



### Feast of the Annunciation — March 25

We celebrate the Virgin Mary's "fiat" or "yes" to the greeting of the Archangel Gabriel that she will give birth to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Salvation of our souls. This is a day of obligation equal to the Lord's Day (Sunday) and all should do their best to gather to celebrate the Eucharist together. The day is so honoured that we break away from our Lenten fast for one day to celebrate the feast with great joy. The feast is celebrated even if it falls on Good Friday itself.



### Reading of the Twelve Passion Gospels

In anticipation of Good Friday we read twelve Gospel passages that narrate the Passion of our Lord. The twelve readings retell the account of Judas' betrayal, Jesus' final words to the Apostles, His anguish in the Garden, His arrest and trial before Pilate, the denial of Peter, the scourging and crucifixion, and our Lord's death and burial. This service will move even the hardest of hearts to the Lord. "Glory to Your Passion, O Lord!" "Glory to Your long-suffering, O Lord!"



### Procession and Veneration of the Holy Shroud

On Good Friday we observe a strict fast and spend the day in quiet meditation of our Crucified Lord. We celebrate Vespers with a procession and veneration of the Holy Shroud. During the procession children "clack" wooden blocks symbolic of the sounds made by hammers as Jesus is nailed to the Cross. Those not in the procession turn in their pews so as to never turn their back towards the image of Christ. The Shroud is then laid in a tomb for all to venerate.



### Holy Saturday — The Descent into Hades and Nadhrobne

When the time for Vespers arrives we begin to see a great transformation. Just before the Gospel is proclaimed the clergy change from red vestments to gold in anticipation of our Lord's Resurrection. Easter foods are blessed and yet reserved for the following day so that we can partake of the blessed meal immediately after the Easter Sunday morning service. At the end of the day we celebrate the "Nadhrobne" or "at the tomb" service as the Shroud is transferred to the Holy Altar.



### Pascha — The Resurrection of Our Lord

Early in the morning we journey with myrrh-bearing women to the tomb. The doors of the Church are closed and the people assembled. At a certain point the priest knocks on the doors, commanding that they be opened to the King of Glory as we sing "Christ is risen from the dead...". We share the risen Lord in the Most Holy Eucharist. At the end of the service we are greeted with "Christ is Risen!" to which we respond "Indeed, He is risen!"

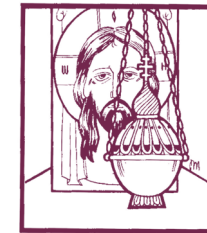
## ST. STEPHEN PROTOMARTYR UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

# 2026

## Liturgical Services

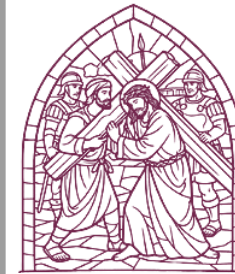
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## Lenten and Easter Season



### Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts was first documented by Pope St. Gregory I (540–604), who at the time was the papal legate to Constantinople. He noted that the Byzantines even fasted from the act of "consecration" during the weekdays of Holy Lent. This tradition continues today and is practiced to varying degrees in North America. The prayers of incense and a solemn silent procession of the Blessed Sacrament are at the core of this Eucharistic service.



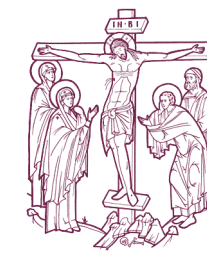
### Way of the Cross

This Lenten service walks through fourteen stations representing the Passion of Christ, from condemnation to burial, meditating of His suffering and love through prayer. It is a spiritual pilgrimage, letting believers symbolically follow Jesus's path to Calvary. It is intended to foster reflection on His sacrifice and a spirit of reparation for the suffering and insults that Jesus endured during his passion, encouraging self-examination to follow His example.



### Sorokousty

"At the signal given by the voice of the Archangel and the trumpet of God, the Lord himself will come down from heaven; those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise, and only after that shall we who remain alive be taken up in the clouds, together with them, to meet the Lord in the air" (1Thess.4:16-17). At this Lenten service we read aloud the names of our loved ones who have died and pray that we may be together with them at our Lord's second coming.



### Akathist to the Theotokos

This centuries old "standing prayer" recalls the protection of the Most Holy Theotokos. In 625, when emperor Heraclius was fighting the Persians, the Khan sent forces to attack Constantinople by land and by sea. Patriarch Sergius urged the people not to lose heart but trust in God, a procession around the city was made with the relics of the True Cross and the Virgin's robe. Through our Lady's intercession the city was saved!

