

# HOLY WEEK

## in the Orthodox Church



# WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS PACKET?

This printable packet contains teaching resources to help explore the Eastern Orthodox Holy Week. The information pages and activities can be used together with the Orthodox Pebbles Holy Week Craft Kit or with the creative projects that we are offering on the Orthodox Pebbles website. Please see below for an overview of the resources included in this packet.

## Holy Week Flapbook Planner

We are offering two versions of the planner, for younger and older children. The cover is common for all ages, but the bottom page is different. An illustrated bottom page is provided for younger children, and a blank one for the older ones, where they get to fill in the information themselves.



## Holy Week Cards



### How to make the planner:



Print out the desired planner pages, using the "Borderless" printing option to avoid white margins.

Fold the top page along the long edges of the gray rectangle. Cut along the dotted lines, stopping at the edge of the gray rectangle.

Glue the top page onto the center of the bottom page. Ready!

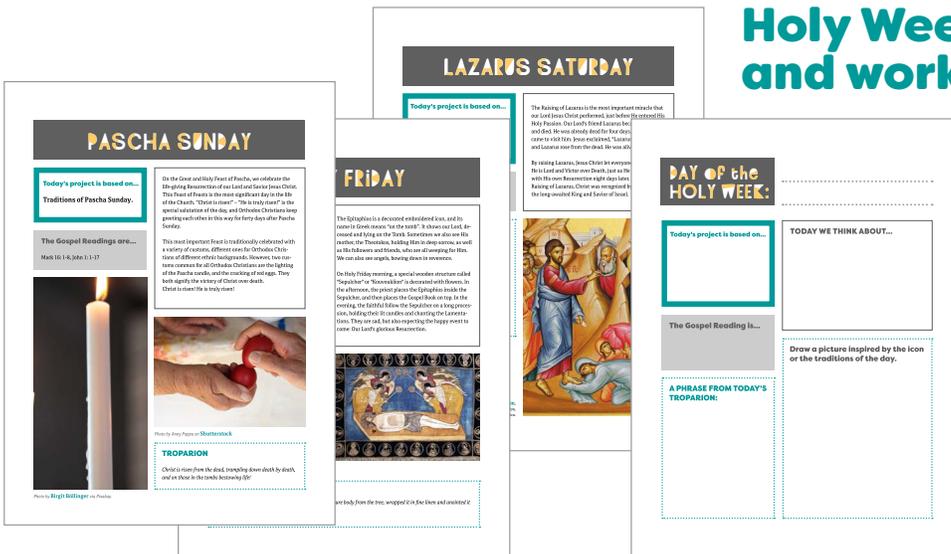
Lift the flap to reveal the main theme of each day.



Use the cards to help the children learn the main theme of each day. They can be used like flashcards, in which case the child looks at a card and has to say the matching phrase (e.g. "Holy Monday" --> "The withered fig tree" - or vice versa). They can also be used for a game of Memory: the cards are placed face-down, and the children take turns flipping two cards over, trying to make up matching pairs.

## Holy Week fact sheets and worksheets

The fact sheets can be printed out for study. The child can also complete the worksheet with the help of each fact sheet. They can all be collected into a binder or folder together with the planner, to make a complete teaching unit on the Eastern Orthodox Holy Week.



