

HOLY WEEK/PASCHA SERVICE SCHEDULE 2010



**SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST
ORTHODOX CHURCH
1240 BROADBRIDGE AVENUE
STRATFORD, CT 06615**

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

By now, with the end of Great Lent approaching, I am sure that you are as anxiously awaiting the solemn and glorious season of Holy Week and Pascha as I am. All of the worthy sacrifices, struggles and spiritual efforts we have made during Lent will help us to observe these upcoming Holy Days with great spiritual intensity.

I am very much looking forward to this coming Sunday when, following our venerable parish tradition, virtually every parishioner will receive Holy Confession and Communion. It brings me much joy to experience the oneness of mind, the fervor of faith and the intensity of worship, that our common reception of the *Heavenly Bread and the Cup of Life* makes possible. Those who have recently come to Confession, need not necessarily do so again before Pascha, however, I would be glad to give any one who would feel more comfortable and better prepared to receive Holy Communion a brief Confession either this weekend or during Holy Week. Those who have not yet come, please do so this week, (and please do so by Holy Saturday if possible) so that we may break the fast together on Pascha through our common reception of Holy Communion. Please plan to stay after Divine Liturgy on Pascha to break the fast at a Paschal reception in the church hall. Those attending are asked to bring a food item. Please see the sign-up sheet in the Church Hall. And of course we will also have our annual egg hunt as well.

Holy Week is one of the most solemn and spiritually intense weeks of the Church Year. I invite and encourage you to attend as many as possible of the Holy Week Services. These services are very beautiful and moving. They urge all of us to be prayerful and watchful as we re-experience the saving Passion and Glorious Resurrection of our Saviour. Life is beautiful, yet we know all too well how fast time passes. Let us make the most of this sacred and Holy Week and allow ourselves to be transformed and renewed by it. Let us for this one week truly *Lay Aside All Earthly Cares* so that we may be focused on the *One Thing Needful*, the Kingdom of Heaven, through our participation in these wonderful divine services. .

Our celebration of Pascha is a foretaste of the Kingdom of Heaven which is glorious and in the words of the Church Fathers, a *Paradise of Delight*. What earthly joy can possibly compare to the unbridled joy we feel in singing the Paschal Troparion *Christ is Risen From the Dead* for the first time at the stroke of Midnight? And what can compare to the sight of the church emblazoned with light, filled with the sweet fragrance of Easter lilies at the Paschal Liturgy? Of course before we can reach the empty tomb, we must walk with our Lord to Golgatha and experience the mystery of the Cross. Yes this will require a sacrifice on our part, but great blessings will come to all who participate with an open heart and a willing spirit.

Let us intensify our spiritual preparation by fasting with greater zeal (we are to abstain from meat during all of Holy Week, and to observe a strict fast from meat and dairy products on Good Friday and Holy Saturday) Looking forward to praying during the upcoming Holy Week and experiencing the spiritual joy of Holy Pascha with each and every one of you, I remain,

With Love in Christ

Very Rev Peter Pajewski

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE 2010

Lazarus Saturday – March 27, 2010

8:00 am Divine Liturgy

5:00 pm Great Vespers & Litya

The Entrance of Our Lord Into Jerusalem – Sunday March 28, 2010

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

Holy Monday March, 29, 2010

6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy

Holy Tuesday March 30, 2010

9:00 am Bridegroom Matins

6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy

Holy Wednesday March 31, 2010

9:00 am Bridegroom Matins

Holy Thursday April 1, 2010

9:00 am Vespers Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great

7:00 pm Matins of Holy Friday – Reading of the 12 Passion Gospels

Holy Friday April 2, 2010

11:00 am Royal Hours

7:00 pm Vespers & Procession With the Winding Sheet

Holy Saturday - April 3, 2010

9:00 am Vespers Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great

4:30 pm – 6:00 pm Confessions

11:45 pm Nocturnes

PASCHA – The Feast of Feasts! April 4, 2010

12:00 Midnight Resurrection Matins

10:00 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

Bright Monday April 5, 2010

10:00 am Paschal Divine Liturgy

4:00 pm Paschal Vespers - Cambridge Manor

Bright Tuesday April 6, 2010

9:00 am Paschal Divine Liturgy – St. John's Mill Hill

7:00 pm Great Vespers

Bright Wednesday – Annunciation of the Theotokos – April 7, 2010

9:00 am Paschal Divine Liturgy