

THE PARISH NEWSLETTER MARCH 2018

The Nativity of the Mother of God Russian Orthodox Church
617 Sand Creek Road, Albany NY (518) 869-3932

A parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad www.albanyrocor.org

Rector: Protopriest Alexis Duncan ; Protopriest Michael Fritz

Protodeacon: Fr. Michael Soloviev

GREAT LENT BEGAN - MONDAY FEBRUARY 19th

MARCH NAMESDAYS

12	Kira Milas	26	Nikifor Popov
	Kira Stabinsky	30	Fr. Alexis Duncan
14	Antonina Shevtchuk		Alex Nikiforov
18	Conon (Conner) McClure		Alexey Vepritsky
18	Ciaran Fitzpatrick		Patrick Soloviev
19	Helene (Jean) Henry		Patrick Henry
23	Victoria Alieva		

MNOGAYA LETA! MANY YEARS to all of our Parishioners celebrating their Namesday in the month of March.

DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR CHURCH DUES FOR 2018 - Please contact our Church Treasurer, Natasha Smelova if you have any questions. Reminder: WORKING ADULTS DUES ARE \$30 per month

ANNUAL GENERAL PARISH MEETING - SUNDAY MARCH 4th

We request that ALL parishioners attend the General Parish Meeting so they may be informed as to the current status of the Church and the Parish as a whole. Please be advised that in order to take an active role in the Parish and to vote on issues during the meeting, you must be a member of good standing in the Church. To inquire as to how to become a member of the Parish and to pay your Church Dues, please contact the Church Treasurer Natasha Smelova smelova@yahoo.com.

We all hope the parish will be there when we need it (for prayers, marriages, funerals, baptisms, etc.). By joining you show your visible support of the parish which nourishes you and your family spiritually. Through the payment of membership dues we pay our Clergy's salary, the upkeep of the Church (Electricity, Heat, Gas, etc.), and also for any repairs that may be needed.

The monthly dues for 2018 for anyone 18 years old and over are:

\$30 (employed adults) (\$360 a year)

\$10 (retired persons) (\$120 a year)

\$5 (students and non-working adults) (\$60 a year).

Together with paying your Church Dues, please consider making a monthly pledge to the Church Mortgage Fund. We have approximately a \$5000 mortgage payment a month, and we need everyone to help pay for our beautiful church. Thank you for supporting your parish.

IMPORTANT DATES IN MARCH 2018

Dates in **RED** - Designate Church Services

Dates in **BLUE** - Coffee Hour Hostess

Dates in **GREEN** - Special Events

- MAR. 3rd** Soul Saturday Panikhida 4:15 pm
Vigil 5pm
- MAR. 4th** Liturgy 9:30 AM - St. Gregory of Palamas
Coffee Hostess: Maria Hauf, N. Pasheda; M. Andruskevich
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
PASSIA - 2pm
- MAR 7th** PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY 6:30 am
- MAR 9th** PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY 6:30 am
- MAR 10th** **MAR. 3rd** Soul Saturday Panikhida 4:15 pm
Vigil 5pm
- MAR.11th** Liturgy 9:30 AM - Sunday of the Cross
Coffee Hostess:Krykhtin Group; Smelova Grop
LENTEN LECTURE
PASSIA 2pm
- MAR 14th** PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY 6:30 am
- MAR 16th** PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY 6:30 am
- MAR 17th** **MAR. 3rd** Soul Saturday Panikhida 4:15 pm
Vigil 5pm
- MAR. 18th** Liturgy 9:30 AM - St. John of the Ladder
Russian Foods - Pot Luck
SISTERHOOD MEETING
COUPLES & FAMILIES WORKSHOP 12:30
PASSIA 2pm
- MAR 21st** PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY 6:30 am
ST. ANDREW'S CANON 6:30p,
- MAR 23rd** PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY 6:30 am
- MAR 24th** VIGIL 5pm
- MAR 25th** Liturgy 9:30 SANG BY THE WOMEN'S CHOIR - St, Mary of Egypt
N. Vepritskaya; M. Fitzpatrick; Julia Shamata
HOLY UNCTION 5PM - Dinner to follow
- MAR 28th** PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY 6:30 am
- MAR 30th** PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY 6:30 am
- MAR 31st** **GENERAL CHURCH CLEANING FOR PASCHA 9AM**

