

ST. KATHERINE MISSION  
*Newsletter*

Volume 1, Issue 1  
March 2008



The Newsletter of  
SAINT KATHERINE THE GREAT MARTYR MISSION  
ORTHODOX CHURCH OF AMERICA

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## A NAME FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

We need a name for our new newsletter. Somehow "Newsletter", while straightforward, doesn't have much character. Please submit all suggestions to Emily Lorelli or Father John, either in person or via email, before March 19<sup>th</sup>.

## PASTOR'S COLUMN

by Father John Strickland

As we enter upon the holy season of the Great Fast, we are reminded once again of its ultimate goal: to bring our hearts to a condition of repentance. This is the real purpose of fasting, as the experience of divine judgment in the Old Testament shows. By fasting, for instance, the Ninevites stirred their hearts to repentance after receiving the word of God's judgment from the Prophet Jonah (Jon. 3:1-5). And the Prophet Joel, too, delivering the same word to the Israelites, instructed them thus:

Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord, Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come (Joel 1:14-15).

These are strong words, and we are taught by the Church to take them

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Forgiveness Sunday Vespers is one of the most essential and beautiful services of the lenten season, and in fact of the whole liturgical year. Without participating in it we can not fully understand the meaning of what lies ahead of us during the Forty Days, Passion Week, and even holy Pascha itself.

seriously. Every year during the Great Fast we are taught by the Church to take seriously the fact that our lives have fallen far short of what God intends them to be. And we realize, once we begin to take it seriously, that we have lived our lives without God and therefore face his fearful judgment.

And yet the Church will not allow us to despair of this. Through the divine services she reminds us, over and over, that through our repentance God's judgment becomes . . . God's forgiveness. Is this not the central message regularly proclaimed to us at Matins on Saturday evenings in one of the resurrectional gospels: "That repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name among all nations" (Luke 24:47)? The forgiveness that comes from God through our repentance is indeed the "good news," or Gospel, by which we live our lives, and this is true especially during the Great Fast.

And so we begin this holy season with a service of forgiveness known as Forgiveness Sunday Vespers. At its conclusion we complete the unique rite of mutual forgiveness, knowing that our sins have not only separated us from God but from one another, and that in order to begin the process by which we ask for God's forgiveness we must necessarily ask for each other's. After all, this is the meaning of the Our Father, when we ask God to forgive us our trespasses *to the extent that we forgive those who trespass against us*. Our Lord, summarizing the meaning of this most important of all our prayers, states simply that "if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (cf. Matt. 6:9-15). And we, assembled together at the first service of the Great Fast as the body of Christ, are assured of God's forgiveness as we proclaim to one another: "God forgives!"

For this reason Forgiveness Sunday Vespers is one of the most essential and beautiful services of the lenten season, and in fact of the whole liturgical year. Without participating in it we can not fully understand the meaning of what lies ahead of us during the Forty Days, Passion Week, and even holy Pascha itself. We gather, as Joel prophesied, as a "solemn assembly" in the "house of the Lord" to "cry out unto the Lord." As we do so, we begin, albeit tentatively, to comprehend the sorrow caused by our sins (symbolized half way through the service by the solemn changing of colors and introduction of penitential melodies). We also begin to experience the divine mercy and forgiveness that beckons us through the lenten doors of repentance. And these, if entered through sincerely, become the gateway to a great and mystical joy.

The Church calls upon us to recognize as much when she has us commit ourselves, during the opening sequence of hymns that evening, to "begin the fast with joy." Yes, with joy. For joy is the condition of the human heart when it is united to God through repentance and forgiveness, and it is what awaits us during the course of the Great Fast.

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Discussion of the unexpectedly and uncharacteristically low record of fulfilled pledges and tithes received for January and February and the concerns about meeting our budget as a result.
- Discussion of our landlord's recent activities in trying to rezone our building and the position this puts us in.

## PARISH AND LOCAL EVENTS

**March 4:** Seattle Pacific University hosts **Metropolitan Kallistos** (Timothy Ware) for two talks:

- 9:30-10:30am **“What is Prayer?”** at First Free Methodist Church
- 7:30-9:30pm **“Salvation in Christ: The Orthodox Approach”** at SPU Upper Gwinn

**March 5:** WOCA hosts **Metropolitan Kallistos** at St. Demitrios Orthodox Church

- 7:30-9:30pm **“The Healing Journey of Holy Lent”**

**March 21-23:** Women's Lenten Retreat at St. John the Baptist Monastery in Goldendale

**March 28:** St. Katherine Orthodox Mission hosts **Heather MacKean** for a lecture and discussion on the **“Visual Imagery of Icons”**

- 7-9pm at St. Katherine Mission (lecture, discussion, and refreshments)

## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS:

**March 8:** Evangelization Mtg – 4pm

**March 9:** Forgiveness Vespers – 6pm

**March 10:** Beginning of Great Lent

**March 10-13:** Compline with the Canon of St. Andrew – 7pm

**March 14:** Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts – 5:30pm

**March 15:** Catechesis – 11am

**March 19:** Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts – 5:30pm

**March 22:** Charity Mtg – 4pm

**March 24:** Festal Vigil – 7pm

**March 25:** Divine Liturgy for the Feast of Annunciation – 9am

**March 26:** Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts – 5:30pm

**March 29:** Catechesis – 11am

**April 20:** Palm Sunday

**April 21-26:** Passion Week

**April 27:** Holy Pascha – The Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ



## THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

### THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the earliest Christian feasts, and was already being celebrated in the fourth century. There is a painting of the Annunciation in the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome dating from the second century. The Council of Toledo in 656 mentions the Feast, and the Council in Trullo in 692 says that the Annunciation was celebrated during Great Lent.

The Greek and Slavonic names for the Feast may be translated as "good tidings." This, of course, refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God and the salvation He brings. The background of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of St Luke (1:26-38). The troparion describes this as the "beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the eternal mystery," for on this day the Son of God became the Son of Man.

There are two main components to the Annunciation: the message itself, and the response of the Virgin. The message fulfills God's promise to send a Redeemer (Genesis 3:15): "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for his heel." The Fathers of the Church understand "her seed" to refer to Christ. The prophets hinted at His coming, which they saw dimly, but the Archangel Gabriel now proclaims that the promise is about to be fulfilled.

We see this echoed in the Liturgy of St Basil, as well: "When man disobeyed Thee, the only true God who had created him, and was deceived by the guile of the serpent, becoming subject to death by his own transgressions, Thou, O God, in Thy righteous judgment, didst send him forth from Paradise into this world, returning him to the earth from which he was taken, yet providing for him the salvation of regeneration in Thy Christ Himself."

The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth in Galilee. There he spoke to the undefiled Virgin who was betrothed to St Joseph: "Hail, thou who art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

In contrast to Eve, who was readily deceived by the serpent, the Virgin did not immediately accept the Angel's message. In her humility, she did not think she was deserving of such words, but was actually troubled by them. The fact that she asked for an explanation reveals

"And Mary said, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.' And the angel departed from her" (Luke 1: 35-38).

her sobriety and prudence. She did not disbelieve the words of the angel, but could not understand how they would be fulfilled, for they spoke of something which was beyond nature.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34).

"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: therefore also that which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.' And Mary said, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.' And the angel departed from her" (Luke 1: 35-38)."

In his Sermon 23 on the day of the Annunciation, St Philaret of Moscow boldly stated that "the word of the creature brought the Creator down into the world." He explains that salvation is not merely an act of God's will, but also involves the Virgin's free will. She could have refused, but she accepted God's will and chose to cooperate without complaint or further questions.

The icon of the Feast shows the Archangel with a staff in his left hand, indicating his role as a messenger. Sometimes one wing is upraised, as if to show his swift descent from heaven. His right hand is stretched toward the holy Virgin as he delivers his message.

The Virgin is depicted either standing or sitting, usually holding yarn in her left hand. Sometimes she is shown holding a scroll. Her right hand may be raised to indicate her surprise at the message she is hearing. Her head is bowed, showing her consent and obedience. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon her is depicted by a ray of light issuing from a small sphere at the top of the icon, which symbolizes heaven. In a famous icon from Sinai, a white dove is shown in the ray of light.

There are several famous icons of the Annunciation. One is in the Moscow Kremlin in the church of the Annunciation. This icon appeared in connection with the rescue of a prisoner by the Mother of God during the reign of Ivan the Terrible. Another is to be found in the Dormition Cathedral in Moscow (July 8). It was originally located in Ustiug, and was the icon before which St Procopius the fool (July 8) prayed to save the city from destruction in 1290. One of the most highly revered icons in Greece is the Tinos icon of the Annunciation (January 30).

The Annunciation falls during Lent, but it is always celebrated with great joy. The Liturgy of St Basil or St John Chrysostom is served, even on the weekdays of Lent. It is one of the two days of Great Lent on which the fast is relaxed and fish is permitted (Palm Sunday is the other).

# WISDOM OF THE FATHERS

## Saint Ephrem of Syria (d. 373) on Forgiveness of One's Neighbor

Thou wast baptised from the water; thou hast put on Christ in His naming; the seat of the Lord is on thy person and His stamp on thy forehead. See that thou become not another's, for other Lord hast thou none. One is He Who formed us in His mercy; one is He Who redeemed us on His cross. He it is Who guides our life; He it is Who has power over our feebleness; He it is Who brings to pass our Resurrection. He rewards us according to our works. Blessed is he that confesses Him, and hears and keeps His commandments! Thou, O man, art a son of God Who is high over all. See that thou vex not by thy works the Father Who is good and gracious.

If thou art wrath against thy neighbour, thou art wrath against God; and if thou bearest anger in thy heart, against thy Lord is thy boldness uplifted. If in envy thou rebukest, wicked is all thy reproof. But if charity dwell in thee, thou hast on earth no enemy. And if thou art a true son of peace, thou wilt stir up wrath in no man. If

"Thou art bought with the blood of God; thou art redeemed by the passion of Christ; for thy sake He suffered death, that thou mightest die to thy sins. His face endured spitting, that thou mightest not shrink from scorn. Vinegar and gall did He drink, that thou mightest be set apart from wrath. He received stripes on His body, that thou mightest not fear suffering."

thou art just and upright, thou wilt not do wrong to thy fellow. And if thou lovest to be angry, be angry with the wicked and it will become thee; if to wage war thou seekest, lo! Satan is thy adversary; if thou desirest to revile, against the demons display thy curses. If thou shouldst insult the King's image, thou shalt pay the penalty of murder; and if thou revilest a man, thou revilest the image of God. Do honour to thy neighbour, and lo! thou hast honoured God. But if thou wouldst dishonour Him, in wrath assail thy neighbour!

This is the first Commandment,—Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy soul, and with thy might according as thou art able. The sign that thou lovest God, is this, that thou lovest thy fellow; and if thou hatest thy fellow, thy hatred is towards God. For it is blasphemy if thou prayest before God while thou art wrath. For thy heart also convicts thee, that in vain thou multipliest words: thy conscience rightly judges that in thy prayers thou profitest nought. Christ as He hung on the height of the tree, interceded for His murderers; and thou (who art) dust, son of the clay, rage fills thee at its will. Thou keepest anger against thy brother; and dost thou yet dare to pray? Even he that stands on thy side, though he be not neighbour to thy sins, the taint of iniquity reaches unto him, and his petition is not heard. Leave off rage and then pray; and unless thou wouldst further provoke, restrain anger and so shalt thou supplicate. And if he (the other) is not to encounter thee ill fury, banish rage from that body, because it is holden with lusts.

Thou hast a spiritual nature; the soul is the image of the Creator; honour the image of God, by being in agreement with all men. Remember death, and be not angry,

that thy peace be not of constraint. As long as thy life remains to thee, cleanse thy soul from wrath; for if it should go to Sheol with time, thy road will be straight to Gehenna. Keep not anger in thy heart; hold not fury in thy soul; thou hast not power over thy soul, save to do that which is good. Thou art bought with the blood of God; (1) thou art redeemed by the passion of Christ; for thy sake He suffered death, that thou mightest die to thy sins. His face endured spitting, that thou mightest not shrink from scorn. Vinegar and gall did He drink, that thou mightest be set apart from wrath. He received stripes on His body, that thou mightest not fear suffering. If thou art in truth His servant, fear thy holy Lord; if thou art His true disciple, walk in thy Master's footsteps. Endure scorn from thy brother, that thou mayest be the companion of Christ. Display not anger against man, that thou be not set apart from thy Redeemer.

### **Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great, second anaphora prayer**

With these blessed Powers, O Master, Lover of man, we sinners also do cry out and say, Holy art thou, in truth, and all-holy, and there is no measure to the magnificence of thy holiness, and holy art thou in all thy works, for in righteousness and true judgment hast thou brought about all things for us. When thou hadst fashioned man, taking dust from the earth, and hadst honored him with thine own image, O God, thou didst set him in a paradise of plenty, promising him life immortal and the enjoyment of eternal good things in

But albeit He was God before the ages, yet He appeared upon earth and sojourned among men; and was incarnate of a holy Virgin, and did empty Himself, taking on the form of a servant, and becoming conformed to the body of our humility, that He might make us conformed to the image of His glory.

the observance of thy commandments. But when he disobeyed thee, the true God, who had created him, and was led astray by the deceit of the serpent, and was slain by his own trespasses, thou didst banish him, in thy righteous judgment, O God, from Paradise into this world, and didst turn him back to the earth from which he was taken, dispensing salvation for him through regeneration, which is in thy Christ Himself. Yet thou didst not turn thyself away till the end from thy creature which thou hadst made, O Good One, neither didst thou forget the work of thy hands, but thou didst look upon him in divers manners, through thy tenderhearted mercy. Thou didst send forth prophets; thou hast wrought mighty works through the saints who in every generation have been well-pleasing unto thee; thou didst speak to us by the mouths of thy servants the prophets, who foretold to us the salvation which was to come; thou didst give the Law as an help; thou didst appoint guardian angels. And when the fullness of time was come, thou didst speak unto us through thy Son Himself, by whom also thou madest the ages; Who, being the brightness of thy glory, and the express image of thy person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, deemed it not robbery to be equal to thee, the God and Father. But albeit He was God before the ages, yet He appeared upon earth and sojourned among men; and was incarnate of a holy

Virgin, and did empty Himself, taking on the form of a servant, and becoming conformed to the body of our humility, that He might make us conformed to the image of His glory. For as by man sin entered the world, and by sin death, so thine Only-begotten Son, Who is in thy bosom, God and Father, was well-pleased to be born of a woman, the holy Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary, to be born under the Law, that He might condemn sin in His flesh, that they who were dead in Adam might be made alive in thy Christ Himself, and, becoming a citizen in this world, and giving ordinances of salvation, He removed from us the delusion of idols and brought us unto a knowledge of thee, the true God and Father, having won us unto Himself for His own people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and being purified with water, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, He gave Himself a ransom to Death, whereby we were held, sold under sin. And having descended into hell through the Cross, that He might fill all things with Himself, He loosed the pains of death, and rose again from the dead on the third day, making a way for all flesh unto the resurrection from the dead - for it was not possible that the Author of life should be holden of corruption - that He might be the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep, the first-born from the dead, that He might be all, being first in all. And, ascending into heaven, He sat down at the right hand of thy majesty on high, and He shall return to render unto everyone according to his works. And He hath left with us as remembrances of His saving Passion these Things which we have set forth according to His commandment. For when He was about to go forth to His voluntary, and celebrated, and life-creating death, in the night in which He gave Himself up for the life of the world, He took bread in His holy and immaculate hands . . .

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## THE ORTHODOX FAITH

An excerpt from Fr. Hopko's *The Orthodox Faith: Volume IV, Spirituality*

### FASTING

Jesus Himself fasted and taught His disciples to fast.

*And when you fast, do not look dismal like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men, but your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. (Matthew 6:16-18)*

Man does not fast because it pleases God if His servants do not eat, for, as the lenten hymns of the Church remind us, "the devil also never eats." (*Lenten Triodion*) Neither do men fast in order to afflict themselves with suffering and pain, for God has no pleasure in the discomfort of His people.

The purpose of fasting is to gain mastery over oneself and to conquer the passions of the flesh. It is to liberate oneself from dependence on the things of this world in order to concentrate on the things of the Kingdom of God. It is to give power to the soul so that it would not yield to temptation and sin. According to St. Seraphim, fasting is an "indispensable means" of gaining the fruit of the Holy

Spirit in one's life (cf. Conversation with Motovilov), and Jesus Himself taught that some forms of evil cannot be conquered without it (*Matthew 17:21, Mark 9:29*)

Man does not fast because it pleases God if His servants do not eat, for, as the lenten hymns of the Church remind us, "the devil also never eats." (*Lenten Triodion*) Neither do men fast in order to afflict themselves with suffering and pain, for God has no pleasure in the discomfort of His people. Neither do men fast with the idea that their hunger and thirst can somehow serve as a "reparation" for their sins. Such an understanding is never given in the scriptures or the writings of the saints which claim that there is no "reparation" for man's sin but the crucifixion of Christ. Salvation is a "**free gift of God**" which no "works" of man can accomplish of merit. (cf. *Romans 5:15-17, Ephesians 2:8-9*)

Men fast, therefore, and must fast, only to be delivered from carnal passions so that the free gift of salvation in Christ might produce great fruit in their lives. Men fast so that they might more effectively serve God who loves them and has saved them in Christ and the Spirit. Fasting without effort in virtue is wholly in vain.

*Why have we fasted, and Thou seest it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and Thou takest no knowledge of it?*

*Behold, in the day of your fast, you seek your own pleasure and oppress all your workers. Behold, you fast only to quarrel and fight...Fasting like yours ... will not make your voice to be heard on high.*

*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness...to let the oppressed go free...is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them...*

*Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall protect you. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; then you shall cry, and He will say: Here I am. (Isaiah 58:3-9)*

"Fasting in the body, O brethren, let us also fast from sin." This is the Church's song in the lenten season of fasting. It is also the teaching of the saints.

*...in fasting one must not only obey the rule against gluttony in regard to food, but refrain from every sin so that, while fasting, the tongue may also fast, refraining from slander, lies, evil talking, degrading one's brother, anger and every sin committed by the tongue. One should also fast with the eyes, that is, not look at vain things...not look shamefully or fearlessly at anyone. The hands and feet should also be kept from every evil action.*

*When one fasts through vanity or thinking that he is achieving something especially virtuous, he fasts foolishly and soon begins to criticize others and to consider himself something great.*

*A man who fasts wisely...wins purity and comes to humility...and proves himself a skillful builder. (St. Abba Dorotheus, 7th c., Directions on Spiritual Training)*

Saint Paul himself fasted, and in his teaching on food insists that men fast and do so in secret, without mutual inspection and judgment.

*Brethren, join in imitating me, and mark those who so live as you have an example in us. For many of whom I have often told you and now tell you with tears, live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is*

*their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.  
(Philippians 3:17-19)*

*All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything. Food is meant for the stomach, and the stomach for food - and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. (I Corinthians 6:12-13)*

*Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains, pass judgment on him who eats, for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another?*

*He who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. He also who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God; while he who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God.*

*Do not let what you eat cause the ruin of him for whom Christ has died ... for the Kingdom of God does not mean food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, he who thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.*

*Do not for the sake of food destroy the work of God...the faith that you have keep between yourself and God...whatever does not proceed from faith (whether eating or abstaining) is sin. (cf Romans 14)*

The spiritual fathers, as strictly ascetic as they were, are very clear in their teaching about fasting. They insist with the Lord and the scriptures that men must fast in order to be free from passions and lust. But they insist as well that the most critical thing is to be free from all sin, including the pride, vanity and hypocrisy which comes through foolish and sinful fasting.

*...eating beyond the point of being satisfied is the door of madness through which lust enters, for the belly is the queen of passions which man serves as a slave.*

*But you, firm in this knowledge, choose what is best for you, according to your own powers...for the perfect person, according to Saint Paul ought both "to be full and be hungry...and do all things through Christ who strengthens (Philippians 4:12-13)*

*Thus a man who strives for salvation...must not allow himself to eat to fullness...but should still eat all kinds of food so that on the one hand he avoid boastful pride and on the other not show disdain for God's creation which is most excellent...Such is the reasoning of those who are wise! (St. Gregory of Sinai, Instruction to Hesychasts)*

*St. Isaac of Syria says, "Meager food at the table of the pure cleanses the soul of those who partake from all passion...for the work of fasting and vigil is the beginning of every effort against sin and lust...almost all passionate drives decrease*

*"Men fast so that they might more effectively serve God who loves them and has saved them in Christ and the Spirit. Fasting without effort in virtue is wholly in vain."*

through fasting."