**LAZARUS**  
**Saturday**



**Palm**  
**SUNDAY**  
**morning**



**Palm**  
**SUNDAY**  
**evening**



**Holy**  
**MONDAY**



**Holy**  
**TUESDAY**



**Holy**  
**WEDNESDAY**



**Holy**  
**THURSDAY**



**HOLY WEEK Planner**



**Holy**  
**FRIDAY**



**Holy**  
**SATURDAY**



**PASCHA**  
**Sunday**





**The Raising of Lazarus**



**The Triumphant Entrance into Jerusalem**

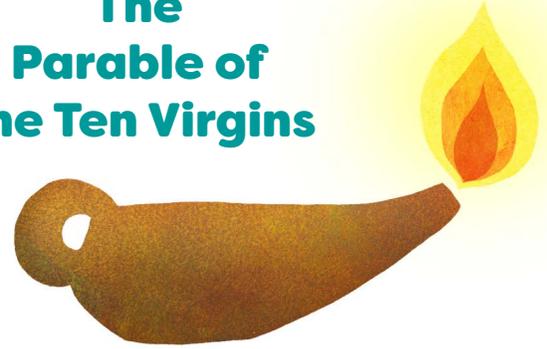


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**The withered fig tree**

**The Parable of the Ten Virgins**



**The woman who anointed Christ**



**The Mystical Supper**



**The Holy Passion**

**The Epitaphios**



**The "First Resurrection"**

**Great and Holy Pascha**



Glue planner cover page here

**Today's theme is...**

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.....

↑  
.....  
Glue planner cover page here  
.....  
↓

**LAZARUS**  
**Saturday**



**Palm**  
**SUNDAY**  
**morning**



**Palm**  
**SUNDAY**  
**evening**



**Holy**  
**MONDAY**



**Holy**  
**TUESDAY**



**Holy**  
**WEDNESDAY**



**Holy**  
**THURSDAY**



**Holy**  
**FRIDAY**



**Holy**  
**SATURDAY**



**PASCHA**  
**Sunday**



# HOLY WEEK CARDS



**The Raising of Lazarus**

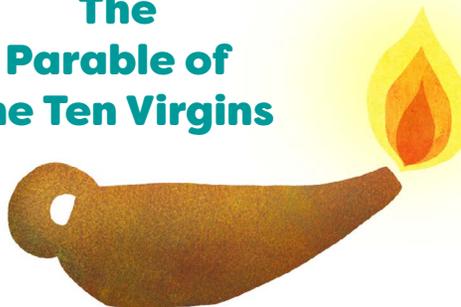


**The Triumphant Entrance into Jerusalem**



**The withered fig tree**

**The Parable of the Ten Virgins**



**The woman who anointed Christ**



**The Mystical Supper**



**The Holy Passion**



**The Epitaphios**



**The "First Resurrection"**



**Great and Holy Pascha**



# DAY OF the HOLY WEEK:

.....

.....

**Today's project is based on...**

**TODAY WE THINK ABOUT...**

**The Gospel Reading is...**

**Draw a picture inspired by the icon  
or the traditions of the day.**

**A PHRASE FROM TODAY'S  
TROPARION:**

.....

.....

.....

.....

# LAZARUS SATURDAY

## Today's project is based on...

The miracle of the **Raising of Lazarus from the dead.**

## The Gospel Reading is...

John 11:1-45

## TROPARION

The troparion is the same for Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday morning:

*By raising Lazarus from the dead before  
Your passion, You did confirm the universal  
Resurrection, O Christ God!  
Like the children with the palms of victory,  
We cry out to You, O Vanquisher of death;  
Hosanna in the Highest!  
Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the  
Lord!*

The Raising of Lazarus is the most important miracle that our Lord Jesus Christ performed, just before He entered His Holy Passion. Our Lord's friend Lazarus became very sick and died. He was already dead for four days, when Jesus came to visit him. Jesus exclaimed, "Lazarus come forth!", and Lazarus rose from the dead. He was alive again!

By raising Lazarus, Jesus Christ let everyone know that He is Lord and Victor over Death, just as He would show with His own Resurrection eight days later. Because of the Raising of Lazarus, Christ was recognized by the people as the long-awaited King and Savior of Israel.



Icon by Athanasios Clark, [tomclarkicons.com](http://tomclarkicons.com), courtesy of the Department of Religious Education, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.



# PALM SUNDAY MORNING

## Today's project is based on...

The Gospel story of the **Triumphant Entrance of our Lord into Jerusalem.**

## The Gospel Reading is...

John 12: 12-18

Five days before the Passover, our Lord entered the city of Jerusalem sitting on a donkey. The people went out to meet Him as King and Savior, waving palm branches, laying their garments on the ground before Him, and shouting "Hosanna!" - which means "Glory to God!".

On this day, we glorify Jesus Christ like the people of Jerusalem, recognizing Him as our Lord and Savior. We cry out: "Hosanna! Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the Lord, the King of Israel!". The priest offers us a blessed cross, made out of a palm leaf, to remind us of the importance of this celebration.

## TROPARION

The troparion is the same for Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday morning:

*By raising Lazarus from the dead before  
Your passion, You did confirm the universal  
Resurrection, O Christ God!  
Like the children with the palms of victory,  
We cry out to You, O Vanquisher of death;  
Hosanna in the Highest!  
Blessed is He that comes in the Name of the  
Lord!*



Icon by Athanasios Clark, [tomclarkicons.com](http://tomclarkicons.com),  
courtesy of the Department of Religious Education,  
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.



# PALM SUNDAY EVENING

## Today's project is based on...

The miracle of the withered fig tree.

## The Gospel Reading is...

Matthew 21: 18-20

On the following day after entering Jerusalem, a time came when our Lord got hungry. There was a fig tree by the road, full of leaves, but when He reached up to find some figs to eat, He realized the tree had no fruit. Then He said, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again", and the tree immediately withered away.

With this miracle, our Lord taught us that our lives should not be fruitless like that barren fig tree. Instead, we should always "bear fruit" by working to follow His Commands, making sure our thoughts and actions constantly honor and recognize Him.

## TROPARION

The troparion is the same for Holy Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

*Behold the Bridegroom comes at midnight,  
And blessed is the servant whom He shall  
find watching,  
And again unworthy is the servant whom He  
shall find heedless.  
Beware, therefore, O my soul, do not be  
weighed down with sleep,  
Lest you be given up to death and lest you be  
shut out of the Kingdom.  
But rouse yourself crying: Holy, Holy, Holy,  
are You, O our God!  
Through the Theotokos have mercy on us!*

*Detail of a fresco at the  
Patriarchal Monastery  
of Peć, in Kosovo, Serbia.*



# HOLY MONDAY

**Today's project is based on...**

**The Parable of the Ten Virgins.**

**The Gospel Reading is...**

Matthew 25:1-13

## TROPARION

The troparion is the same for Holy Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

*Behold the Bridegroom comes at midnight,  
And blessed is the servant whom He shall  
find watching,  
And again unworthy is the servant whom He  
shall find heedless.  
Beware, therefore, O my soul, do not be  
weighed down with sleep,  
Lest you be given up to death and lest you be  
shut out of the Kingdom.  
But rouse yourself crying: Holy, Holy, Holy,  
are You, O our God!  
Through the Theotokos have mercy on us!*

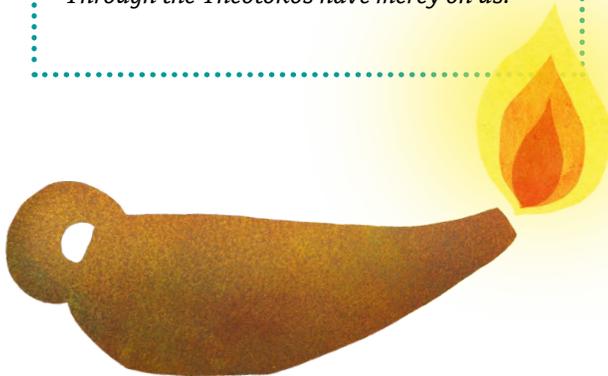
Our Lord said the following parable:

There were ten young women who were getting ready to celebrate a wedding, waiting for the bridegroom to arrive. Five of the women were prepared and had plenty of oil to fuel their lamps, but the other five didn't bring enough oil. The women waited for some time, and then they got tired and fell asleep. When they woke up, they realized that the bridegroom had almost arrived. The wise women were ready to meet Him with their lit lamps, but the others had run out of oil. They rushed into town to buy some more, but by the time they returned, it was too late: they had missed the bridegroom and the wedding celebration.

With this parable, our Lord taught us to always be prepared for Him. One day He will come to earth again, but He is also constantly with us, present in every moment. We should follow His Commands at all times, living in a way that honors and recognizes Him.



*Detail of a fresco at the Visoki Dečani Monastery, Serbia.*



# HOLY TUESDAY

## Today's project is based on...

**The woman who anointed our Lord with myrrh in Bethany.**

## The Gospel Reading is...

Matthew 26: 6-13

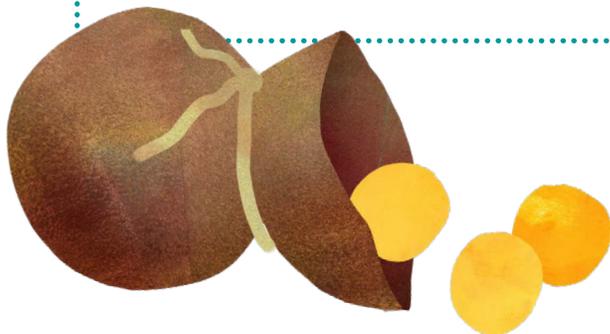
## TROPARION

The troparion is the same for Holy Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

*Behold the Bridegroom comes at midnight,  
And blessed is the servant whom He shall  
find watching,  
And again unworthy is the servant whom He  
shall find heedless.  
Beware, therefore, O my soul, do not be  
weighed down with sleep,  
Lest you be given up to death and lest you be  
shut out of the Kingdom.  
But rouse yourself crying: Holy, Holy, Holy,  
are You, O our God!  
Through the Theotokos have mercy on us!*

There was a woman who brought some very expensive perfume oil to Jesus. It is called myrrh, and it was used in the past to prepare the bodies of the dead for burial. To show her love for our Lord, this woman poured the myrrh on His head; she also poured it on His feet and wiped them with her hair. She was happy to offer Him this costly ointment because she believed He was the Son of God who came to save the world. Some of the Disciples complained that so much money was wasted for this oil when it could have been given to the poor; but our Lord defended the woman and reminded everyone that He was worth much more than money.

The woman anointed our Lord to show her love for Him. We should follow her example and worship Him as well. Nothing is worth more than Jesus, so He should be our top priority. We should always ask ourselves if our thoughts and actions are honoring His Commands. Like the woman, we should be willing to give everything for Him - because He is the One True God and He has given everything for us.