Only coming to Church for Divine Liturgy on Sundays????? Look at all of the Church Services you are missing! We know that everyone is busy - work, family, life in general. During this Lenten period everyone should strive to come to at least ONE of these special services. Be it Vigil on Saturday evening, a Presanctified Liturgy on Wednesday or Friday morning or a Passia Service on Sunday afternoon. They are all extremely beautiful and spiritually uplifting services. Make the most of this Lenten Period and attend some of these services so you can prepare yourself for the Joyous Feast of Feasts - PASCHA. - THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD.



CHURCH FRESCOES

FATHER THEODORE has returned to continue work on our frescoes. We hope that ALL of our Parishioners will welcome him back. Please remember to bring him some meals and goodies - or better yet, invite him to your house for dinner or take him out to dinner. Stop by and visit him while he is working - so he knows how much we appreciate the beautiful work that he does. Also, if you would like to donate to the Fresco Fund - now is the time to do it. Thank you!

CHURCH SCHOOL CLASSES

Church School classes for the 2018 year will begin on February 11, 2018 at 8:30 am (before Liturgy). Sunday School **Dates, Mar 11, Mar 25, Apr 15 (since Apr 8 is Pascha we won't have classes and move the next class to Apr 15), Apr 29, May 13, May 20 - GRADUATION.** If you were unable to bring your children to the Fall classes, please make every effort to bring them to the classes listed above. Your children's spiritual education is extremely important. Sunday School is an extension of what you teach your children at home about God, the Mother of God, the saints, and the spiritual life. Let us work together to give our children the spiritual tools and spiritual foundation they will need not only now in their young lives, but as they get older. May they always keep God in their hearts and in their lives. —Matushka Anna

LENTEN LECTURE - MARCH 11th

The lecture is by Dr. Kentigern Siewers:

Author of *Strange Beauty*, a work on spiritual aspects of landscape in early Christian Ireland and Wales; editor of *Re-Imagining Nature*, which in part explored connections between the new field of environmental semiotics and traditional Christian cosmology; co-editor of *Tolkien's Modern Middle Ages*, including an essay on the influence of patristic Christianity on Tolkien; and co-editor of *Glory and Honor*, a collection of articles and resources on Orthodox Christian marriage.

Reader Alfred Kentigern Siewers is Associate Professor and Chair of English at Bucknell University, where his work focuses on medieval and nature literature, and on literature written in resistance to totalitarianism. He is a Chicago native and former newspaper journalist who has lived in central Pennsylvania with his family for 15 years. A graduate of the Pastoral School of the Diocese of the Midwest, he is warden of Holy Protection Russian Orthodox Mission Parish in Lewisburg, PA, where he helps conduct reader services under Fr. Claude Vinyard, who serves both there and at Christ the Saviour Church in Sugar Notch, PA. He and his wife Olesya (originally from Viatka, Russia) have two boys, Nicholas and Kevin Seraphim, who have been attending St. Seraphim Camp.

Tentative topic for the lecture: "Grant victory to the kings over the barbarians, and by the virtue of Thy Cross preserve Thy commonwealth': Royal priesthood in an age without Orthodox kings." This early version of the hymn for the Exaltation of the Cross suggests how the virtue of our Lord's Cross can be both weapon and remedy against false ideologies of self and materialistic justice corrupting our culture in the spirit of Anti-Christ. Historic traditions in Orthodoxy of the "withholding power" of kingship still can empower us through the virtue of His Cross in our homes, parishes, and civic spheres in America today.

BLINI - Sunday, February 18th

Thank you To Mat. Cecelia Soloviev and Alex McClure for making most of the Blini for our Parish Blini Lunch. Thank you to the Hostesses responsible for the dinner and to all of the people who donated the other food to accompany the Blini, desserts and beverages. Thank you to Anastasia and John Gonyea for manning our Beverage and Caviar table. Thanks to everyone who helped stay and clean-up after the lunch. A good time was had by all.

PUSSYWILLOWS

We have been experiencing some crazy weather this winter. Seventy degrees one day - and four inches of snow the next. Don't know what the future weeks have in store for us - but if we have a few more warm days -- I am sure the pussywillows will be blooming. We are requesting that ALL parishioners keep their eyes open for any blooming pussywillows. If you find some, please cut them and store them in a cool, dry place. Do not keep the cut pussywillows in water, they will continue to bloom. Thank you!



FLOWERS FOR GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY

The Sisterhood is requesting donations of flowers for Holy Friday and Pascha. Usually on Holy Friday, a donation plate is set near the Plaschanitsa to help defray the cost of the roses and other flowers that form the wreath around the Plaschanitsa. The potted plants and other flowers which are located on the steps surrounding the Plaschanitsa are usually donated by parishioners. These flowers not only adorn the Church on Holy and Great Friday, but throughout Pascha. They do not necessarily have to be white lilies but any flower

of your choosing. Not only potted plants, but cut flowers in vases are also wonderful. So please, consider bringing a plant to Church with you on Holy and Great Friday. Anyone wishing to help with the flower arranging for Holy Friday is requested to contact Matushka Anna Duncan. Thank you!

BLESSING OF BASKETS ON PASCHA

Baskets will be blessed following the Paschal Divine Liturgy, at approximately 2:30 am. Parishioners should bring their baskets to the Church Hall. After the Basket Blessing parishioners are encouraged to stay at the hall and break the fast. Please bring your own food, drinks, plates, cups, forks, etc. There will NOT be a Sisterhood sponsored "Coffee Hour". Parishioners are asked to please clean up their tables and help with the general cleaning of the hall, removing trash etc. The tables and chairs may remain in place since we will be using the hall for the Pascha Luncheon & Egg Hunt following the Agape Vespers on Sunday.

AGAPE VESPERS - PASCHA LUNCHEON & EGG HUNT

On Pascha (Sunday, April 8th) at 2pm Agape Vespers will be served at the Church. This is a short and beautiful service and all are encouraged to attend. If you were unable to have your Pascha Basket blessed after the Paschal Liturgy, you can have it blessed after the Agape Vespers. Following the Vespers we will have a "Pot Luck" lunch at the Church Hall and all are welcome. Please bring a dish to **share** and whatever you would like to drink. We ask that people please bring their food in throw away aluminum pans so the clean-up will be fast and easy. We hope that everyone will pitch in and help with the clean up. There will be an egg hunt for the children and parents should bring outdoor clothes for their children to change into after the service. We hope that many parishioners will be able to join us and share in the celebration of the Feast of Feasts.

WOMEN'S CHOIR WEEKEND - SUNDAY, MARCH 25th

Please join us on Sunday March 25th, the weekend of St. Mary of Egypt, for a women's choir Liturgy!

It is often difficult to mobilize women's events as we all have so many obligations, but please take the time to participate in something very special. Bring your daughters!

Zhenya Temidis has graciously agreed to conduct, so please join us that weekend with your voices!

Rehearsal details will be Saturday March 25th at 2pm at the church hall.

Although vigil will be sung by mixed choir, everyone is welcome to participate that evening.

On Sunday evening at 5pm, Holy Unction will be served, for which everyone is welcome to stay as well.

PASCHA CHURCH CLEANING - Saturday, MARCH 31st

On Lazarus Saturday, (MARCH 31st) we will have the General Church Spring Cleaning for Pascha. We ask that everyone meet at the Church at 9:00 am. We hope that some of our agile young men will be able to attend so the Iconostas and high window sills may be dusted and washed and also that the Altar be cleaned. The Church will need a good cleaning BEFORE Pascha to prepare it for the Feast of Feasts and a good cleaning AFTER Pascha. With the extra services and extra people who will be attending the Holy Week and Pascha services, the church will need some extra attention after Pascha - especially the floor. We hope that we will have a good crowd on Lazarus Saturday so the work will go quickly. We will also need to get the Pussy Willows and Palms ready for Palm Sunday. I know everyone is busy trying to prepare their own homes for Pascha – cleaning, baking Kulich and making Paskha, but we hope you can spare a few hours to prepare the Church as well. Thanks.

PASCHAL SALE

This year our Paschal Sale will be held on Western Good Friday - MARCH 30th (3pm - 6pm). We will be selling the frozen vareniki and golubtsi which are left over from our Taste of Russia. We will also be selling Babka - with or without raisins. This is a sweet yeast bread - not as dense as Kulich, but preferred by our non-Russian Customers. If any of our Parishioners are interested in purchasing Kulich or Syrnaya Paskha they are requested to contact Anastasia (RaeLynn Gonyea) Sisterhood President 518-695-6865 by MARCH 11th to place their orders. If your order is NOT placed by this date you will NOT be able to purchase a kulich or syrnaya paskah. We are ONLY baking enough to fill pre-paid orders placed before MARCH 11th.

Small Kulich with or without raisins \$10.00

Large Kulich with or without raisins \$15.00

Syrnaya Paskha 16oz. \$10.00

Large Babka with or without raisins \$8.00

Call Anastasia Gonyea at 518 695-6865 to place your order by MARCH 11TH

COFFEE HOUR HOSTESSES

Just a reminder. Coffee Hour hostesses are requested to make sure the kitchen is clean after your Coffee Hour, including washing, drying and putting away any dishes, pots, pans or utensils you may have used. Also, any towels you used should be brought home, washed and dried and returned to the hall. Since we do not have anyone cleaning the Church Hall on a regular basis, it is the Coffee Hour Hostesses responsibility to make sure the hall, kitchen and bathrooms are CLEAN. This includes removing ALL trash for hall, kitchen & bathrooms. Wiping down the sinks, scrubbing the toilets, replenishing toilet paper and paper towels. Also, ideally, the entire hall floor should be swept and mopped. If you are unable to mop the entire floor, PLEASE take a damp mop and make sure any dirty spots are mopped. We appreciate all the work of our Coffee Hour Hostesses - preparing all of the delicious food, but we would also appreciate if you could make sure the Hall is clean or our weekly renters. THANK YOU!

A REMINDER TO OUR PARISHIONERS

The Feast of Annunciation falls on Holy and Great Saturday, April 7th. For this reason FISH will NOT be allowed on the Feast of Annunciation.

SISTERHOOD NEWS

We have a busy year ahead of us and we hope all that our Sisters and the rest of the Parish will join and participate in all of our upcoming events.

MARCH 30th - Paschal Sale (Vareniki, Golubtsi, Babka, Kulich & Surnaya Paskha

SEPTEMBER 23rd - Parish Feastday Celebration

SEPTEMBER 30th - Russian Festival instead of Taste of Russia in November

OCTOBER 6th - 7th - Music Conference

DECEMBER 23rd-26th - St Herman's Youth Conference

These are all BIG events, that we will need the entire Parish to help support, volunteer and work these events.

We encourage everyone to attend our Sisterhood meetings so you will have a better idea as to what is entailed to make these events a success. I know many of these events are still far in the future, but it is never too early to start planning.

The next Sisterhood meeting will be SUNDAY, MARCH 18th. We were blessed to have many sisters attend our last meeting and we hope that even more will attend the March meeting.

Thank you all for your dedication to our Parish. Without all of your support and hard work, we could never accomplish as much as we are presently accomplishing.

PLAYGROUND COMPLETION

We hope that our contractor will be able to complete the installation of the swing set as soon as the weather permits - hopefully in March. Once the swing set is installed. We will need to place landscaping fabric throughout the playground and place 3 inches of stone - to help with the drainage. Then another layer of fabric and 10inches of playground certified mulch. We hope that All of the able bodied men of our parish will be able to help us complete the playground. We still need to collect some funds to buy the mulch and stone. If you are interested in donating toward the playground fund, please speak to Natasha Smelova. Thank you!

SOUL SATURDAYS DURING GREAT LENT

Saturday is the day which the Church has set aside for the commemoration of faithful Orthodox Christians departed this life in the hope of resurrection to eternal life. Since the Divine Liturgy cannot be served on weekdays during Great Lent, the second, third, and fourth Saturdays of the Fast are appointed as Soul Saturdays when the departed are remembered at Liturgy.

In addition to the Liturgy, kollyva (wheat or rice cooked with honey and mixed with raisins, figs, nuts, sesame, etc.) is blessed in church on these Saturdays. The kollyva reminds us of the Lord's words, "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24). The kollyva symbolizes the future resurrection of all the dead. As Saint Simeon of Thessalonica (September 15) says, man is also a seed which is planted in the ground after death, and will be raised up again by God's power. Saint Paul also speaks of this (I Cor. 15:35-49).

It is customary to give alms in memory of the dead in addition to the prayers we offer for their souls. The angel who spoke to Cornelius testifies to the efficacy of almsgiving, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God" (Acts 10:4).

Memorial services for the dead may be traced back to ancient times. Chapter 8 of the Apostolic Constitutions recommends memorial services with Psalms for the dead. It also contains a beautiful prayer for the departed, asking that their voluntary and involuntary sins be pardoned, that they be given rest with the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles in a place where sorrow, suffering, and sighing have fled away (Isaiah 35:10). Saint John Chrysostom mentions the service for the dead in one of his homilies on Philipians, and says that it was established by the Apostles. Saint Cyprian of Carthage (Letter 37) also speaks of our duty to remember the martyrs.

The holy Fathers also testify to the benefit of offering prayers, memorial services, Liturgies, and alms for the dead (Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, Saint John of Damascus, etc.). Although both the righteous and those who have not repented and corrected themselves may receive benefit and consolation from the Church's prayer, it has not been revealed to what extent the unrighteous can receive this solace. It is not possible, however, for the Church's prayer to transfer a soul from a state of evil and condemnation to a state of holiness and blessedness. Saint Basil the Great points out that the time for repentance and forgiveness of sins is during the present life, while the future life is a time for righteous judgment and retribution (Moralia 1). Saint John Chrysostom, Saint Gregory the Theologian, and other patristic writers concur with Saint Basil's statement.

By praying for others, we bring benefit to them, and also to ourselves, because "God is not so unjust as to forget your work and the love which you showed for His sake in serving the saints..." (Heb. 6:10).

PASSIA

The last Orthodox service to arise was Passia (Greek for "suffering"), and it was compiled in the mid-17th century by the Kievan Metropolitan Peter (Mogila), the developer of many liturgical forms. At first, passias were served widespread in the southern regions of Russia, but by the 20th century they were being served throughout.

The service of Passia occurs four times in the year (according to the number of evangelists): on the second, third, fourth, and fifth Sunday of Great Lent, in the evening. From its title it is clear that these services remember the salutary sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. A Gospel reading related to them is read at each Passia: in the first, the 26th and 27th chapters of Matthew, in the second, the 14th and 15th of Mark, in the third, the 22nd and 23rd chapters of Luke, in the fourth, the 18th and 19th of John. According to tradition, the praying stand with lit candles in hand during the Gospel readings.

Besides this, we hear several touching chants from the services of Great and Holy Friday — the day of the Lord's physical death. Thus, we hear the stichera "Come and worship Joseph eternally remembered...", which is sung during the kissing of Christ's Shroud; before the reading of the Gospel we hear the prokimen, "They parted My garments among them, and upon My vesture did they cast lots..." These and other prayers carry us to Golgotha, again and again reminding us of the final goal of Lent — co-crucifixion with Christ. During the Passia a sermon containing a lesson about Expiation is necessarily read. The early form of this service did not stipulate any parts, but the people's piety added, to the Gospel and sermon, the akathist to Christ's Cross or the Lord's Passion, which is usually sung not only by the choir, but by all present. It is not surprising that Russian Orthodox Christians so love the Passia.

This is a beautiful service with an Akafist to Christ's Passion - we hope that ALL of our parishioners will make a diligent effort to come and participate in at least one of these services.

Holy Unction - The Mystery of Anointing Sunday, MARCH 25th at 5pm

The Mystery (Sacrament) of Holy Unction will be performed on Sunday April 2nd at 5:00 pm. Visiting Clergy, from Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville and surrounding parishes, will be joining us for this very special service (please read explanation by By Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky, from his book *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*) We hope that ALL parishioners will attend this very special service. Following the service and anointing a dinner will be held in the Church Hall and everyone is invited to attend.

By Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky

The Essence Of The Mystery.

The Mystery of Unction is a sacred action in which, while the body is anointed with oil, the grace of God which heals infirmities of soul and body is called down upon a sick person (Orthodox Catechism, p 65). It is performed by a gathering of presbyters, ideally seven in number; however, it can be performed by a lesser number and even by a single priest.

The Divine Institution Of The Mystery.

Even in Old Testament times oil signified grace, joy, a softening, a bringing to life. Anointment of the sick with oil was done by the Apostles, as we read in the Evangelist Mark (6:13): They "anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." The clearest testimony of the Mystery of Unction is to be found in the Apostle James (5:14-15): "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders (presbyters) of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." The Apostle speaks here not of a special "gift" of healing; rather he prescribes the sacred action in a definite form,

which was to enter into the custom of the Church: the performance of it by the presbyters of the Church, prayers, anointment; and he joins to this, as its consequence, the easing of bodily illness and the forgiveness of sins. One cannot understand the words of the Apostle James about anointment with oil as referring to a usual healing method of those times, since oil, with all its beneficial attributes, is not a means of healing against every disease. The Apostles did not introduce anything of themselves, but they taught only what the Lord Jesus Christ had commanded then, and what the Holy Spirit had inspired in them; and they called themselves not the "institutors" of the Mysteries of God, but only the "stewards" of the Mysteries and the "servants of Christ." Consequently, Unction also, which is commanded here by the Apostle James, has a Divine institution.

In ancient Christian literature one may find indirect testimonies of the Mystery of Unction in St. Irenaeus of Lyons and in Origen. Later there are clear testimonies of it in Sts. Basil the Great and John Chrysostom, who have left prayers for the healing of the infirm which entered later into the rite of Unction; and likewise in St. Cyril of Alexandria. In the fifth century, Pope Innocent I answered a series of questions concerning the Mystery of Unction, indicating in his answers that: a) it should be performed "upon believers who are sick;" b) it may be performed also by a bishop, since one should not see in the words of the Apostle, "let him call for the presbytery," any prohibition for a bishop to participate in the sacred action; c) this anointment may not be performed "on those undergoing ecclesiastical penance," because it is a "Mystery," and to those who are forbidden the other Mysteries, how can one allow only one? This Mystery is performed on the sick who are capable of receiving it consciously and participating in prayer for themselves: however it may also be performed on children. The place of this sacred action may be either the church or the dwelling where the sick person is. The Mystery of Unction is usually preceded by Confession and is usually concluded with the Mystery of Communion.

The visible side of the Mystery comprises seven anointings of the sick person with oil by the participating priests in order; this is done in the form of a cross on the forehead, the nostrils, the cheeks, the lips, the chest, and both sides of the hands, accompanied by prayers and by the reading of specific passages in the Epistles and the Gospel. During the anointing itself, seven times this prayer is pronounced: "O holy Father, Physician of souls and bodies, who didst send Thine Only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who healeth every infirmity and delivereth from death: Heal also Thy servant (name)," and so forth. The rite of Unction begins with the singing of troparia and a canon; the final prayer in the rite is a prayer of remission of sins. A whole assembly of servants of the Lord stand before Him on behalf of the sick person, and by the prayer of faith on behalf of the whole Church entreats Him, the Most Merciful One, to grant to the infirm one the remission of transgressions and to purify his conscience from every defilement. There is also kept in mind the fact that a person who has grown weak in body and soul is not always capable of offering the proper confession of his sins. This lightening of the conscience of the one who receives the Mystery of Unction opens the way also for a grace-giving healing of his bodily infirmity through the prayer of faith. There is allowed and sometimes practiced a special rite of Unction, which is performed in church on many persons at the same time, on a special day assigned for this, for the general healing of infirmities of soul and body; but this rite is not precisely identical to the Mystery of Unction (In this rite, usually performed in the evening of Passion Wednesday, as if in preparation for our Lord's death and burial, all present come forward to be anointed by each of the seven (or fewer) priests. The rite is identical to that of the Mystery of Unction, except that if there are many people (and seven priests), the anointings may be performed all together at the end of the service, instead of after each reading of the Gospel, to the accompaniment of a repeated refrain to a special Lenten melody: "Hearken to us, O Lord; hearken to us, O Master; hearken to us, O Holy One.").

