

*Cross*  
**TONE 1**

O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries and by virtue of Thy Cross preserve Thy habitation.

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

**Kontakia**

*Cross*  
**TONE 7**

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; it has mysteriously been quenched by the wood of the Cross! The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for Thou, O my Savior, has come and cried to those in hell: "Enter again into paradise."

*In the place of the Trisagion (i.e. "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us!") We sing:*

Before Thy Cross we bow down in worship, and Thy Holy Resurrection we glorify! *(After each – we make a full prostration – head to the ground and stand back up)*

***Prokeimenon***

**TONE 6:** O Lord, save Thy people / and bless Thine inheritance!  
vs. To Thee, O Lord, will I call, O my God, be not silent to me!

**Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Hebrews 4:14 – 5:6**

*Brethren:* Seeing that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weakness, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

***Alleluia***

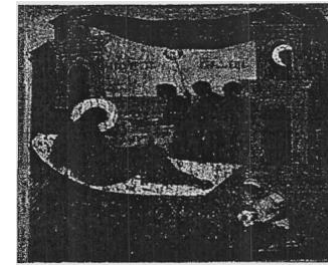
*v: Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast purchased of old.*

*v: God is our King before the ages: He hath wrought salvation in the midst of the earth.*

**Mark 8:34-9:1**

***Gospel***

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."



***Schedule***

**Sunday, March 23, 2025**

*The Cross*

5:00 P.M. Vespers at Ss. Cyril & Methody Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Granite City, IL

**Tuesday, March 25, 2025**

*The Feast of Annunciation*

6:00 P.M. Vesperal Divine Liturgy

**Wednesday, March 26, 2025**

6:00 P.M. Presanctified Liturgy

**Friday, March 28, 2025**

7:00 P.M. Vespers *for the departed*

**Saturday, March 29, 2025**

*Soul Saturday*

10:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy

5:00 P.M. Vespers

**Sunday, March 30, 2025**

*St. John Climacus*

9:15 A.M. Church School

9:30 A.M. 3<sup>rd</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Hours

10:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy

5:00 P.M. Vespers at Ss.

Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church, Swansea, IL

**Wednesday, April 2, 2025**

6:00 P.M. Presanctified Liturgy

**Saturday, April 5, 2025**

11:00 A.M. Parish Council Meeting

5:00 P.M. Vespers

**Sunday, April 6, 2025**

*St. Mary of Egypt*

9:15 A.M. Church School

9:30 A.M. 3<sup>rd</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Hours

10:00 A.M. Divine Liturgy

6:30 P.M. Vespers at St. Michael

the Archangel Orthodox Church, St. Louis, MO

**Nativity of the Virgin Mary**

**Orthodox Church**

**416 Ewing Ave, Madison, IL 62060**

**Sunday, March 23, 2025**

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Great Lent; The Cross*

[www.nativityofthevirgin.com](http://www.nativityofthevirgin.com)

*"My brothers and sisters who are preparing for Holy Communion! Let us fear hardened insensibility to our sins; let us fear the pride of our hearts, which says: "I do not need any forgiveness of sins; I am not guilty, I am not sinful"; or else: "My sins are trifling, they are only human ones" - as though it were necessary that they should be diabolical; or: "I do not feel amiss living in my sins." This is the pride of Satan, and it is Satan himself speaking these words in our hearts. Let us feel deeply, deeply, with our whole hearts, our innumerable iniquities; let us sigh for them from the very depths of our souls; let us shed tears of contrition for them, in order to propitiate to mercy the Master, Whom we have angered. Let us not in the least justify ourselves like the Pharisees, the hypocrites: "For in Thy sight," it is said, "shall no man living be justified (Psalm 143:2);" and we can only propitiate God to be merciful unto us by sincere repentance for our sins. Let us put aside indifference and coldness; let us labor unto the Lord with a fervent spirit. Do not let us forget that we have now come to propitiate the Master of our lives and our righteous Judge for a long period of our sinful lives. Is this, therefore, a time for any coldness and indifference, which are not approved of even in social intercourse, in our relations with our fellow-men? Ought not our soul, on the contrary, to be turned into a spiritual fire, and pour itself forth in tears of most heartfelt repentance? O, my God, my God! our iniquities have literally increased beyond the number of the hairs of our heads, above the number of the sand of the sea, and yet we do not feel them, we are indifferent to them; we even do not cease to love them. "If Thou,"*

## Prayer Requests

### Those in this earthly life

Newly Illum. Gwendolyn	Selaphiel	Eva
Sarah	Margaret	Catechumen Mary
John	James	Alexandra
Anthony	Macarius	Mary Magdalene
Michelle	Christiana	Diana
Ioan	John	Barbara
Sophia	Gregory	Anastasia
Marie	Archpriest James	Maria
Ben	Amy	Elaine
Brad	Infant Sage	Wilma
Lorraine	Elizabeth	Michael
Carl	Kristine	April
Nicholas	George	Joseph
Newly Illumined Michael	Jake	Michael
Peter	Cecelia	Barb
Maria	Gabriella & CTBB	Barbara
Evelyn	Shawn	Mark
Bridget	Reader Simeon	Angela
Jason	Anna	Elijah
John	Elizabeth	Sophia
Hope	Edmund	Kathy
Subdeacon Paul	Catechumen Athanasius	Matushka Tanya
Judith	Alex	Mary
Peter	Julia	Archpriest John
Rebecca	Martha	Matushka Margaret
Tomas	Kendra	Matthew
Rachel	David	Priest Josef
Katie	Adina	Archpriest Michael
Veronika	Reader Stephen	Reader Peter
Peter	Priest Andrew	Patricia
Shawn	Popadija Joan	Matushka Virginia

### Those in the life to come

Helen	Archpriest Vladimir	Cheryl
Jane McGarry	Archbishop PAUL	Nancy
Victor	Archimandrite Innocent	Magdalene
Judy	Edward	John
Matushka Olga	Francis	
Archpriest Thomas	Jean	
Metropolitan THEODOSIUS	Olga	

"Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand (Psalm 130:3)?" Grant, Lord, unto us all a contrite spirit and a humble heart, so that we may offer to Thee true penitence. Amen. When your faith in the Lord, either during your life and prosperity, or in the time of sickness and at the moment of quitting this life, grows weak, grows dim from worldly vanity or through illness, and from the terrors and darkness of death, then look with the mental eyes of your heart upon the companies of our forefathers, the patriarchs, prophets, and righteous ones - St. Simeon, who took the Lord up in his arms, Job, Anna the Prophetess, and others; the Apostles, prelates, venerable Fathers, martyrs, the disinterested, the righteous, and all the saints. See how, both during their earthly life and at the time of their departure from this life, they unceasingly looked to God and died in the hope of the resurrection and of life eternal, and strive to imitate them. These living examples, which are so numerous, are capable to strengthen the wavering faith of every Christian in the Lord and in the future life. Those Christian communions who do not venerate the saints and do not call upon them in prayer lose much in piety and in Christian hope. They deprive themselves of the great strengthening of their faith by the examples of men like unto themselves. When your spirit is dejected during sickness, and begins to represent to you the terrors of death, then tranquillize and comfort your troubled, trembling, and sorrowful heart by the following words: "Thou, O Lord, in the depths of Thy wisdom and love to men, orderest everything and givest unto all everything that is profitable for them," and believe that He will unfailingly order everything for your good, whether it be life, sickness, misfortune, sorrow, or death, so that you could not even desire better. Do not say: "It is early for me to die. I would have wished to live a little longer for the glory of God, for the advantage of my relatives and neighbors. I should have liked to look a little longer upon the world, to enjoy earthly blessings." Be thankful to God for having enjoyed up till now His blessings, favors, and bounties. Now submit to His will, to His call, but at the same time do not despair of the continuation of your earthly life." My Life in Christ - St. John of Kronstadt

### Troparia

Resurrection

TONE 6

The angelic powers were at Thy tomb; the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave; seeking Thy Most Pure Body, Thou didst capture hell, not being tempted by it. Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. O Lord Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee!