the light of Christ together, as members of one Body. Each is filled with the same divine radiance, and in that light they know one another.”

In Orthodox Christianity, salvation is always communion — communion with God and with all who are united to Him. The joy of the vision is shared, not solitary.

Death And The Fulfilment Of The Vision

When a believer departs this life in repentance, the soul begins to experience the light of God according to its purity. **The righteous taste joy, the unrepentant feel the same light as torment.** Yet the fullness will come only at the resurrection of the body.

Saint John of Damascus writes:

“The soul will not receive its full blessedness until it is reunited with the body in the resurrection.”

Then all creation will be renewed, and the faithful will see Christ face to face.

“Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face.” (1 Cor 13:12)

“Knowing Orthodoxy”

PASCHAL NEEDS 2026

LENTEN & HOLY WEEK NEEDS

Flowers for Icon – Salutations	4 weeks @\$50/week
Flowers for the Feast of Veneration of the Cross	\$150
Charcoal	\$55
Incense (one box)	\$70
Candles for the Cross (six sets)	\$21 per set
12 Candles (12 Gospel Readings on Holy Thursday)	\$7 each
24 Candles for the Tomb-Kouvouklion on Holy Friday	\$7 each
3 XL Candles (for Services), need 15 sets	\$21/per set
Palms/Laurel	\$200
Pussy willows (obtained locally in fields) for Palm Sunday Slavic tradition	
Flowers for Bridegroom Icon	\$100
Flowers for Palm Sunday Icon	\$50
Wreath	\$65
Holy Friday wreath (Kouvouklion)	\$55 Taken
Potted lilies (or items we can later plant outside)	\$30 each
Flowers for Kouvouklion/Epitaphion	\$1,500
Flowers (various needs for Holy Week and altar decor)	\$350
Resurrection Lambatha	\$425

Olive oil. **Please do not bring Capatriti oil. It does not burn well.**

Communion wine **Donations only please. The Church will purchase wine.**

See Stephanie... please *give your checks to Stephanie, in the office where a list will be kept.*
Make your check payable to St Demetrios, ear-marked: Donation, Holy Week.

Thank you for your support – Glory to God in and for all things!

Flower Girls for Holy Friday

Flower Girls represent the Myrrh Bearing Women at the Tomb for the Holy Friday evening service. Girls must be fully dressed in white (dress, sweater, tights, shoes & gloves). The church has numerous dresses to loan out.

Girls (ages 5 and up) who are interested in being Flower Girls **please sign up with Kristin Sullivan.**

FMI: text/call Kristin@ 603-374-3306 or ... email: kristin.grace.sullivan@gmail.com

2026 HOLY WEEK VIGIL LIGHT

Beginning April 5th, and through PASCHA, we are offering a Family or Individual VIGIL LIGHT. It will be lit at every service. The cost is \$25. Make your check payable to St. Demetrios earmarked Vigil Light.

Any questions, please call/see/speak with Stephanie.

Mail in requests with payment, put Attn: Stephanie on the envelope... so that (your) name can be on the Vigil Light. Thank you.

FESTIVAL 2026 FESTIVAL 2026 FESTIVAL 2026

SAVE THE DATES: FRI/SAT/SUN, JULY 10, 11, 12TH

The Festival committee is back and planning, organizing, baking etc... to get ready for this awesome event.

VERY IMPORTANT ...

- **We need everyone's help. Call Stavro or Phil.**
 - Stavro Nashi, phone 207-284-3705
 - Phil Kowash, phone 207-391-2571
 - Vanja Somerville, phone (for baking) 1-617-872-0617
- **We will continue with our Sponsorship Ads. (Remember the great ads we had on the hall walls... for everyone to see.)**
- **More info in the next newsletter.**
- **We need you ... call and/or sign up on the Volunteer list. It will be posted at a later time, but let Stavro/Phil/Vanja know.**

THANKS!

Notes (April 2026)

Fasting Notes:

Palm Sunday – We celebrate the feast with olive oil (oo), wine & fish.

Holy Week, all the way to the “Resurrection” Service, is a strict fast! Also there is the custom not to even cook on Holy Friday!

We **BREAK the Fast**, after the Resurrection early on the First Day of the Week – Sunday of Pascha. During this first & “Bright” Week, there is no fast!

.....

Very Important:

Fr Basil/Presv Paula will be taking an extensive “break” after Pascha. From right after Pascha, Fr Basil will take vacation/private time off.

(From April 16- June 26.)

.....

CANISTERS. Just a reminder to take one of the Canisters (located at the Candle Stand), and fill it with quarters. Bring the filled canister to the office when ready.

CHURCH SCHOOL dates for April include April 26th. Please send any questions to Rebekah Rinard at rebekahmrinard@gmail.com.

NOTE DATE CHANGES. St. Fotini Festival Baking. Mark your Calendars.

We will resume Baking on Tuesday, April 21st, 2026. Typically we bake on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We need many extra hands to make all the pastries and other items for the Festival.

FMI or any questions, please call Anna Zafirson @ 207-423-9709 or Vanja Somerville @ 1-617-872-0617. Make sure you leave your phone # and email for updates.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE PARADE, BOSTON, MA will be held on Sunday, April 26th, 2026.

Parade kick off at 1:00pm Boylston & Charles Street. Celebration to follow at Boston Common with music, food, etc.

FMI: go to greekboston.com

Also... see poster on the Church Bulletin board (by the office area).

April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 <small>(fast)</small>	2 <small>(fast)</small>	3 <small>(fast)</small>	4 <small>(fast)</small> Sat of Lazaros, we begin <i>Holy Week</i> Schedule
5 Palm Sunday (fast) <i>Entrance of The Christ into Jerusalem</i> Dinner <u>Propane Challenge</u>	6	7	8	9	10	11
Holy Week - See Schedule of Services <i>From Sat April 4 – Pascha, April 12</i>						
12 Sun of <i>The Passover-Pascha</i> <i>of the Lord from death unto Life!</i>	13	14	15 <small>(NO fast)</small>	16	17 <small>(NO fast)</small>	18
Χριστος Ανεστη. – Αληθως Ανεστη! Christ is Risen - Truly He is Risen!						
19 Sun of St. Thomas & Continuing - PASCHA	20	21	22 <small>(o oil/wine)</small>	23	24 <small>(o oil/wine)</small>	25
26 The Myrrhbearers <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> GREEK Independence PARADE <i>Liturgy ends early</i> </div>	27	28	29 <small>(o oil/wine)</small>	30		

HOLY WEEK *Schedule of Services 2026*

Saturday of **LAZAROS (Apr 4)** - Div. Liturgy 9:00am-10:00am

PALM Sunday (Apr 5) - 9:00am Orthros, D. Liturgy by 10:00am
- **Bridegroom Orthros** 6:00-7:15pm

Holy **MONDAY (Apr 6)** - **Bridegroom Orthros** 6:00-7:15pm
(@ *Biddeford-Serbian/old church ??*)

Holy **TUESDAY (Apr 7)** - **Presanctified Liturgy** 8:30-9:45am
- **Bridegroom Orthros** 6:00-7:15pm (@ *Cemetery Chapel ??*)

Holy **WEDNESDAY (Apr 8)** - **Presanctified Liturgy** 8:30-9:45am
- **Holy Oil** 5:30-6:45pm

Holy **THURSDAY (Apr 9)** - **Vesp. Liturgy (Mystical Supper)** 7:00-8:15am
- **Orthros of the CRUCIFIXION** 6:00-8:30pm

Holy **FRIDAY (Apr 10)** - **Great Hours** 9:00-10:15am
- **Vespers of the ENTOMBMENT** 3:00-4:00pm
- **Orthros of the LAMENTATION** 6:00-8:00pm

