

Eastern Easter in a Western World

**Update: Since the publication of this post, the quarantine has been extended to April 30. Though Maundy Thursday and Easter Vigil services are now canceled, the schedule will remain otherwise the same as noted below, and all services will be streamed online.*

Gov. Reeves has recently ordered that Mississippi residents avoid gatherings in groups of ten or more people until April 17 (Executive Order No. 1463). Of course, with Easter falling on April 12, this is a great sadness to us who find our very identity in the Resurrection of our Lord.

But do

not weep! For here we are presented with a unique opportunity. You may know that, while the whole Church on earth observes the church year together with all its times and festivals and seasons, the calendar of the Western Rite (or tradition) is staggered by a week from that of the Eastern Rite. So, while we in the Western world celebrate the Feast of Easter on April 12th this year, our Eastern kin will not celebrate it until April 19th.

Due to

our highly unusual situation this year, we are going to join our Eastern brethren for a time, that we might not fast from the Lord's Feast of Victory on this highest and holiest of days. Because our quarantine will be lifted on April 17, briefly adopting the calendar of the Eastern Rite would allow us to celebrate the Feast in all its fullness, together as the Body of Christ, partaking of the Body (and Blood) of Christ.

To that

end, see the revised schedule of services below, and note most importantly that **we shall celebrate Easter on Sunday, April 19**. Beginning Friday, April 17 (Good Friday, marked in red), our quarantine is lifted and we will meet together *at church*.

For those among us who remain in a risk category for this virus, please

quarantine yourself as long as you feel necessary. Just because you are not here physically for the celebration of Easter does not mean that you are excluded. The pastors can visit you with communion so that you may participate in this joyous occasion with the rest of the saints. Dear Christians, our fast is soon to end, for Easter is drawing nigh. Peace be to you all.

<u>Day/Date</u>	<u>Service</u>
Sunday, March 29	The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lord
Wednesday, April 1	Lenten Midweek Vespers
Sunday, April 5	Fifth Sunday in Lent
Wednesday, April 8	Lenten Midweek Vespers
Sunday, April 12	Palm Sunday
Thursday, April 16	Maundy Thursday
Friday, April 17	Good Friday
Saturday, April 18	Easter Vigil
Sunday, April 19	The Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord