

Quo Vadis

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“Quo Vadis?” is a Latin phrase meaning “Where are you going?” It refers to a Christian tradition regarding St. Peter. According to the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*, Peter is fleeing from likely crucifixion in Rome, and along the road outside the city, he encounters the risen Jesus. Peter asks Jesus “Quo vadis?” Jesus replies “Romam vado iterum crucifigi” (“I am going to Rome to be crucified again”). St. Peter thereby gains the fortitude to return to the city, to eventually be martyred by being crucified upside-down. The phrase also occurs a few times in the Latin *Vulgate* translation of the *Holy Bible*, notably in John 13:36 when Peter asks Jesus the same question, to which He responds, “Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me.” The Church of Domine Quo Vadis in Rome is built where, according to tradition, the meeting between St. Peter and the risen Jesus Christ took place.

This parish newsletter is called **Quo Vadis** for a reason: to ask the question of where *you* are going in life. Is your life’s journey leading you towards Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? St. Peter, at a pivotal moment in his life, when he understandably felt like running away, found the courage to go where Jesus Christ would have him go. Where are *you* going? Will *you* follow Jesus Christ?

Rector’s Message

“Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” (Mark 16:2-3)

Easter means many things to us as Christians. It means that Jesus Christ has defeated death. It means that eternal life is real, that death does not end our life with God. That all who live and believe will never die. But that stone being rolled away from the tomb—a detail recorded in all four gospels—tells us something else about Easter that is quite significant. The stone being rolled away tells us that Easter is also about the ways in which God removes obstacles in our life, those obstacles that try to keep us from God, and try to stop us from living the life that God has called us to live.

Let’s start with Peter and the other men who followed Jesus, his first disciples. Haven’t you ever noticed that on Easter morning they didn’t go to the tomb to help the women remove the stone? They were all locked away in the upper room, afraid for their lives. No wonder the women were worried about who would roll away the stone for them—they couldn’t get the men to go to the tomb with them! The men had created a tomb for themselves, and put a stone of their making over it. And they really didn’t want the stone rolled away. And that even includes the leader of those disciples, Peter. “Peter,” by the way, is a nickname given to him by Jesus, and it literally means rock or stone. Peter is supposed to be the stone, the rock on which Christ will build his church. But that first Easter morning, the leader of the disciples is locked away with the other disciples, cowering in fear. You might say, in Peter’s case, that the stone Peter needs rolled away is himself! Sometimes that’s true for us, isn’t it? We get in our own way. We create our own tombs. And the stone covering the tomb is our very own self.

The women had the courage to go to the tomb themselves. Even though they didn’t know what they would do once they got there. And that, too, teaches us something, doesn’t it? That sometimes we need to

leave our tombs; we need to step out in faith; and we need to trust that God will be there for us, and help us in our need. The women knew they couldn't roll that stone away, but it did not stop them from going to the tomb. If Easter means anything, it certainly means that God will be with us, always, and especially when we need God to be. But we can't let the women off quite that easily. Go back to what happened that first Easter morning. When the women arrived at the tomb, the stone was already rolled away from the tomb. They needn't have worried about that at all. But then they were told to go and tell Peter and the other disciples that Jesus is going ahead of them to Galilee; there they would see him, just as he promised. So, what did the women do? They fled from the tomb, and said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. And that is how Mark's Easter story ends. Even after we step out in faith, we can still find ourselves stumbling. There are lots of stones in our paths, it turns out, and it is easy to stumble. The women said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. So, what were the women afraid of? A rolled-away stone, a missing Messiah, and a mysterious message from a young man dressed in a white robe. These would make anyone afraid, wouldn't it? Or perhaps they were afraid of what the disciples would say. Would they think the women were crazy, or seeing things? Would they even believe them? The women were afraid, and for good reason. And that fear became another stone that needed to be rolled away.

Who will roll away that stone? Well, after Jesus was raised from the dead, he did as he promised. He showed himself to the disciples. Jesus entered the upper room, he rolled away their stone, he freed them of their fear, and he helped them to proclaim the good news to the world. And here is another miracle of Easter: This stone was, indeed, rolled away. It must have been. Because we know the story. The women (specifically Mary Magdalene) did tell the disciples, eventually. And Jesus did appear to those disciples, just as he promised. And he forgave Peter for denying him. And he promised to send the Holy Spirit to them. And he helped them understand what had just happened, and how it fulfilled the promise of Scripture. And he ascended into heaven. And the Holy Spirit came. And every last stone in the lives of those disciples was rolled away. Because there is no stone too large for God. No obstacle that God cannot remove.