# HOLY WEDNESDAY

**Today's project is based on...**

**The Mystical Supper.**

**The Gospel Reading is...**

Luke 22: 14-23

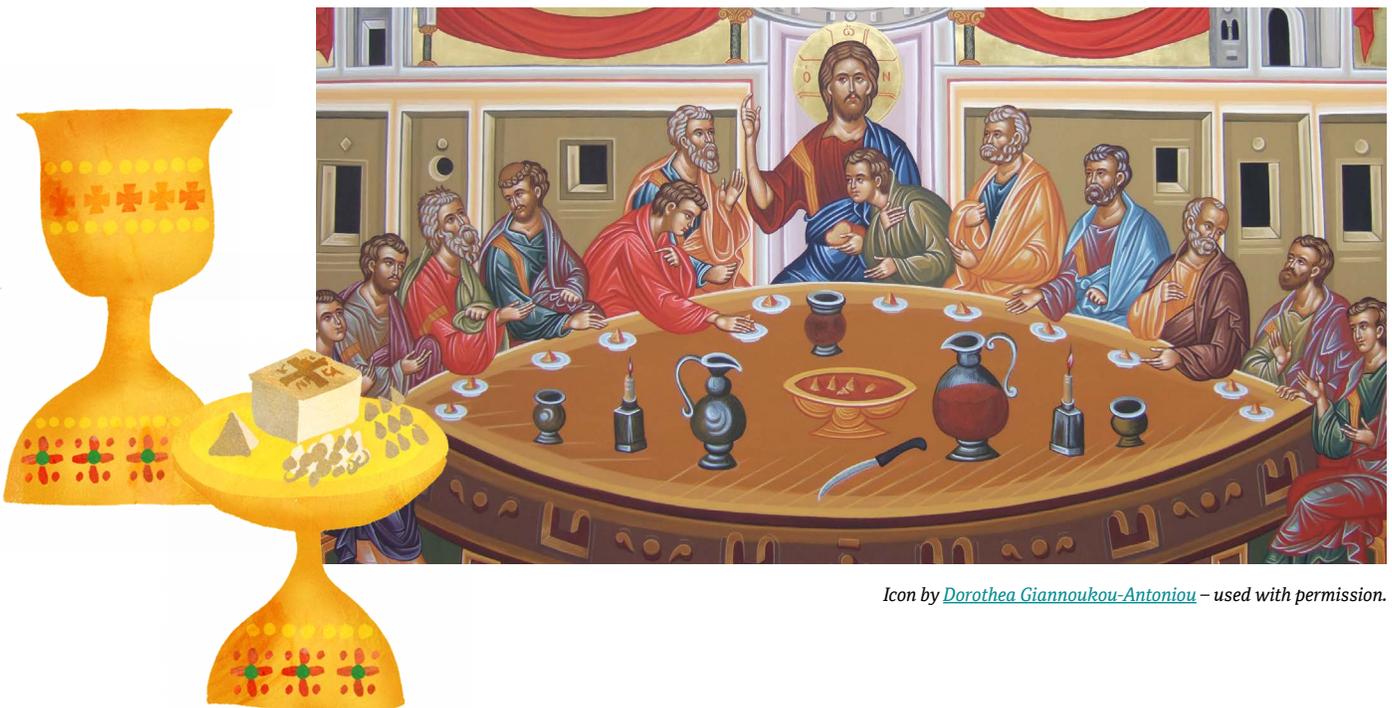
## TROPARION

*Of Your Mystical Supper, O Son of God,  
accept me today as a communicant.  
For I will not speak of Your mysteries to Your  
enemies, neither like Judas will I give You a  
kiss, but like the thief will I confess You.  
Remember me, O Lord, in Your Kingdom!*

While our Lord was celebrating the Passover dinner with His Disciples, He took some bread, gave thanks, and offered it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." Then He gave them a cup of wine, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."

On that day, our Lord established the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. When we receive Holy Communion today, the bread and wine become our Lord's Body and Blood; we take these inside of us, just like the Disciples did back then. We receive Christ our God into our bodies, hearts, and souls, so we can be united with Him forever.

On the icon of the day, we see our Lord Jesus Christ dining with His Disciples. He is sitting in the middle of the table, and the Disciples are sitting around Him. St. John the beloved Disciple is sitting to His left, and St. Peter to His right. In front of every Disciple there is a piece of bread. The man who is reaching out to dip his bread in the bowl is Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Jesus.



# HOLY THURSDAY

**Today's project is based on...**

**The Holy Passion of our Lord.**

## The Gospel Readings are...

On Holy Thursday evening, the “Twelve Gospels” are read. The parts about the Crucifixion are: Mark 15: 21-32, Matthew 27: 35-54, Luke 23:32-49

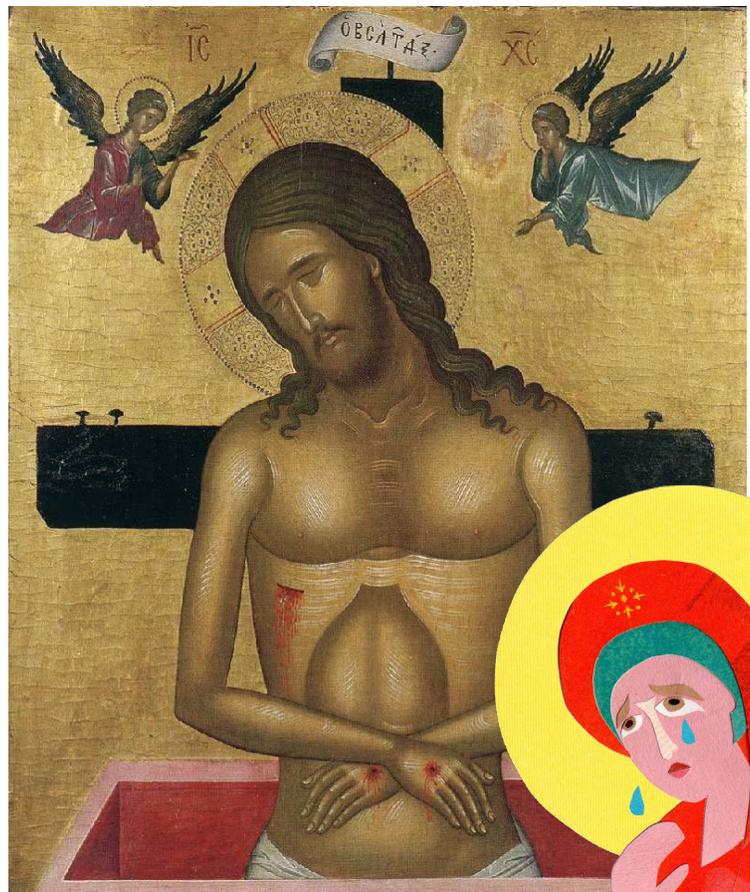
The parts about the Burial are:  
John 19: 25-37, Mark 15: 43-47,  
John 19: 38-42, Matthew 27: 62-66

At church, on Holy Thursday evening, we commemorate the Holy Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the icon of the day, we see our Christ deceased, unclothed, and placed inside a tomb. On His hands and side there are the marks of the nails and the spear. Behind Him we see the Cross, and a sign on top which reads: “The King of Glory”. Sometimes His mother, the Theotokos, is also shown, holding the Body of her Son. We may additionally see the instruments of the Passion – the spear and the sponge of vinegar – placed upright behind our Lord, or held by angels. Even though we are very sad, the inscription on the Cross and the golden color of the icon are preparing us for the happy event to come: Our Lord's glorious Resurrection.

## TROPARION

*Today He is hung upon the tree, He Who did hang the land in the midst of the waters. A crown of thorns crowns Him Who is King of angels. He is wrapped in the purple of mockery, He Who wrapped the Heavens with clouds. He received buffetings, He Who freed Adam in Jordan. He was transfixed with nails, He Who is the Bridegroom of the Church. He was pierced with a spear, He Who is the Son of the Virgin. We worship Thy Passion, O Christ. Show also unto us Thy glorious Resurrection.*

Icon by unknown artist, 15th century, Icon Museum Recklinghausen - Public domain via [Wikimedia Commons](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Holy_Thursday_Icon.jpg).



# HOLY FRIDAY

## Today's project is based on...

The **Epitaphios** tradition.

## The Gospel Readings are...

Matthew 27:1-38, Luke 23:39-43,  
Matthew 27:39-54, John 19:31-37,  
Matthew 27:55-61

The Epitaphios is a decorated embroidered icon, and its name in Greek means “on the tomb”. It shows our Lord, deceased and lying on the Tomb. Sometimes we also see His mother, the Theotokos, holding Him in deep sorrow, as well as His followers and friends, who are all weeping for Him. We can also see angels, bowing down in reverence.

On Holy Friday morning, a special wooden structure called “Sepulcher” or “Kouvouklion” is decorated with flowers. In the afternoon, the priest places the Epitaphios inside the Sepulcher, and then places the Gospel Book on top. In the evening, the faithful follow the Sepulcher on a long procession, holding their lit candles and chanting the Lamentations. They are sad, but also expecting the happy event to come: Our Lord's glorious Resurrection.



15th-century Epitaphios at the Novgorod State United Museum Reserve, Russia – Public domain via [Wikimedia Commons](#).

## TROPARION

*The Noble Joseph, when he had taken down Thy most pure body from the tree, wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices, and placed it in a new tomb.*



# HOLY SATURDAY

## Today's project is based on...

The service of the  
"First Resurrection".

## The Gospel Reading is...

Matthew 28: 1-20

## TROPARION

*When You descended unto death, O Lord Who Yourself are immortal Life, then You mortified Hades by the lightning flash of Your Divinity. When You raised the dead from the nether-world, all the Powers of the heavens were crying out: O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory be to You.*

On Holy Saturday morning, the service of the "First Resurrection" takes place. We celebrate that, while our Lord's body was in the Tomb, His soul descended into the underworld to free the souls of the dead from all ages, that were trapped there. The priest chants, "Arise O God, judge the earth", and scatters leaves around the church; at that moment, we make a big commotion banging on wooden and metal objects, to celebrate the harrowing of Hades.

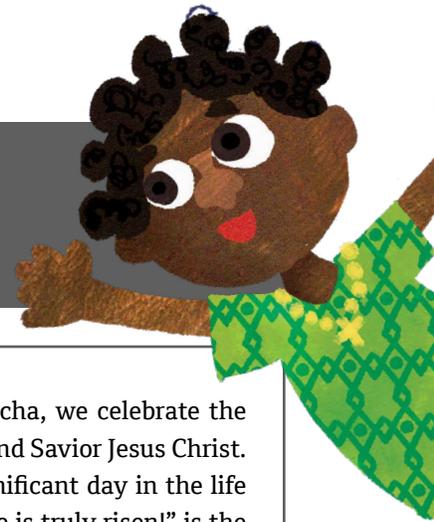
On the icon of the day, we see Christ stepping on the gates of Hades, and pulling Adam and Eve out from their graves. They are old, because they waited for a very long time for Him to come and rescue them. Surrounding the victorious Christ are Saint John the Baptist and the Old Testament Saints, ready to join God and the angels in Heaven.



Icon by Athanasios Clark, [tomclarkicons.com](http://tomclarkicons.com), courtesy of the Department of Religious Education, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.



# PASCHA SUNDAY



**Today's project is based on...**

**Traditions of Pascha Sunday.**

**The Gospel Readings are...**

Mark 16: 1-8, John 1: 1-17

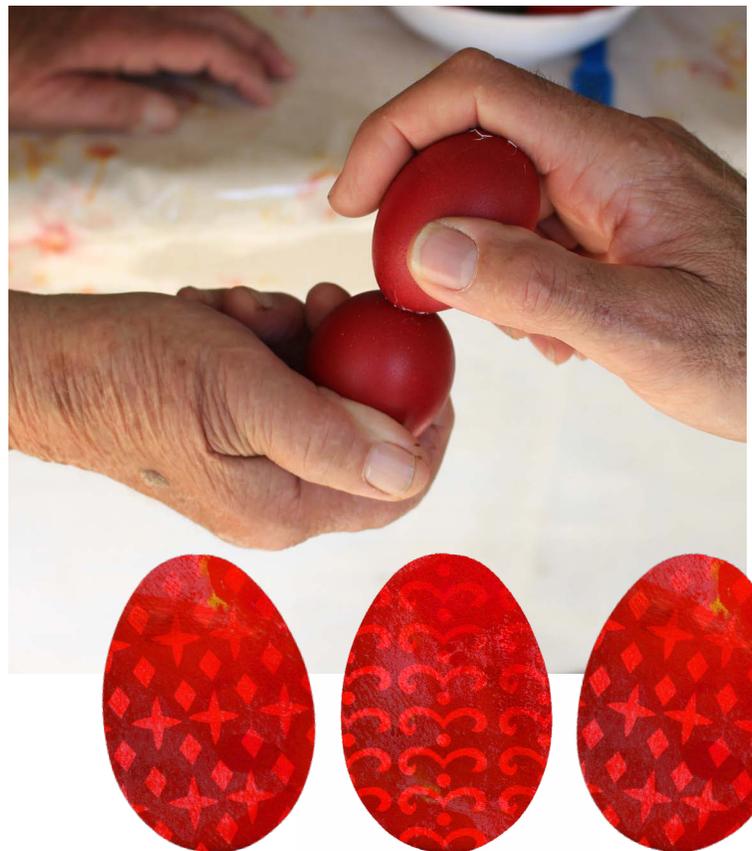
On the Great and Holy Feast of Pascha, we celebrate the life-giving Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This Feast of Feasts is the most significant day in the life of the Church. "Christ is risen!" – "He is truly risen!" is the special salutation of the day, and Orthodox Christians keep greeting each other in this way for forty days after Pascha Sunday.

This most important Feast is traditionally celebrated with a variety of customs, different ones for Orthodox Christians of different ethnic backgrounds. However, two customs common for all Orthodox Christians are the lighting of the Pascha candle, and the cracking of red eggs. They both signify the victory of Christ over death. Christ is risen! He is truly risen!



## TROPARION

*Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and on those in the tombs bestowing life!*





Resources for Teaching

our budding rocks of faith

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