Holy **SABBATH (Apr 11)** - **Vesperal Liturgy (Sepulcher)** 9:30-11:15am
- **Orthros/Liturgy THE RESURRECTION** 11:30-1:45am
Blessing of the **Paschal Baskets** (the meats & cheeses)

Holy **PASCHA (Apr 12)** - **Vespers of Agapi** 11:00-11:45am

Come Receive The Light, *from The Light that Never Sets!*

Ακολουθια ΜΕΓΑΛΗΣ ΕΒΔΟΜΑΔΟΣ

Σαββατον του Λαζαρου (4 Απρ) – Θεια Λειτουργια 9:00–10:00πμ

Κυριακη των ΒΑΙΩΝ (5 Απρ) – Ορθρος/Θ. Λειτουργια 9:00–11:30πμ
– Ορθρος Νυμφιου 6:00–7:15μμ

Μεγαλη ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ (6 Απρ) – Ορθρος Νυμφιου 6:00–7:15μμ
(Biddeford-στην *Σερβικη/παλια εκκλησια*)

Μεγαλη ΤΡΙΤΗ (7 Απρ) – Προηγιασμενη Λειτουργια 8:30–9:45πμ
– Ορθρος Νυμφιου 6:00–7:15μμ (*Στο Κοιμητηριο*)

Μεγαλη ΤΕΤΑΡΤΗ (8 Απρ) – Προηγιασμενη Λειτουργια 8:30–9:45πμ
– Ευχελαιον 5:30–6:45μμ

Μεγαλη ΠΕΜΠΤΗ (9 Απρ) – Εσπ. Λειτουργια 7:00–8:15πμ
– Ορθρος <ΣΤΑΥΡΩΣΙΣ> 6:00–8:30μμ

Μεγαλη ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗ (10 Απρ) – Μεγαλες Ωρες 9:00–10:15πμ
– Εσπερινος <ΑΠΟΚΑΘΛΩΣΙΣ> 3:00–4:00μμ
– Ορθρος <ΕΠΙΤΑΦΙΟΣ ΘΡΗΝΟΣ> 6:00–8:00μμ

Μεγα ΣΑΒΒΑΤΟΝ (11 Απρ) – Εσπ. Λειτουργια 9:30–11:15πμ
– <Η ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ> Ορθρος/Θ. Λειτουργια 11:30–1:45πμ

Κυριακη του ΠΑΣΧΑ (12 Απρ) – Εσπ. ΑΓΑΠΗΣ 11:00–11:45πμ

Δευτε Λαβετε Φως

Notes continued for April 2026

IOCC Thanks

"Thanks to your generosity, our St. Demetrios community raised \$700.00 for the International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) last month. The Giving Tree for IOCC is a fundraising campaign that provides us all with the opportunity to participate in worthy charities extending far beyond our reach. Thank you for your contributions. May God bless you all and keep you in His grace."

Thank you, Dimitra Voulgari, IOCC volunteer

HELLENIC SOCIETY NEWS

Sunday, April 19th, 3:00pm. Biblia Mazi... Book discussion of the collection of short stories, *Little Infamies* by Panos Karnezis.

Thursday, April 30th, 7:00pm - Film Discussion of *the Bride Escaped*, directed by Alekos Sakellarios (1962).

Email: novak@maine.edu for film and discussion links.

St. Seraphim of Sarov

Saint Seraphim commonly addressed his neighbor as, '**My Joy!**' 'My Joy, Christ is risen!' he would say encouragingly to the downcast, even outside the Paschal season.

Pray for the eyes to see the beauty in our loved ones, and perhaps make it a practice to address them in the same way.

The power of these true words, '**My joy,**' can transform our mindset."

Offered by the Orthodox Observer ... years ago.

KEEP THE FAITH !