*For the holy fathers taught us to be killers of passions and not killers of the body. Partake of everything that is permissible with thanksgiving, to the glory of God and to avoid boastful arrogance; but refrain from every excess. (The Monks Callistus and Ignatius, 14th c., Directions to Hesychasts)*

If such is the teaching to hesychast monks, it is certainly applicable to all Christians as well. The whole essence of the matter is put simply and clearly in these two short stories from the fathers of the desert.

*A certain brother brought fresh loaves of bread and invited his elders. When they had eaten much, the brother, knowing their travail of abstinence, began humbly to beg them to eat more. "For God's sake, eat this day and be filled." And they ate another ten. Behold how these that were true monks and sincere in abstinence did eat more than they needed, for the sake of God.*

*Epiphanius, bishop of Cyprus, called the abbot Hilarion to see him. A portion of fowl was set before them and the bishop invited the abbot to eat. The old man said, "Forgive me, Father, but since the time I took this habit I have never eaten anything that has been killed."*

*And Epiphanius said to him, "And from the time I took this habit I have let no man sleep who has anything against me, and neither have I slept holding anything against anyone."*

*And the old man said to him, "Forgive me, Father, for your way of life is greater than mine." (The Sayings of the Fathers)*

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## TROPARIA & KONTAKIA: MARCH

March 2

**Sunday of the Last Judgment -- Meatfare**

**Troparian - Tone 1**

When You, O God, shall come to earth with glory,  
all things shall tremble  
and the river of fire shall flow before Your judgment seat;  
the books shall be opened and the hidden things disclosed!  
Then deliver me from the unquenchable fire,  
and make me worthy to stand at Your right hand, righteous Judge!

**Hieromartyr Theodotus the Bishop of Cyrenia**

**Troparian - Tone 4**

By sharing in the ways of the Apostles,  
you became a successor to their throne.  
Through the practice of virtue, you found the way to divine contemplation, O  
inspired one of God;  
by teaching the word of truth without error, you defended the Faith, even to the  
shedding of your blood.  
Hieromartyr Theodotus, entreat Christ God to save our souls.

**Kontakion - Tone 3**

You denounced the depths of false belief.

With the Orthodox faith you wounded the delusion of idolatry.  
As a godly, whole burnt sacrifice,  
You refreshed the ends of the earth with your wonders!  
O holy hierarch Theodotus, our father,  
Entreat Christ God to grant us great mercy!

March 9

**Expulsion of Adam from Paradise – Cheesefare**

**Kontakion - Tone 6**

Master, Teacher of wisdom,  
Bestower of virtue,  
you teach the thoughtless and protect the poor:  
Strengthen and enlighten my heart.  
Word of the Father,  
let me not restrain my mouth from crying to you:  
Have mercy on me, a transgressor,  
O merciful Lord!

**40 Holy Martyrs of Sebaste**

**Troparion - Tone 1**

Together let us honor the holy company united by faith,  
Those noble warriors of the Master of all.  
They were divinely enlisted for Christ,  
And passed through fire and water.  
Then they entered into refreshment praying for those who cry:  
Glory to him who has strengthened you!  
Glory to him who has crowned you!  
Glory to him who has made you wonderful, O holy Forty Martyrs!

**Kontakion - Tone 6**

You abandoned all earthly armies,  
cleaving to the heavenly Master, O Forty Martyrs of the Lord.  
Having passed through fire and water, O Blessed Ones,  
you have fittingly received heavenly glory and many crowns.

March 16

**1st Sunday of Great Lent – Sunday of Orthodoxy**

**Troparion - Tone 2**

We venerate Your most pure image, O Good One,  
and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ God.  
Of Your own will You were pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh  
to deliver Your creatures from bondage to the enemy.  
Therefore with thanksgiving we cry aloud to You:  
You have filled all with joy, O our Savior,  
by coming to save the world.