Do you want proof of the resurrection? There is none that is more convincing than this: That Peter and the disciples, cowering in fear in their locked upper room, became the most fearless witnesses to the resurrection that you could ever imagine. Most of them dying, unafraid, and unwilling to deny what had become the cornerstone of their faith: that Christ died, rose again, and promised one day to return. No one was more fearless than those first disciples. And no stone that this world rolled in front of them could stop them now. Not prison, or threat of death, or anything else in this world. Now that is a miracle! So what changed? How did they go from cowering in fear in a locked room to boldly sharing the story of Jesus with all the world? Who rolled away the stone for them? What else could it be? It was Jesus Christ himself, risen from the dead. And he appeared to them. And he rolled away all the stones that were stopping them from doing his work. And after he did, they fearlessly proclaimed the good news of the resurrection of our Lord. No stone could trap them anymore. That, too, is the miracle of Easter. For them and for us. Our risen Lord enters our lives, and even our tombs, and rolls away the stones that are keeping us from being all that God wants us to be. He frees us from fear and helps us proclaim his message to the world. Easter means that there is no tomb that God cannot free us from. There is no stone that God cannot roll away. Regardless of how we got there, God doesn't want us to stay there. God wants to free us from whatever it is that is keeping us from the new life in Christ that the miracle of Easter offers to us all. For Christ is risen! Indeed, He is risen!

Excerpt from the Church Fathers

“Those to whom the Risen Christ has revealed Himself, to them has He assuredly become manifest spiritually; He has shown Himself to their spiritual eyes. When this happens to us through the Spirit, He raises us from the dead and gives us life. He grants us to see Him, Who is immortal and indestructible, and not only that, He grants us clearly to know Him who raises and glorifies us with Himself.”

— St. Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022), Homily on the Mystery of the Resurrection of Christ

Lives of the Saints

St. Dunstan of Canterbury, Bishop – commemorated on May 19th

St. Dunstan (909–988) was an English bishop. He was successively Abbot of Glastonbury Abbey, Bishop of Worcester, Bishop of London, and Archbishop of Canterbury. His work restored monastic life in England and reformed the English Church. Dunstan served as an important minister of state to several English kings. He was the most popular saint in England for nearly two centuries, having gained fame for the many stories of his greatness, not least among which were those concerning his famed cunning in defeating the Devil.

According to Dunstan's earliest biographer, known only as 'B', his parents were called Heorstan and Cynethryth and they lived near Glastonbury. B states that he was related to Ælfheah the Bald, Bishop of Winchester, and Cynesige, Bishop of Lichfield. As a young boy, Dunstan studied under the Irish monks who then occupied the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey. Accounts tell of his youthful optimism and of his vision of the abbey being restored. While still a boy, Dunstan was stricken with a near-fatal illness and effected a seemingly miraculous recovery. Even as a child, he was noted for his devotion to learning and for his mastery of many kinds of artistic craftsmanship. With his parents' consent he was tonsured, received minor orders and served in the ancient church of St Mary. He became so well known for his devotion to learning that he is said to have been summoned by Athelm to enter his service. He was later appointed to the court of King Æthelstan.

Dunstan soon became a favorite of the king and was the envy of other members of the court. A plot was hatched to disgrace him and Dunstan was accused of being involved with witchcraft and black magic. The king ordered him to leave the court and as Dunstan was leaving the palace his enemies physically attacked him, beat him severely, bound him, and threw him into a cesspool. He managed to crawl out and make his way to the house of a friend. From there, he journeyed to Winchester and entered the service of Ælfheah, Bishop of Winchester.

The bishop tried to persuade him to become a monk, but Dunstan was doubtful whether he had a vocation to a celibate life. The answer came in the form of an attack of swelling tumors all over Dunstan's body. This ailment was so severe that it was thought to be leprosy. It was more probably some form of blood poisoning caused by being beaten and thrown in the cesspool. Whatever the cause, it changed Dunstan's mind. He took Holy Orders in 943, in the presence of Ælfheah, and returned to live the life of a hermit at Glastonbury. Against the old church of St Mary he built a small cell 5 feet long and 2½ feet deep. It was there that Dunstan studied, worked at his art, and played on his harp. It is at this time, according to a late 11th-century legend, that the Devil is said to have tempted Dunstan and to have been held by the face with Dunstan's tongs.

Dunstan worked as a silversmith and in the scriptorium while he was living at Glastonbury. It is thought likely that he was the artist who drew the well-known image of Christ with a small kneeling monk beside him in the Glastonbury Classbook, "one of the first of a series of outline drawings which were to become a special feature of Anglo-Saxon art of this period." Dunstan became famous as a musician, illuminator, and metalworker. Lady Æthelflæd, King Æthelstan's niece, made Dunstan a trusted adviser and on her death, she left a considerable fortune to him. He used this money later in life to foster and encourage a monastic revival in England. About the same time, his father Heorstan died and Dunstan inherited his fortune as well. He became a person of great influence, and on the death of King Æthelstan in 940, the new King, Edmund, summoned him to his court at Cheddar and made him a minister.

Again, royal favor fostered jealousy among other courtiers and again Dunstan's enemies succeeded in their plots. The King was prepared to send Dunstan away. There were then at Cheddar certain envoys from the "Eastern Kingdom," which probably meant East Anglia. Dunstan implored the envoys to take him

with them when they returned to their homes. They agreed to do so, but it never happened. The story is recorded:

... the king rode out to hunt the stag in Mendip Forest. He became separated from his attendants and followed a stag at great speed in the direction of the Cheddar cliffs. The stag rushed blindly over the precipice and was followed by the hounds. Edmund endeavored vainly to stop his horse; then, seeing death to be imminent, he remembered his harsh treatment of St. Dunstan and promised to make amends if his life was spared. At that moment his horse was stopped on the very edge of the cliff. Giving thanks to God, he returned forthwith to his palace, called for St. Dunstan and bade him follow, then rode straight to Glastonbury. Entering the church, the king first knelt in prayer before the altar, then, taking St. Dunstan by the hand, he gave him the kiss of peace, led him to the abbot's throne and, seating him thereon, promised him all assistance in restoring Divine worship and regular observance.

Dunstan, now Abbot of Glastonbury, went to work at once on the task of reform. He had to re-create monastic life and to rebuild the abbey. He began by establishing Benedictine monasticism at Glastonbury. The Rule of St. Benedict was the basis of his restoration according to the author of 'Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries' (written in the 960s or 970s) and according to Dunstan's first biographer, who had been a member of the community at Glastonbury. Their statements are also in accordance with the nature of his first measures as abbot, with the significance of his first buildings, and with the Benedictine leanings of his most prominent disciples. Nevertheless, not all the members of Dunstan's community at Glastonbury were monks who followed the Benedictine Rule. In fact, Dunstan's first biographer, 'B', was a cleric who eventually joined a community of canons at Liège after leaving Glastonbury. Dunstan's first care was to rebuild the Church of St. Peter, rebuild the cloister, and re-establish the monastic enclosure. The secular affairs of the house were committed to his brother, Wulfric, "so that neither himself nor any of the professed monks might break enclosure." A school for the local youth was founded and soon became the most famous of its time in England. A substantial extension of the irrigation system on the surrounding Somerset Levels was also completed.

Within two years of Dunstan's appointment, in 946, King Edmund was assassinated. His successor was Eadred. The policy of the new government was supported by the Queen mother, Eadgifu of Kent, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Oda, and by the East Anglian nobles, at whose head was the powerful ealdorman Æthelstan the "Half-king." It was a policy of unification and conciliation with the Danish half of the kingdom. The goal was a firm establishment of royal authority. In ecclesiastical matters it favored the spread of Catholic observance, the rebuilding of churches, the moral reform of the clergy and laity, and the end of the religion of the Danes in England. Against all these reforms were the nobles of Wessex, who included most of Dunstan's own relatives, and who had an interest in maintaining established customs. For nine years Dunstan's influence was dominant, during which time he twice refused the office of bishop (that of Winchester in 951 and Crediton in 953), affirming that he would not leave the king's side so long as the king lived and needed him.

In 955, Eadred died, and the situation was at once changed. Eadwig, the elder son of Edmund, who then came to the throne, was a headstrong youth wholly devoted to the reactionary nobles. According to one legend, the feud with Dunstan began on the day of Eadwig's coronation, when he failed to attend a meeting of nobles. When Dunstan eventually found the young monarch, he was cavorting with a noblewoman named Ælfgifu and her mother, and refused to return with the bishop. Infuriated by this, Dunstan dragged Eadwig back and forced him to renounce the girl as a "strumpet". Later realizing that he had provoked the king, Dunstan fled to the apparent sanctuary of his cloister, but Eadwig, incited by Ælfgifu, whom he married, followed him and plundered the monastery. Although Dunstan managed to escape, he saw that his life was in danger. He fled England and crossed the channel to Flanders, where he found himself ignorant of the language and of the customs of the locals. The count of Flanders, Arnulf I, received him with honor and lodged him in the Abbey of Mont Blandin, near Ghent. This was one of the

centers of the Benedictine revival in that country, and Dunstan was able for the first time to observe the strict observance that had seen its rebirth at Cluny at the beginning of the century. His exile was not of long duration. Before the end of 957, the Mercians and Northumbrians revolted and drove out Eadwig, choosing his brother Edgar as king of the country north of the Thames. The south remained faithful to Eadwig. At once Edgar's advisers recalled Dunstan.

On Dunstan's return, Archbishop Oda of Canterbury consecrated him a bishop and, on the death of Coenwald of Worcester at the end of 957, Oda appointed Dunstan to the see. In the following year the see of London became vacant and was conferred on Dunstan, who held it simultaneously with Worcester. In October 959, Eadwig died and his brother Edgar was readily accepted as ruler of Wessex. One of Eadwig's final acts had been to appoint a successor to Archbishop Oda, who died on June 2, 958. The chosen candidate was Ælfsige of Winchester, but he died of cold in the Alps as he journeyed to Rome for the pallium. In his place Eadwig then nominated the Bishop of Wells, Byrthelm. As soon as Edgar became king, he reversed this second choice on the ground that Byrthelm had not been able to govern even his first diocese properly. The archbishopric was then conferred on Dunstan. St. Dunstan went to Rome in 960, and received the pallium from Pope John XII. On his journey there, Dunstan's acts of charity were so lavish as to leave nothing for himself and his attendants. His steward complained, but Dunstan seems to have suggested that they trust in Jesus Christ.

On his return from Rome, Dunstan at once regained his position as virtual prime minister of the kingdom. By his advice Ælfstan was appointed to the Bishopric of London, and Oswald to that of Worcester. In 963, Æthelwold, the Abbot of Abingdon, was appointed to the See of Winchester. With their aid and with the ready support of King Edgar, Dunstan pushed forward his reforms in the English Church. The monks in his communities were taught to live in a spirit of self-sacrifice, and Dunstan actively enforced the law of celibacy whenever possible. He forbade the practices of simony (selling ecclesiastical offices for money) and ended the custom of clerics appointing relatives to offices under their jurisdiction. Monasteries were built, and in some of the great cathedrals, monks took the place of the secular canons; in the rest the canons were obliged to live according to rule. The parish priests were compelled to be qualified for their office; they were urged to teach parishioners not only the truths of the Christian faith, but also trades to improve their position. The state saw reforms as well. Good order was maintained throughout the realm and there was respect for the law. Trained bands policed the north, and a navy guarded the shores from Viking raids. There was a level of peace in the kingdom unknown in living memory.

In 973, Dunstan's statesmanship reached its zenith when he officiated at the coronation of King Edgar. Edgar was crowned at Bath in an imperial ceremony planned not as the initiation, but as the culmination of his reign. This service, devised by Dunstan himself and celebrated with a poem in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle forms the basis of the present-day British coronation ceremony. There was a second symbolic coronation held later. This was an important step, as other kings of Britain came and gave their allegiance to Edgar at Chester. Six kings in Britain, including the kings of Scotland and of Strathclyde, pledged their faith that they would be the king's liege-men on sea and land. Edgar ruled as a strong and popular king for sixteen years. Edgar's reign, and implicitly his governing partnership with Dunstan, was praised by early chroniclers and historians who regarded it as a golden age. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle caveated the acclaim with one complaint, criticizing the high level of immigration that took place at that time. It would appear from William of Malmesbury's later history that the objection was limited to the mercenary seaman, employed from around the North Sea littoral, to assist in the defense of the country.