A Patristic Journey through Sunday Gospels of the Great Fast

The Second Sunday of the Great Fast - Mark 2:1-12

"It is a farmer's duty to plant and water, *but it depends on God's power, wisdom and mercy whether or not the seed will make shoots, grow and bring forth fruit.*

It is a scientist's duty to examine and seek, *but it depends on God's power, wisdom and mercy whether or not knowledge will be revealed to him.*

It is a parent's duty to bring up and educate his child in the fear of God, *but it depends on God's power, wisdom and mercy how long this child will live.*

It is a priest's duty to teach, inform, reprimand and guide the faithful, *but it depends on God's power, wisdom and mercy whether or not the priest's efforts will bring forth fruit.*

It is the duty of all of us to strive and endeavor to be made worthy to stand in the presence of the Son of God, *but it depends on God's power, wisdom and mercy whether or not we will be allowed near to the Lord.*

But we must not strive without hope in God's mercy. May all of our endeavors be illumined by the hope that the Lord is near us, and that He will receive us into the presence of the light of His countenance.

There is no deeper and more inexhaustible fountain, than the fountain of God's mercy. When the Prodigal Son repented, after his terrible fall to the level of the swine, his merciful father went to meet him, embraced him and forgave him. God is tireless in going to meet His repentant children. He extends His hand to all who turn to face Him. ... To those, therefore, who are striving for their salvation, the Lord does not deny His presence."

- from a sermon by St. Nikolai Velimirovic

Monthly Financial Report. 3/20/2026

(Operating Budget 2026)

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCIAL UPDATE *as of February 28, 2026*

Total Stewards: 100

Total Stewardship Received: \$40,600

<u>Month</u>	<u>Income (\$)</u>	<u>Expenses (\$)</u>	<u>Operating account (\$)</u>
January	\$23,811	\$30,259	-\$6,448
February	\$30,918	\$24,746	-\$275

*We ended February in the **Red \$275!** {Compare to 2025: \$8,780}.*

Our Income is up by \$1,000 (compared to *LAST YEAR*).

Our Expenses are up by \$10,000 (compared to *LAST YEAR*).

Compare: Year to date:

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>
Total Income:	\$53,557	\$54,729
Total Expenses:	\$44,777	\$55,005

Please Remember,

Our **Monthly Stewardship Offering** *makes the difference* in our **Operating Income & Expenses!**

70% of our Income is STEWARDSHIP!

Thank You!!

** ** * ** *

Beloved ones! NEVER FORGET, *as St. Ignatii proclaims,*
that all of our sorrows and adversities in this life are **temporary.**
And the more we become aware in our hearts of Jesus's
never-ending, unconditional and limitless love for us,
the more He will transform our sorrows into JOY!

Thank you Sponsors for making our St. Demetrios Newsletter possible!

**Melissa J. Rioux**
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Saint Demetrios

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Boston

Sunday Services:

9:00 AM Orthros

Divine Liturgy by 10:00 AM

Winter hours started October 5.

Summer hours:

Orthros 8:45 AM, Divine Liturgy by 9:30 AM

Fr. Basil Arabatzis, Presbyter

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9:30 AM - 3:00 PM

Website: stdemetriosofmaine.com

Church: (207) 284-5651

FAX: (207) 283-4651

Home: (207) 284-6170

Elder Paisios taught:

The devil does not hunt after those who are lost; he ***hunts after those who are aware, those who are close to God.*** He takes from them *trust in God* and begins to afflict them with *self-assurance, logic, thinking and criticism.* Therefore, we should not trust our logical minds. Never believe your thoughts. The ancient fathers did not trust their thoughts at all, but even in the smallest things, when they had to give an answer, they addressed the matter in their prayer, joining to it fasting, in order in some way to 'force' Divine Grace to inform them what was the right answer according to God. And when they received the 'information,' they gave the answer.

From "Holy Orthodox Monasteries"

Saint Demetrios

Greek Orthodox Church

186 Bradley Street

Saco, ME 04072

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