**Kontakion - Tone 8**

No one could describe the Word of the Father;  
but when He took flesh from you, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described,  
and restored the fallen image to its former beauty.  
We confess and proclaim our salvation in word and images.

March 23

**2nd Sunday of Great Lent –St. Gregory Palamas**

**Troparion - Tone 8**

○ light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation,  
○ ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians,  
○ wonder-working Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace,  
al-ways intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved.

**Kontakion - Tone 4**

Now is the time for action!  
Judgment Judgment is at the doors!  
So let us rise and fast,  
offering alms with tears of compunction and crying:  
"Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea;  
but forgive us, O Master of All,  
so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns."

**Kontakion - Tone 8**

Holy and divine instrument of wisdom,  
joyful trumpet of theology,  
together we sing your praises, O God-inspired Gregory.  
Since you now stand before the Original Mind, guide our minds to Him, O  
Father,  
so that we may sing to you: "Rejoice, preacher of grace."

March 25

**The Annunciation of the Most-Holy Theotokos**

**Troparion - Tone 4**

Today is the beginning of our salvation,  
The revelation of the eternal mystery!  
The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin  
As Gabriel announces the coming of Grace.  
Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos:  
Rejoice, O Full of Grace,  
The Lord is with You!

**Kontakion – Tone 8**

○ Victorious Leader of Triumphant Hosts!  
We, your servants, delivered from evil, sing our grateful thanks to you,  
○ Theotokos!  
As you possess invincible might, set us free from every calamity  
So that we may sing: Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!

March 30

**3rd Sunday of Great Lent –Veneration of the Cross**

**Troparion - Tone 4**

○ 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."

**Venerable John Climacus of Sinai, Author of "the Ladder"****Troparion - Tone 8**

By a flood of tears you made the desert fertile  
 And by your longing for God you brought forth fruits in abundance.  
 By the radiance of miracles you illuminated the whole universe.  
 O our holy Father John Climacus, pray to Christ our God to save our souls.

**Kontakion - Tone 1**

You offered us your teachings as fruits of everlasting freshness,  
 To sweeten the hearts of those who receive them with attention.  
 O blessed and wise John, they are the rungs of a ladder,  
 Leading the souls of those who honor you from earth to Eternal glory in Heaven.

## LENTEN HYMNS

**From "Lord I Call" at Forgiveness Vespers**

Let us begin the fast with joy.  
 Let us prepare ourselves for spiritual efforts.  
 Let us cleanse our soul and cleanse our flesh.  
 Let us abstain from every passion as we abstain from food.  
 Let us rejoice in virtues of the spirit and fulfill them in love.  
 That we all may see the Passion of Christ our God,  
 and rejoice in spirit at the holy Pascha.

**Kontakion of the Great Canon of Saint Andrew (sung after Ode 6)**

My soul, my soul, arise!  
 Why art thou sleeping?  
 The end is drawing near, and thou wilt be confounded.  
 Awake then and be watchful,  
 that Christ our God may spare thee,  
 who art everywhere present and fillest all things.

**Now the Powers of Heaven (sung during Entrance at Presanctified Liturgy)**

Now the powers of heaven with us invisibly do serve.  
 Lo, the King of Glory enters. Lo, the mystical sacrifice is upborne, fulfilled.  
 Let us draw near in faith and love and become communicants of life eternal.  
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

## PARISHIONERS' NAME DAYS – MARCH

March 17 – Pat Nauditt (St. Patrick)

March 18 – Nikolai Knowlton (St. Nicholas of Zhicha)

March 19 – Daria Hezel (Martyr Daria)

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Please keep the following people in your prayers this month:

### LIVING:

Charles

Robert

Mark

Sarah

Patricia

Flore

the child Anna

Naheda

Arne

Laurel and the child to be born of her

Valentina

the child Oliver

### DEPARTED:

[Please use this place to keep a list of those who are in need of prayer this month. If you would like to include someone on this list for next month's newsletter, please email the name to Emily Lorelli by the penultimate Wednesday of the month.]