

THE FORERUNNER
The Nativity of St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church
 420 Laura Street, Philipsburg, PA 16866
 V. Rev. Fr. C. Michael Simerick, Acting Rector
 Contact Fr. Michael directly at 814-375-1343
<http://nativityofstjohn-oca.org>



John Conkey-Council President; Tom Demchak-Vice-President; Judy Everly-Secretary; Mike Conkey-Treasurer
Members: Sonya Brennish, George Sura, Ivan Switala

MAY 2019

Service & Activity Schedule

- Sat., May 4 – Vespers – 5:00 p.m.
- Sun., May 5 – St. Thomas Sunday
 Hours @ 9:35 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 a.m.
 Fellowship Hour – Everly and Conkey
 Bless graves – 1:30 pm
- Sat., May 11 – Chicken BBQ – 11 am – 2 pm
 Vespers– 5:00 p.m.
- Sun., May 12 – Holy Myrrhbearing Women
 Hours @ 9:35 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 a.m.
 Fellowship Hour – St. Anne’s Guild
 Happy Mother’s Day
- Sat., May 18
 Vespers – 5:00 p.m.
- Sun., May 19 – The Paralytic
 Hours @ 9:35 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 a.m.
 Fellowship Hour – Fetcenko & Stine
- Sat. May 25
 Vespers – 5:00 p.m.
- Sun., May 26 – Samaritan Woman
 Hours @ 9:35 a.m.
 Divine Liturgy @ 10:00 a.m.
 Fellowship Hour – Donovan & Foster

Readers:

Mark Ammerman, John Conkey,
 Mike Conkey, Tom Demchak,
 Doug Donovan, George Sura,
 Andrew Tocimak

Altar Servers:

Acolyte John Blake
 Ivan Switala

Reader’s Schedule

	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Epistle</i>
5/5	Tom Demchak	Tom Demchak
5/12	John Conkey	John Conkey
5/19	Mark Ammerman	Mark Ammerman
5/26	Doug Donovan	Doug Donovan

Notable Feasts in May

5/8	Holy Apostle John the Theologian
5/22	Midfeast Pentecost
5/25	Finding of the Honorable Head of St. John the Baptist
5/29	Leavetaking of the Midfeast

Birthdays

Mary Ann Ammerman	May 6
Tom Everly	May 30
Suzanne Demchak	May 31

Anniversaries

Elaine & Jim Cardinal	May 16, 1970
Joanne & William Whitehead	May 22, 1993

Please contact Shirley Donovan (814-360-3615) or Mary Ann Conkey (814-867-2926) if there are changes with the Fellowship Hour. Cash donations go towards the purchase of coffee, cream, and sugar.

From the Desk of Father Michael

From the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ until His Ascension (Thursday, June 6) we are to rejoice in the joy of the Pascha season. The greeting “Christ is Risen, Truly He is Risen” is continued throughout this period. In preparing for the celebration of Holy Pascha no less than twelve weeks were invested in liturgical and sacramental participation that we might enter into the mysteries of the Feast of Feasts, the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; therefore, a 40-day period of rejoicing after the Resurrection is most appropriate.

<p style="text-align:center">St. Thomas Sunday – May 5 BELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION, THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR ORTHODOX FAITH</p>

On Sunday, May 5, we commemorate St. Thomas who had first doubted our Lord’s resurrection but his doubts were dispelled when he encountered the risen Lord. St. Thomas’ weakened faith stemmed from his relying on empirical knowledge, that one acquires through the physical senses. Christ becoming man reveals to us more resolutely the depth of our humanity posited in our spiritual essence. The living soul in us is what truly makes us human. It is what sets us apart from the rest of creation. Because of our spiritual dimension, we are able to contemplate, dream, speculate, love, and be spiritually and emotionally moved by beauty, courage, and other intangible factors.

We begin on St. Thomas Sunday the blessing of the graves precisely because what appears to our physical senses, that those in the graves are no more, is overcome by the power of our faith through which we know that death has been abolished and all are alive. The invisible Christ came physically into this world to save us via His resurrection and will come physically once again at the end of time that we might abide with Him forever in His kingdom that He has prepared for us. May we continue to nurture our faith by feeding on the eternal word of God and the sacramental food of life afforded us by our participation in His holy Church.

We will exclaim for 40 days that “Christ is risen! Truly He is risen!” because His victory over death has been made our victory. The Lord spared no effort in explaining and bolstering the faith of His disciples and those that followed Him regarding the resurrection, that His resurrection might be believed by them and us. It is the belief in the Lord’s resurrection that sustains us in this present life and makes possible our glorious eternal life in the world to come.

St. Nicholas of Ochrid in the following article writes concerning the resurrection of the dead:

“Christ’s apostle Paul considered the resurrection a precious mystery, and thus he revealed it to the faithful slowly and carefully when he said: ‘We would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope...For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel’s call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise’ (I Thess. 4:13-16). And again he says, ‘Lo, I tell you a mystery...in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable’ (I Cor.15:51-52). Then what is perishable shall be clothed in what is imperishable, and what is mortal shall be clothed in immortality. And then the saying that is written shall come to pass: ‘O death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?’ (I Cor. 15:55, Cf. Hos. 13:14).

Jesus made many other statements about the resurrection of the dead. But in order not to leave people in any doubt, He attested to these words of His with deeds. He resurrected the dead daughter of Jairus, a ruler of the Jewish synagogue (Matt.9:25, Mark 5:41). Furthermore, the Lord resurrected the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:12-15)...Furthermore, the Lord also resurrected Lazarus at Bethany (John 11).. Whom else did the Lord resurrect? Himself. He resurrected from the tomb on the third day after His death, just as He had prophesied. And his disciples ‘rejoiced when they saw the Lord’ (John 20:20). ...The holy apostles made the event of the Messiah’s resurrection from the dead the foundation of their preaching of the gospel. And all their personal hope and all their unwavering courage in the face of death drew strength and nourishment from that glorious event. One of them, who initially persecuted Christ’s Church but later

saw the living, risen Lord, wrote: ‘Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can any of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ...If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men the most unfortunate’ (I Cor.15:12,19)...

The Lord died and resurrected to prove and demonstrate our own resurrection from the dead. With His resurrection an inextinguishable flame of faith was kindled forever in the hearts of men, that they too would be resurrected. ‘For as in Adam all die so also in Christ shall all return to life’ (I Cor.15:22).”

Let us rise above our physical nature and be truly human investing in our spiritual prowess renewed through our baptism, nurtured via the sacraments of the Church, and empowered by our undaunting belief in the Lord’s resurrection.

<p style="text-align: center;">Sunday of the Myrrhbearing Women and Mothers’ Day– May 12</p>

Many of those who followed Jesus were concerned about what He taught and what He stood for regarding His political motivations, but of all those who sought to be with Him and around Him, including His apostles, none were more loyal than the simple ragtag group who loved Him and did not spare any opportunity to offer to Him the little they had in rendering Him love and respect. When even the apostles forsook Him at the end, this same small group of followers stuck by Him and out of genuine human love did those things appropriate in rendering respect to His dead body.

The following commentary on the gospel read this Sunday (Mark 15:43-16:8) is offered by St. John Chrysostom (*Homily LXXXVIII on Matthew XXVII*):

“Mark how great the women’s diligence. They had followed Him, ministering to Him, and were present even to the time of the dangers. This is why they also saw all; how He cried, how He gave up the ghost; how the rocks were rent and all the rest. These women were the first to see Jesus; and the sex that was most condemned first enjoys the sight of the blessings; this sex shows its courage the most. And when the disciples had fled, these were present ...Joseph, who had been concealing his discipleship of late, now became very bold after the death of Christ. He was by no means an obscure person ...but one of the council ...He exposed himself to death, taking great enmity upon him from all by his affection for Jesus ...Do you see the women’s courage? Do you see their affection? Do you see their noble spirit in matters of money? their noble spirit even unto death? Let the men imitate the women; let us not forsake Jesus in temptation ...But we neither feed Him when hungry, nor clothe Him when naked (Cf. Matt.25), but seeing Him go begging, we pass Him by. And yet if we saw Him in fact, everyone would strip himself of all his goods.

We must learn from this gospel not to permit fear of bodily harm or loss of status to prevent us from fulfilling our faithful obligations to our Lord’s service, as demonstrated by Joseph of Arimathea and the myrrh-bearing women. With regard to the myrrh-bearing women, we might come to understand that fulfilling the routine and habitual chores expected of us as Christians might lead to extraordinary insights and profound revelations of the highest caliber. The women went early and fearlessly to perform the anointing with love and were provided an awesome encounter with the angel, assuring them of the Savior's resurrection.

Let us not shrink from the routine and sometimes seemingly thankless responsibilities that we are asked to perform in the church, for often they can be rewarded by truly divine experiences. May God continue to strengthen our faith in these days reflecting the light of the resurrection through all of our endeavors to render Him faithful service.”

MOTHER'S DAY

On Sunday, May 12, our nation honors its mothers. The following are excerpts from a beautiful article on Mother's Day written by the V. Rev. Stephen Sedor, entitled "Mother's Day, Mothers of the Christian Church."

"Today, over the length and breadth of America, people have gathered in their churches to honor mothers on this Mother's Day. The Church, too, joins in honoring mothers, but particularly those true, Christian, loving mothers who neglect no part of their children's upbringing, especially that which concerns the Christian life here and hereafter.

Good and great mothers have been the glory of the Christian Church. Open the pages of God's Book, the Sacred Scriptures, and open the pages of Church History, and there you will find a host of remarkable women. Let's take a look at some of them.

1. There was the Lord's own mother, the Virgin Mary. Remember what she said when the Angel announced the news of Christ's coming? 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it to me according to thy word.' There was submission to God's will. And there was a true mother's love and loyalty, as the Virgin Mary stood under the cross to be with Her Son until death came to Him.

2. There were the Myrrh-Bearing Women, whom our Church honors after Easter each year. Early in the morning we see them hurrying to the tomb that they might even in death minister to the One they loved.

3. There were other remarkable women in the New Testament. Lydia, who opened the doors of her home that it might serve as a church. There was Dorcas, who sewed clothes for the widows and orphans of her city. There was Eunice the mother, and Lois the grandmother of the Apostle Timothy ... When Timothy as a boy visited with his grandmother, she didn't take him to the movies, but sat with him and read God's Word.

Great mothers were not limited to the New Testament era. Church History, too, provides wonderful examples of women who deserve even today to be honored on Mother's Day

4. What shall we say of Nanna, the mother of St. Gregory the Theologian? Nanna was married to a man who was not even a Christian. But she prayed for Gregory Sr., and finally he believed and was baptized into God's Family. He not only became a Christian, but in time a bishop; and not only a bishop, but a saint of the Church. And when Gregory Jr. was born, Nanna took him to be baptized and touched his fingers to the Holy Gospel to dedicate him to the service of the Lord.

5. What shall we say of Emmelia, the mother of St. Basil the Great, and of Macrina, his grandmother? Eight children were born into that family, three of whom became bishops of the Church, and most of whom are accounted saints in the Church's calendar. During the cold winter months, Basil and his brothers and sisters would gather around the open fireplace and listen while the grandmother and mother told of their own relatives who had become martyrs for Christ. Emmelia was the daughter of a martyr, and she often told her children how their grandfather had died for the Lord.

6. And what shall we say of Anthusa, the great mother of St. John Chrysostom? She became a widow at the age of 20 years, never remarried, but dedicated her life to the bringing-up of John to the glory of God and the Church. Word of her dedication, her sacrifice and her love spread wide in that day, and even reached the ears of a wellknown pagan educator who exclaimed: 'What mothers these Christians have!'

7. And then there is Monica, the mother of Blessed Augustine. Augustine wrote a book about his life, and he tells of his early life of sin. But Monica never stopped weeping and praying for him. After some 18 years of such prayer, Augustine was changed and converted to the Christian faith. Then began the amazing career which led him to become a bishop of the Western Church. Monica died at the age of 58, and Augustine wept for an hour beside his mother's body. He apologized to the Christians, saying, 'Don't be amazed that I wept for an hour for my mother, for she wept a whole lifetime over me ...'

Such were the great Christian mothers nurtured in the Christian Church down through the centuries past.

But today we must remember that a Christian mother is not only to feed her child, and raise him up to be a fine physical specimen of manhood or womanhood. A Christian mother is the child's first and most important teacher. No one else will have as much an influence on a child as a mother has during the first five or six years of life. If God is to be real to that child, the mother must make Him so. If prayer is to be vital, like breath of the soul, the mother must make it so. Yes, the influence and mark of a mother will remain forever on the child."

May God grant all of our mothers, grandmothers, and Godmothers of our parish and throughout the world His choicest blessings, and to the departed mothers eternal life in God's Kingdom, for all that they do and did in service of love to their families.

MOTHER, I'M SORRY

Mother, as your beloved child, I write this letter of apology for all the times I have in words, deeds, and thoughts forfeited my right to be called your child. From the very beginning when you brought me to life, I came to the newness of the life experience reluctantly. My wailing, kicks, and screams were but outward manifestations of my inner rebellion against all outside myself and against you. Although I appeared to be a helpless bundle of flesh, my self-centered ego was quite transparent. Immediately upon my birth, as a loving mother you sought to sustain me, by feeding and nurturing me with your protective love. Frequently, I slept through or rejected your attempts to feed me, and when it was pleasing to me, I accepted your love gestures but on other occasions, I rejected them as well.

As I began to grow and mature, I grew in awareness of all the things around me. I sought to reach out to them or cry out for them regardless of your efforts to constrain me. No matter how dangerous or inappropriate my cries or regardless of your efforts to control me, I often persevered in my stubborn pursuit to have my own way. My total disregard for your attempts to constrain me often resulted in my embarrassing you and others.

You tried to teach me about the virtues of life, and I for the most part proved a disinterested or at best a reluctant student. The moral and ethical values you attempted to instill in me had only varying success. I rebelled not only against those principles but also your authority. It was as if I began to see our relationship as adversarial. I was often ashamed of you and my association with you. You would preach and teach with steadfast loving compassion, and I would look for ways to justify my defiance of you and the principles you championed. I even chose friends that lived in total denial of most everything you advocated. I then used them and their philosophies to justify my rebelliousness.

I grew accustomed to simply taking from you what I felt I needed and rejecting what I considered to be superfluous. I wanted and demanded your material/moral support and compassionate understanding, especially when a misguided action of mine resulted in negative consequences. In retrospect, I can honestly say I had come to understand our relationship as parasitical. I would simply live off the good things you could provide for me, that is the things I understood in my depravity as being beneficial, and categorically rejected the rest.

When I was old enough to leave you due to school, vocation, or flexing my newfound freedom, due to age, I did so quickly without looking back at you or what I was leaving behind. In the earlier part of my separation from you, I came back periodically to reestablish ties, but soon those times became less and less frequent. Living without your guidance and supervision gave me a great sense of comfort. The liberation I felt was intoxicating. Finally, I found myself almost totally divorced from you. When I thought of you at all, it was for the most part due to selfish reasons. I thought about you in nostalgic ways. At that time, I did not realize that my life separate from you was no life at all. I stopped supporting you, caring for you, thinking of you. I began to live only for myself and my own self-interests.

Now that I find myself in the twilight of my life, I have come to realize that my physical life will not continue much longer. **Suddenly as if miraculously, I remember you Holy Mother, the Church, and all of the wonderful and beautiful things you attempted to instill in me regarding the real values of this life--love, truth, virtue, relationships, a sacramental life with you who gave me new life through baptism.** I now realize that all the things you did for me in the beginning and attempted to do for me throughout all my years was to prepare me for what I must now face, and that is physical death. Your attempt to have me concern myself foremost with the spiritual things of life that do not end was not clear to me in the past but has become abundantly clear to me now as the physical world and my physical life collapses around me.

Holy Mother, the true Orthodox Catholic Church, I'm sorry for rejecting the holy life you called me to share with you. I'm sorry for turning my back on your bridegroom and my Savior, Jesus Christ, through all my selfish actions. I'm sorry for not supporting you properly that the Savior's work in this world could have been accomplished more readily. I'm sorry for the times through pride and arrogance I trivialized your truths and norms to family, friends and strangers, causing their faith and trust in you to be diminished.

I know that I cannot be saved, Holy Mother, without your forgiveness and blessing, so on this day honoring mothers, I humbly beseech your forgiveness for being a wayward and prodigal child. I alone have alienated myself from you and spurned your motherly love and concern. I ask your blessing that I might return to your maternal protection as a true child of God. Hear this plea and have mercy, Holy Mother, for I pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

Sunday of the Paralytic – May 19

The gospel reading for this Sunday is taken from John 5:1-15. It is definitely not by accident that some of the post Sundays of Pascha deal with the theme of water. Our holy Church attempts to awaken in us the Lord's great miracle of making it possible for us to die unto our old person and be born again through the holy waters of the baptismal font. If the waters of the pool of Bethesda once stirred could bring bodily restoration, certainly the waters of baptism empowered by the Holy Spirit could accomplish the Lord's mandate of providing for us rebirth through the holy font.

On the Sunday commemorating the healing of the paralytic, we are also asked to keep in mind two additional important aspects revealed to us regarding this miracle. When Jesus asked the man who had been crippled for 38 years if he wanted to be healed, the question to many seems foolish. But we know that Jesus does not speak foolishly. He deliberately asked the man if he wanted to be healed because often it is evident that those suffering from infirmities truly don't want to be healed of them. We can grow accustomed to our infirmities and they can become an excellent excuse for us, assisting us in not measuring up to what is required of us. We can simply say when we have infirmities as an excuse that we can't do this or that because of our apparent handicap. Jesus does not ask this man a foolish question, and the man reveals that he truly wants to be healed, but an obstacle consistently prevents him from receiving restoration.

The obstacle preventing this man from being healed in the troubled waters of Bethesda reveals the second important aspect of this miracle for us to contemplate. The man answers Jesus when asked if he wants to be healed "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled." The paralytic languished in his illness some 38 years because no one would help him. We are asked to think about all the able-bodied men who had to have been present at the pool over those 38 years while this man was praying for assistance so that he might receive his bodily health.

Why is it that one man is physically handicapped and another enjoys full health? The fathers of the Church teach that the infirm by their patience and endurance in bearing their infirmities receive their reward at the end of this life by being granted eternal life. The healthy, on the other hand, being blessed with physical strength, are to use their strength and their resources given to them by God to help the infirm. It is in this way that the healthy also at the end of this life will see the reward of everlasting life. The paralytic, in addition to inheriting eternal life due to his patience, endurance, and faith, was also granted the great blessing to have this encounter with the Son of God and to be healed physically of his infirmity. We are called to both persevere in our infirmities and to help those less fortunate by the measure of strength afforded us by our Lord. By so doing, we who are baptized will be fulfilling our Christian vocations in this life and therefore will enjoy the blessed life with our Lord in His Kingdom.

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman – May 26

The Sundays that follow the Resurrection, in particular those that deal with the connotation of water, as mentioned above, are preparing us for the sacrament of baptism. In the early Church baptisms were performed on Pentecost and other days commemorating the themes of the Resurrection or renewal. The descent of the Holy Spirit, of course, is the baptism of the nucleus members of the holy Church by tongues of fire. Baptism, the sacrament made possible by the power of the Holy Spirit, perfects transformation/renewal and the ushering in of eternal truth. The themes of renewal and the revelation of the eternal truth, both perfected by the Holy Spirit, are the pillars of the Orthodox Christian faith. The Savior came to make us anew and endow us with the eternal truth regarding His salvation plan that we might be set free to inherit eternal life.

In the gospel from **St. John, 4:5-42**, Jesus says to the Samaritan woman, “The hour is coming and now is when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for such the Father seeks to worship Him. God is spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”

Father Schmemmann in his book “The Celebration of Faith, the Church Year, Vol. 2” writes:

“These words express and eternally proclaim a genuine religious revolution, a revolution in the very concept of religion; in these few lines, we see the birth of Christianity. In spirit and in truth! Religion, until then, and for centuries, had consisted of rules, laws, and statutes, and thus religious observance consisted entirely of blind, unquestioning submission to these rules. Not on this mountain, but in Jerusalem; not here, but there; not that way, but this way. Thus, offering to God thousands of such prescriptions, human beings protected themselves from trouble, from fear, and from painful searching. They built themselves a cage in which everything was clearly and carefully defined and there were no demands other than precise observance. And all of this is now erased and overturned in a few words: worship is not on this mountain and not in Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth. In other terms, not in fear and blindness, not out of anxiety or distress, but in knowledge and freedom, in free choice, in love, as of a child for his father.

Now, at the center of religion, at its very heart, is not law, not submission, not prescription, but truth: “You will know the truth,” Christ said, “and the truth will make you free” (Jn 8:32). At its heart now is the very process of seeking: “Seek and you will find” (Mt 7:7). Not appeasement, but thirst: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness” (Mt 5:6). Not slavery, but freedom: “No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing” (Jn 15:15). Not rule-keeping, but love: “I desire mercy and not sacrifice” (Mt 9:13); “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another” (Jn 13:34).

Despite all of its historical falls and failures, Christianity never erased these words from the gospel, and by them, therefore, it judges itself. With results much more tragic, anti-religious propaganda, in its blind hatred of religion, ignores these words as if they were never said, and, to dispatch religion with greater ease, equates it with externals, superstitions and fear. Yet Christianity, first and foremost, is Christ, his teaching, the gospel. The gospel recounts how people preferred their own—their own opinions, their own ideology, their own law—to “spirit and truth,” and how intolerable was this call to liberation. Here, in this story of people rejecting him who called them to live in spirit and in truth, lies the full meaning of the gospel. And thus the gospel itself gives us an explanation for that hatred of Christ which to this day forces people to lie, slander, and silently ignore.”

Let us, who are baptized unto the death and resurrection of Christ, seek Him in spirit and in truth that we might inherit eternal life.

MEMORIAL DAY – Monday, May 27

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11, and was first observed on 30 May 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.

In 1915, inspired by the poem "In Flanders Fields," Moina Michael replied with her own poem:

We cherish too, the Poppy red
That grows on fields where valor led,
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies.

She then conceived of an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial Day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war. She was the first to wear one, and sold poppies to her friends and co-workers with the money going to benefit servicemen in need. Later a Madam Guerin from France was visiting the United States and learned of this new custom started by Ms. Michael and when she returned to France, made artificial red poppies to raise money for war orphaned children and widowed women. This tradition spread to other countries. In 1921, the Franco-American Children's League sold poppies nationally to benefit war orphans of France and Belgium. The League disbanded a year later and Madam Guerin approached the VFW for help. Shortly before Memorial Day in 1922 the VFW became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies. Two years later their "Buddy" Poppy program was selling artificial poppies made by disabled veterans. In 1948 the US Post Office honored Ms Michael for her role in founding the National Poppy movement by issuing a red 3 cent postage stamp with her likeness on it.

Traditional observance of Memorial Day has diminished over the years. Many Americans nowadays have forgotten the meaning and traditions of Memorial Day. At many cemeteries, the graves of the fallen are increasingly ignored, neglected. Most people no longer remember the proper flag etiquette for the day. While there are towns and cities that still hold Memorial Day parades, many have not held a parade in decades. Some people think the day is for honoring any and all dead, and not just those fallen in service to our country.

There are a few notable exceptions. Since the late 50's on the Thursday before Memorial Day, the 1,200 soldiers of the 3d U.S. Infantry place small American flags at each of the more than 260,000 gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery. They then patrol 24 hours a day during the weekend to ensure that each flag remains standing. In 1951, the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts of St. Louis began placing flags on the 150,000 graves at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery as an annual Good Turn, a practice that continues to this day. More recently, beginning in 1998, on the Saturday before the observed day for Memorial Day, the Boys Scouts and Girl Scouts place a candle at each of approximately 15,300 grave sites of soldiers buried at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park on Marye's Heights (the Luminaria Program). And in 2004, Washington D.C. held its first Memorial Day parade in over 60 years.

Grant rest eternal and blessed falling asleep to all of our military and civilian personnel who lost their lives in all of our military conflicts through the ages. May God grant their memories be eternal!

CHICKEN BBQ – Our annual chicken BBQ is scheduled for Saturday, May 11.

Barbeque Work Schedule

Wed., May 8, 9:00 a.m. – Bake cookies; wash potatoes
Thurs., May 9, 12:00 noon – Clean chickens; wrap potatoes
Fri., May 10, 9:00 a.m. – Prepare applesauce, buns, butter, etc.
Sat., May 11, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. – Barbeque