In 975, Edgar was succeeded by his eldest son, St. Edward "the Martyr." His accession was disputed by his stepmother, Ælfthryth, who wished her own son Æthelred to reign. Through the influence of Dunstan, Edward was chosen and crowned at Winchester. Edgar's death had encouraged the reactionary nobles, and at once there was a determined attack upon the monks, the protagonists of reform. Throughout Mercia they were persecuted and deprived of their possessions. Their cause, however, was supported by

Æthelwine, the ealdorman of East Anglia, and the realm was in serious danger of civil war. Three meetings of the Witan were held to settle these disputes, at Kyrtlington, at Calne, and at Amesbury. At the second of them the floor of the hall where the Witan was sitting gave way, and all except Dunstan, who clung to a beam, fell into the room below; several men were killed. In March 978, King Edward was assassinated at Corfe Castle, possibly at the instigation of his stepmother, and Æthelred the Unready became king. His coronation on Low Sunday, March 31, 978, was the last state event in which Dunstan took part. According to William of Malmesbury, writing over a century later, when the young king took the usual oath to govern well, Dunstan addressed him in solemn warning. He criticized the violent act whereby he became king and prophesied the misfortunes that were shortly to fall on the kingdom, but Dunstan's influence at court was ended. Dunstan retired to Canterbury, to teach at the cathedral school. Only three more public acts are known. In 980, Dunstan joined Ælfhere of Mercia in the solemn translation of the relics of King Edward, soon to be regarded as a saint, from their grave at Wareham to a shrine at Shaftesbury Abbey. In 984, in obedience to a vision of Andrew the Apostle, he persuaded King Æthelred to appoint Ælfheah as Bishop of Winchester in succession to Æthelwold. In 986, Dunstan induced the king, by a donation of 100 pounds of silver, to stop his persecution of the See of Rochester.

Dunstan's retirement at Canterbury consisted of long hours, both day and night, spent in private prayer, as well as his regular attendance at Mass and the daily office. He visited the shrines of St. Augustine of Canterbury and St. Æthelberht, and there are reports of a vision of angels who sang to him heavenly canticles. He worked to improve the spiritual and temporal well-being of his people, to build and restore churches, to establish schools, to judge suits, to defend widows and orphans, to promote peace, and to enforce respect for purity. He practiced his crafts, made bells and organs and corrected the books in the cathedral library. He encouraged and protected European scholars who came to England, and was active as a teacher of boys in the cathedral school. On the vigil of Ascension Day 988, it is recorded that a vision of angels warned he would die in three days. On the feast day itself, Dunstan said Mass and preached three times to the people: at the Gospel, at the benediction, and after the Agnus Dei. In this last address, he announced his impending death and wished his congregation well. That afternoon he chose the spot for his tomb, then went to his bed. His strength failed rapidly, and on Saturday morning, May 19, he ordered the clergy to assemble. Mass was celebrated in his presence, then he received Extreme Unction and the Viaticum, and died. Dunstan's final words are reported to have been, "He hath made a remembrance of his wonderful works, being a merciful and gracious Lord: He hath given food to them that fear Him."

The English people accepted Dunstan as a saint shortly after his death, and in 1029 the Synod of Winchester was ordered St. Dunstan's feast to be kept solemnly throughout England. St. Dunstan became patron saint of English goldsmiths and silversmiths because he worked as a silversmith making church plate. The Eastern Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Anglican Communion mark his feast day on May 19. English literature contains many references to St. Dunstan: for example, in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. A story relates how St. Dunstan nailed a horseshoe to the Devil's foot when he was asked to re-shoe the Devil's cloven hoof. This caused the Devil great pain, and Dunstan only agreed to remove the shoe and release the Devil after he promised never to enter a place where a horseshoe is over the door. This is claimed as the origin of the lucky horseshoe.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is Easter often celebrated on different dates in Eastern and Western Christianity?

The phenomenon of two separate Easter dates is due to some differences between different calendar systems and some differences between the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church. In the Eastern Orthodox Church, Pascha (Easter) is frequently celebrated on a different day than in Western Christianity because it follows the Julian calendar instead of the Gregorian calendar, so that the vernal equinox is 13 days later.

The Julian Calendar was developed during the dictatorship of Julius Caesar. It was put into effect because the calendar that Romans used at the time didn't match up with the solar year (it was about three months off). A three-month gap created many problems for scheduling things—if a calendar says the winter solstice is one day and it happens three months later, farmers can't accurately plan how long they'll be able to work on that particular day. They'll also have a hard time knowing when they can harvest and collect winter stocks if their calendar doesn't accurately show seasonal changes. Armies planning when to stop for winter and when to advance would have similar problems.

To solve the calendar problem, Sosigenes of Alexandria developed a calendar that had 12 months, some with 31 days and others not. His calendar also included a leap year every four years to make up for the fact the Julian calendar treated a year as $365\frac{1}{4}$ days (every four years, February's extra day helps the calendar jump ahead). The Julian calendar was a sound system, and in many ways, it is the system we still use today. However, it had a big problem: Sosigenes of Alexandria had overestimated how long a solar year was by about 12 minutes. Twelve minutes doesn't sound like much, but that means that every century, the Julian calendar fell behind an entire day. Those days accumulated, so by the 1500s, people were back to the problem of the calendar not fitting solar events and seasons.

Pope Gregory XIII adopted a calendar system developed by astronomer Luigi Lilio and instituted the Gregorian Calendar in 1582 to solve this problem. This calendar had a slightly different formula for calculating leap years and left out ten days from that year's calendar. It also calculated Easter on a different day. While the Gregorian calendar didn't catch on immediately—it was the 1500s, the Protestant Reformation was in full swing, and most Protestants weren't fond of making changes recommended by the Pope. By the 1700s, though, most of the world's countries had switched to the Gregorian calendar (Turkey didn't accept it until 1927). However, even though the countries with the most Eastern Orthodox Christians (Greece, Russia, etc.) had accepted the Gregorian calendar for civil use, their churches didn't adopt it for their movable feasts. In 1923 the Orthodox Church of Greece adopted a Revised Julian calendar, which would line up fixed dates with the Gregorian calendar, but Easter would still be calculated using the Julian calendar. Many, but not all, of the other local autocephalous churches have since adopted it.

It was the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council in AD 325 who came up with a uniform way of setting the date, and the calendar then in use was the Julian. They decreed that Easter was to be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon following the vernal equinox, but always after Passover. To this day, the Orthodox have stuck with this method of calculating the date of the feast, leading to the celebration of Orthodox Easter usually falling later than in the Western world (either because the West disregards the date of Passover or because the first Sunday after the full moon following the vernal equinox on the Gregorian calendar falls before the vernal equinox on the Julian calendar, as is the case this year). In some years, Eastern and Western Easter fall on the same date, and this will once again be the case in the year 2025.

The gap in time between the celebration of Easter for the East and the West will be getting wider and wider. As a result of this widening gap, from 2699 onward, the celebration of Easter for the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Western Christian churches will never coincide again. Altogether, in the whole of the 21st century, the celebration of Easter will be held on the same day 31 times, but during every coming century, this will happen more and more rarely. The last time Easter celebrations will coincide is estimated to be in 2698. From then onwards, Eastern Orthodox and Western Christians will never celebrate the Resurrection of Christ together again.

The World Council of Churches proposed a reform of the method of determining the date of Easter at a summit in Aleppo, Syria, in 1997: Easter would be defined as the first Sunday following the first astronomical full moon following the astronomical vernal equinox, as determined from the meridian of Jerusalem. The reform would have been implemented starting in 2001, since in that year the Eastern and

Western dates of Easter would coincide. This reform was not implemented, as it would have relied mainly on the cooperation of the Eastern Orthodox, since the date of Easter would change for them immediately; whereas for the Western churches, the new system would not differ from that currently in use until 2019. However, Eastern Orthodox support was not forthcoming, and the reform failed. More recent statements by the Vatican and Orthodox churches state the goal to achieve consensus by 2025, just in time for the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea, but without publishing any specific plans or who would adopt which changes. On November 10, 2022, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew stated that both the Orthodox and Catholic sides have a good intention to finally establish a common date for the celebration of Christ's Resurrection (Easter) before the celebration of the 1700th anniversary of the First Council of Nicaea, which took place in AD 325; however, he said that it was too early to talk about details. As of now, the year before the aforesaid anniversary, this does not seem at all likely to happen.

Recipe of the Month

Osterbrot (German Easter Bread)

It seems that practically every Christian country in Europe has an Easter bread, and Germany is no exception. Osterbrot (Easter bread) is German braided sweet bread that is soft and slightly sweet, with lemon zest giving it a little bit of fresh citrus flavor. It is a popular breakfast or brunch item during the Easter holiday season in Germany and other European countries. It is also known as Hefezopf (which translates as "yeast braid"), and is similar to Challah and Paska bread, but slightly different. It is often served sliced and toasted and tastes delicious on its own, but is even better topped with butter or your favorite jam. Leftovers are also great for extra indulgent bread pudding or French toast!

Ingredients:

- 1 Cup of Heavy Cream – Using heavy cream instead of milk makes this bread super rich and soft. Reserve 2 tablespoons of heavy cream for brushing onto the loaf before baking.
- 2½ tsp. Active Dry Yeast – Active dry yeast needs to be activated before it can be used. You can also use instant yeast and skip the first step of the recipe.
- 4 Cups of Flour – All-purpose flour works best for this recipe.
- 1/3 Cup of Sugar
- 1 tsp. Vanilla Extract – Traditionally vanilla sugar is used in this recipe, but you can also use vanilla extract.
- 1 tbsp. Lemon zest – Fresh lemon zest adds a fresh citrus flavor to the bread which balances out the sweetness.
- 3 Large Eggs – They should be at room temperature for the best results. This way the dough rises better.

Directions:

- (1) Heat up the heavy cream until lukewarm, be careful if the cream is too hot the yeast won't rise.
- (2) Pour lukewarm cream into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook attachment. Sprinkle yeast and 1 tsp sugar on top of the milk. Give it a stir with a spoon and allow to sit for 5 minutes. The mixture should be frothy after 5 minutes. If that isn't the case, start over with new yeast.
- (3) With the stand mixer running on low speed, add flour, sugar, vanilla extract, lemon zest, 2 eggs and 1 egg white. Save the egg yolk for brushing the bread before baking.
- (4) Knead for 5 minutes until a soft and only slightly sticky dough forms that pulls away from the sides of the bowl. If the dough is too sticky to handle, add a little bit more flour, start with 1 Tbsp.
- (5) Form the dough into a ball and place it in a greased bowl. Turn the dough to coat all sides and cover the bowl with plastic wrap. Place the bowl in a warm environment to rise until doubled, about 1-2 hours.

(6) Once the dough has doubled in size, turn it out onto a lightly floured surface. Shortly knead the dough to release the air bubbles. Divide the dough into 4 equal pieces and shape each of them into a 12-inch long rope. Grease a baking pan (or line it with parchment paper) and place the ropes side by side.

(7) Punch the upper ends of the ropes together. You have rope 1, 2, 3, and 4. We start with rope 4 and place it over rope 3, under rope 2 and over rope 1. Now you repeat this with rope 3: Over rope 2, under rope 1 and over rope 4. Repeat this process until all the ropes are braided together. Punch the ends of the bread together.

(8) Cover the bread with cling film and let it rise in a warm environment while you preheat the oven to 350°F.

(9) Combine the remaining egg yolk and 2 tbsp heavy cream and brush the bread with it. Bake it for 25 minutes or until golden brown. Transfer the bread to a cooling rack.

Notes:

- Freezing: You can freeze this bread.
- Activating the yeast: Make sure the cream has the right temperature before adding the yeast. An instant-read thermometer is helpful! The target temperature is about 100 degrees F.
- Serving: Serve this bread with butter and jam or spread Nutella on it!
- Add-ins: If you want to make raisin bread you can add 1 cup of raisins after the first rise to the dough and gently knead them into the dough. Candied citrus peel also makes a delicious addition.
- Optional Toppings: Top the bread with coarse sugar or sliced almonds before baking.
- Similar bread: Osterbrot is similar to Challah, but Challah is usually parve, which means it doesn't contain dairy and is made with water instead of dairy products like milk, butter, or cream. Challah becomes quite similar when you use a less traditional recipe with milk in it. Brioche is an enriched French bread like this Easter bread containing butter and milk or cream.

Parish News

Blessing of Easter Food Baskets

Easter food baskets will be blessed in the church hall at 4:00 PM on Saturday, May 4, 2024.

Paschal Repast

A Paschal repast is being held at the Carpathian Club Hall after Divine Liturgy on Easter Sunday, May 5, 2024. All parishioners and visitors are welcome!

Blessing of Graves

Graves at Bay View Cemetery in Jersey City shall be blessed on Bright Saturday (May 11, 2024), starting at 10:00 AM, followed by Evergreen and Rosedale cemeteries. Please call the Rectory at (201) 436-3244 to schedule appointments for grave blessings at Graceland and other cemeteries.

Parish Council Meeting

The Parish Council is meeting in the church hall on Wednesday, May 15, 2024 at 5:00 PM.

In Memoriam

Mr. Konstantin Menshikov, a former parishioner, passed into blessed repose on March 30, 2024. Memory Eternal! ВІЧНАЯ ПАМ'ЯТЬ!

Schedule of Services

May 2-6, 2024

9:00 AM (Thursday) – Vespers & Divine Liturgy
6:00 PM (Thursday) – Matins w. 12 Passion Gospels
4:00 PM (Friday) – Vespers & Matins w. Lamentations
9:00 AM (Saturday) – Vespers & Divine Liturgy
11:30 PM (Saturday) – Nocturns & Paschal Matins
9:20 AM (Sunday) – Paschal Hours & Divine Liturgy
9:30 AM (Monday) – Divine Liturgy

May 11-12, 2024

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

May 18-19, 2024

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

May 25-26, 2024

5:00 PM (Saturday) – Great Vespers
9:30 AM (Sunday) – Divine Liturgy

Deanery Paschal Vespers

N.J. Deanery Paschal Vespers will be at Christ the Savior Church in Paramus, N.J., on Bright Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at 6:30 PM. Most Rev. Archbishop Michael will officiate.

Daily Bible Readings

1. No Liturgy Readings
2. 1 Corinthians 11:23-32; Composite Reading*
3. No Liturgy Readings
4. Romans 6:3-11; Matthew 28:1-20
5. Acts 1:1-8; John 1:1-17
6. Acts 1:12-17, 21-26; John 1:18-28
7. Acts 2:14-21; Luke 24:12-35
8. Acts 2:22-36; John 1:35-51
9. Acts 2:38-43; John 3:1-15
10. Acts 3:1-8; John 2:12-22
11. Acts 3:11-16; John 3:22-33
12. Acts 5:12-20; John 20:19-31
13. Acts 3:19-26; John 2:1-11
14. Acts 4:1-10; John 3:16-21
15. Acts 4:13-22; John 5:17-24
16. Acts 4:23-31; John 5:24-30
17. Acts 5:1-11; John 5:30-6:2
18. Acts 5:21-33; John 6:14-27
19. Acts 6:1-7; Mark 15:43-16:8
20. Acts 6:8-7:5, 47-60; John 4:46-54
21. Acts 8:5-17; John 6:27-33
22. Acts 8:18-25; John 6:35-39
23. Acts 8:26-39; John 6:40-44
24. Acts 8:40-9:19; John 6:48-54
25. Acts 9:20-31; John 15:17-16:2
26. Acts 9:32-42; John 5:1-15
27. Acts 10:1-16; John 6:56-69
28. Acts 10:21-33; John 7:1-13
29. Acts 14:6-18; John 7:14-30
30. Acts 10:34-43; John 8:12-20
31. Acts 10:44-11:10; John 8:21-30

* Mt. 26:2-20; Jn. 13:3-17; Mt. 26:21-39; Lk. 22:43-45; Mt. 26:40-27:2

Special Donations

Special Donations may be offered at \$15 for the Altar Vigils, \$10 for the Sanctuary Lamp, and \$5 for any one of the following: St. John's Cross, St. Nicholas' Cross, and Triple Candelabra, and may be offered in memory of the departed or in honor of the living. Please note that for Special Donations in June to be acknowledged in "Quo Vadis," the donation must be recorded in the Special Donations register in the church vestibule by May 19, 2024.

May 19, 2024

Sanctuary Lamp offered by Fr. Sophrony Royer in memory of V. Rev. Archimandrite Anthony Falsarella.

May 26, 2024

St. John's Cross offered by Helen Wanko in memory of Mary Macinsky (anniversary of birth). **St. Nicholas' Cross** offered by Helen Wanko in memory of Anastasia Grudinoff (anniversary of repose).

Remember to support the parish every time you shop!



ShopRite, Stop & Shop, and Acme gifts cards available for purchase in the church vestibule.