

**St. Mary's Orthodox Church  
(Dormition of the Mother of God)**

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*Sunday March 19, 2017*

***Sunday of the Holy Cross***

Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria, and those with them at Rome: Claudius the Tribune, his wife Hilaria, their sons Jason and Maurus, the priest Diodorus, and the deacon Marianus; Martyr Pancharius at Nicomedia (302); Saints Quintus, Quintilla, Quartilla, Mark and Companions, martyrs venerated in Sorrento near Naples in Italy; Saints Apollonius and Leontius (*Leontinus*), by tradition early Bishops of Braga in Portugal (4th century); Saint Auxilius, a companion of St Patrick, became Bishop of Killosey (near Naas, County Kildare) in Ireland (c. 460); Saint John the Syrian of Pinna, a Syrian monk who settled in Pinna near Spoleto in Italy and became abbot of a large monastic colony there for 44 years (6th century); Saint Leontius of Saintes, Bishop of Saintes (640); Saint Adrian, disciple of St Landoald, murdered while begging alms for his monastery near Maastricht in the Netherlands (c. 668); Saints Landoald and Amantius, a priest and deacon who helped enlighten what is now Belgium and north-eastern France, founded the church at Wintershoven (c. 668); Saint Lactan, born near Cork in Ireland, St Comgall entrusted him to found a monastery at Achadh-Ur, now Freshford, in Kilkenny (672); Saint Alcmund (*Alcmund of Derby, or of Lilleshall*), martyred in Shropshire (c. 800) Saint Gemus, a monk, probably at Moyenmoutier in Alsace, whose relics were enshrined at Hürbach; Righteous Mary (*Maria Shvarnovna*), wife of Vsevelod III (1206); Saint Bassa, nun, of the Pskov-Caves Monastery (1473); Venerable Innocent of Komel the Wonderworker, in Vologda (1521), disciple of St. Nilus of Sora; New Martyr Demetrius, at Constantinople (1564); Saint Sophia of Slutsk and Minsk, descendant of the Sovereigns of the Kyivan-Rus' (1612); New Martyr Nicholas Karamanos of Smyrna (1657); Saint John Blinov, Confessor (1932); New Martyr Matrona Alexeeva (1938); Saint Symeon (Popovic), Archimandrite of Dajbabe Monastery, Montenegro (1941); **Other Commemorations:** Smolensk "Umileniye" ("*Tender Feeling*", "*Sweet-Kissing*") Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos; Icon of the Mother of God of Lubyatov (15th century).

***Services for the week of March 19***

Wednesday, March 22: 9:00 am Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Friday, March 24: Vigil for the Annunciation.

Saturday, March 25: 9:00 am Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom for the Great Feast of the Annunciation.

6:00 pm Great Vespers for the Sunday of St. John of the Ladder..

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**Parish News**

**WELCOME:** to all of our guests today. We are so glad that you have come to enjoy our Orthodox worship. We invite you to come for coffee and sweets in our church hall and to enjoy fellowship with us. May God bless you!

**OFFERING:** March 12: \$688.35

**DIACONAL ORDINATION:** It is a pleasure and a joy to announce that Jason Crowder will be ordained to the diaconate on Saturday, April 1 at the church of St. Mary of Egypt (ROCOR diocese) in Atlanta. Fr. Mark will be present at the ordination. Deacon Elias has been blessed by our bishop and also by his diocese to serve here in our parish church. May God grant the soon-to-be-ordained deacon and his dear wife and daughter every blessing and good strength for the ministry!

**PLEASE CONSIDER A DONATION** for Paschal flowers to the Ladies' Altar Society. The Resurrection will be here soon. Help to beautify the church on this most sacred of days.

**REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS** Wanda (Martha) Smith, Janet Mikel and Ernie Chizmar. May the Lord bless them and remember them in all ways. May He grant them health!

**HOLY CONFESSION:** Please be aware that to be considered an Orthodox Christian *in good standing* in our diocese...that Holy Confession once a year as the *minimum* requirement and it must take place during the Great Fast. Please plan on having confession at least once during this sacred season.

**REFLECTION**

Faithfulness and obedience to the will of God is necessary to adorn the life of every Christian. As is seen in the life of St. Agapius, God glorifies the faithful and the obedient. When he was a young man, this saint was captured by pirates, was taken to Asia and was sold to a certain Arab. For twelve years Agapius remained quietly and obediently a slave of this Arab. For twelve years he prayed to the All-Holy Mother of God to help him gain his freedom from bondage. One night, the Virgin Mother of God appeared to him and said, "Arise and go without fear to Mt. Athos to your elder." Agapius arose and came to his elder on Mt. Athos, the Holy Mountain. When the elder saw Agapius, he was saddened, thinking that Agapius had fled from his master. He said to him, "My child Agapius, you have deceived your master, but you can never deceive God. On the day of the dreadful judgment, you will have to render an answer for that money with which your master purchased you to serve him. Therefore, you must return and faithfully serve your master." Agapius, faithful and obedient to the will of God, returned immediately to Asia, reported to his master, and informed him about everything that had happened. The Arab, learning all of this, was amazed and was overcome with the charity of Christians. He desired to see Agapius' s elder. The Arab arrived at the Holy Mountain, accompanied by his two sons. Here, he and his two sons were baptized. All three of them were tonsured as monks. They remained there until their deaths, practicing the strict life of asceticism, at first, under the guidance of Agapius' s spiritual father, and afterwards, by Agapius himself. Thus, the one-time cruel masters became the obedient disciples of their former slave, faithful to the will of the God of the obedient Agapius.