



ST. MARY'S ASSUMPTION ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

A parish of the Albanian Archdiocese of the Orthodox Church in America

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March 15 2026

Sunday of the Holy Cross

Epistle Reading : St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6
Gospel Reading : Mark 8:34-38; 9:1

Sunday of the Holy Cross, Agapius the Martyr & His Companions, Manuel the New Martyr of Crete, Holy Apostle Aristobulos of the Seventy, Bishop of Britain

UPCOMING WORSHIP

Friday, March 13— Akathist, 6:30 pm
Saturday, March 14— Great Vespers, 5:00 pm
Sunday, March 15— Veneration of the Cross; Orthros 9:00 am, Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
Monday, March 16— Great Compline, 6:30 pm
Wednesday, March 18— Pre-Sanctified Liturgy & Lenten meal at St. Nicholas, 6:00 pm.
Friday, March 20— Akathist, 6:30 pm
Saturday, March 21— Great Vespers, 5:00 pm

MEMORIAL

We observe a 1 year memorial for Theodore Gregory. Grure and coffee hour are provided in loving memory by family. Memory eternal!

A MESSAGE OF THANKS

On behalf of the Parish Council and Fr. Mark, thank you to everyone who made the trip to Boston this past Sunday. It was inspiring to see such a strong turnout from St. Mary's to support our community and stand together with His Beatitude Archbishop Joani and His Grace Bishop Nikodhim. It was a powerful show of support for our hierarchs, and a beautiful reflection of the love we hold for our faith and our heritage.

With love in Christ,
The Parish Council & Fr. Mark

REFLECTION

Troparion — Tone 4

O Lord, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians, over their adversaries. And by virtue of Your Cross preserve Your habitation!

Kontakion — Tone 7

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; it has mysteriously been quenched by the wood of the Cross! The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell: "Enter again into paradise."

THANK YOU

Many thanks to all parishioners who brought a Lenten dish for the potluck dinner after the Pre-Sanctified service at St. Mary's on Wednesday. We had an abundance of food to share with our guests from other Orthodox churches. Thank you to those who cooked, set up, served and cleaned. We appreciate all the help.

DONATIONS for the EPITAFI

Looking towards Holy Week, we are asking for your donations for the purchase of flowers to decorate the Holy Epitaph of the Lord for Holy Friday. Each year, we are blessed to have the tomb of our Lord beautifully decorated and honored with flowers. This is due to the generous contributions of our parishioners. Thank you in advance for your continuous support of our beloved church!

HERITAGE SUNDAY— **March 22, 2026**

Each March, we commemorate two pivotal events in our spiritual journey. March 13, 1965, was the passing of our first hierarch, Theophan (Noli). On March 22, 1908, Noli and other founders conducted the first Divine Liturgy in the Albanian language in Boston.

To mark these, on the Sunday before the Annunciation, we celebrate Heritage Sunday with memorial prayers for our departed hierarchs, priests, and priftëresha who faithfully served.

HIERARCHICAL DIVINE LITURGY

We are honored to announce that His Grace Bishop Nikodhim will be visiting our parish on **Sunday, March 29**, for the Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt. His Grace will preside over a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, where we will gather to receive his archpastoral blessing. We look forward to welcoming His Grace and sharing in this sacred day together.

PALM SUNDAY CHURCH DINNER - *reservation deadline is Monday, March 30*

Join us for a Palm Sunday Dinner on **Sunday, April 5**, after Divine Liturgy.

Tickets are \$30 per person; children under 14 are free and will receive cheese pizza.

Reservations and payment in advance are required, and only paid reservations will be honored.

You can make reservations after liturgy on Sundays or by contacting Priftëreshë Colleen at colleen.doku@gmail.com or 774-276-1264.

We look forward to sharing this meal and our Lenten journey with you as a parish family

SONS OF ST. MARY'S

The next meeting for the Men's Club will be TUESDAY, **APRIL 14**. This is the Tuesday after Pascha. Hope to see you all then!

UPCOMING MEMORIALS

March 22— Virginia Theodosia, 40 days March 22— Vasillaq Kostallari, 6 years

March 22— Metropolitan Theophan Noli, the Hierarchs of our Archdiocese and the clergy who have served St. Mary's

THE LIFE-GIVING CROSS

Taking its place at the very midpoint of Great Lent, the Orthodox Church designates the Third Sunday as the Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross. This crucial observance presents the radiant and life-giving Cross of Christ before us, invigorating our spiritual journey. The Cross stands not as a symbol of defeat, but as the trophy of Christ's victory over sin and death, a constant reminder of His immeasurable love and sacrifice for humanity. It is through the Cross that Christ has opened the path to salvation and glory, transforming suffering into a means of grace and spiritual growth. Among those who stood steadfastly by the Cross during His suffering were His Most Holy Mother the Theotokos, Saint Mary Magdalene, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Salome Mother of the Sons of Zebedee, offering unwavering devotion and embodying profound faithfulness even in the face of ultimate sorrow. Saint John the Evangelist also remained, upholding the Theotokos in her grief. Their presence underscores the deep human connection to Christ's sacrifice.

