

CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF FEBRUARY 18, 2007

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY

CHEESE-FARE SUNDAY

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Rite of Forgiveness
 Coffee Hour
 7:00p.m. Vespers

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH

THE BEGINNING OF GREAT LENT

7:00p.m. Canon of St. Andrew

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH

7:00p.m. Canon of St. Andrew

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST

7:00p.m. Canon of St. Andrew

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND

7:00p.m. Canon of St. Andrew

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD

7:00p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24TH

6:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25TH

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

8:40a.m. Hours
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy
 Coffee Hour



Cheese-Fare Sunday

is the last day we partake of dairy products until Pascha, April 8th. For more information on fasting during Great Lent please see page three of this bulletin and/or speak with Fr. John.

The Season of the Great and Holy Fast

begins on Sunday, February 18th, at 7:00p.m. with the Vespers service and concludes with the celebration of Pascha, April 8th. As we know, during this season of repentance we are called to much more than a mere dietary change; we are called to change our entire way of life so that it conforms to the ways of God. And for this reason we not only cease those things which are spiritually harmful (arguing, gossiping, overeating, judging others, etc.) but we also limit those things which bring no spiritual benefit (television, radio, magazines, etc.). In their stead we apply ourselves to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving: attending more church services, helping to those in need, spending more time in spiritual reading and reflection, and reforming bad habits. There is no greater opportunity to spiritually "get back on track" than the Great Fast— let us not waste it!



The Rite of Forgiveness

will be served immediately following the Divine Liturgy today, February 18th. On this day before the beginning of the Great Fast, we ask each other's forgiveness, remembering that there can be no true fast, no genuine repentance, no reconciliation with God, unless we are at the same time reconciled with one another. Let us take this God-given opportunity to forgive and forget those things which separate us, so that we can travel the road of Lent, not as individuals, but together, as brothers and sisters returning to our Father's House.



Bible Studies

This past Tuesday, a Bible Study was held at the church on the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple (Luke 22-39). After the study, questions were asked regarding numerous topics including: the soul after death, the nature of the resurrected body, the intermediate and final judgments, prayers for the dead, the Greek and Hebrew versions of the Old Testament, ascetic practices during the Lenten season, and the relationship between the NT Church and the OT Temple and Synagogue. Bible Studies will resume following Great Lent.



Church Readers Urgently Sought

If you have any experience at all reading in church, or would like to learn, please speak with Fr. John. This important ministry brings much reward and is urgently needed in our parish. All are welcome: men, women, and children!

The Directory of Parishioners and Friends of the Parish

is now available for pickup in the back of the church. If you would like your copied mailed to you, please let Fr. John know. See Fr. John for future updates or additions to the directory.



The Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts

Great Lent is a season of repentance, fasting, and intensified prayer, and so the Orthodox Church regards more frequent reception of Holy Communion as especially desirable at this time. However, since the Divine Liturgy has a festal or celebratory character not in keeping with the season of repentance, the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts is served instead. This special Lenten service will be offered on Wednesday or Friday evenings at 7:00pm after a day of spiritual preparation and if possible total abstinence. The faithful who wish to receive Holy Communion but are unable to keep a total fast because of medical reasons, weakness, or work responsibilities, normally eat a light lenten meal in the early morning, or by 12 noon at the latest. Should you have any questions or concerns, please speak with Fr. John.

The Sacrament of Confession

is one of reconciliation with God, bringing about not only a clearing of the conscience through the remission of sins, but also a healing of the soul through our recommitment to Christ.



This Sacrament should therefore be received by all Orthodox Christians during each of the fasting seasons, including Great Lent. For those who wish to receive Holy Communion, the Sacrament of Confession is indispensable and absolutely necessary to maintaining our spiritual health and well being. Fr. John is available to hear confessions following any service or at any other time by appointment.



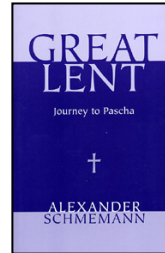
FROM THE SAYING OF THE DESERT FATHERS

One day Saint Epiphanius sent someone to Abba Hilarion with this request, "Come and let us see each other before we depart the body." When he came they rejoiced in each other's company. During their meal they were brought a fowl; Epiphanius took it and gave it to Hilarion. Then the old man said to him, "Since I took the habit I have not eaten meat that has been killed." The bishop answered, "Since I took the habit I have not allowed anyone to go to sleep with a complaint against me and I have not gone to rest with a complaint against anyone." Hilarion replied, "Forgive me, your way of life is higher than mine."

SUGGESTIONS FOR SPIRITUAL READING

Great Lent

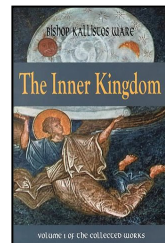
Fr. Alexander Schememann



Quite possibly the best book on the subject. Fr. Alexander guides the reader along the forty day pilgrimage to Pascha, revealing Great Lent as "a school of repentance to which every Christian must go each year in order to deepen his faith, to re-evaluate, and if possible, to change his life." Lent, he writes, "is a wonderful pilgrimage to the very sources of Orthodox faith – a rediscovery of the Orthodox way of life."

The Inner Kingdom

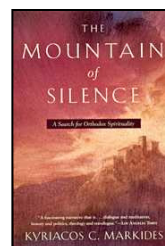
Bp. Kallistos Ware



A collection of the works by this Orthodox bishop / Oxford professor, speaking equally to laypeople and specialists, on both the timeless mysteries of the Church and urgent contemporary concerns of the Orthodox Christian. The Inner Kingdom is an excellent introduction to the spiritual life and worship of the Ancient Church, complete with fascinating stories and insights from the lives of the Saints.

The Mountain of Silence

Kyriacos C. Markides



In this captivating book, Markides follows Father Maximos, one of Mount Athos's monks, to the troubled island of Cyprus.

As Father Maximos establishes churches, convents, and monasteries in this deeply divided land, Markides is awakened anew to the magnificent spirituality of the Orthodox Church.

These titles are all available online:

- ❖ Light & Life, light-n-life.com
- ❖ St. Tikhon's Press, stspress.com
- ❖ St. Vladimir's Press, svspress.com



GENERAL RULES OF FASTING FOR THE GREAT AND HOLY LENT

Let us set out with joy upon the season of the Fast, and prepare ourselves for spiritual combat.

Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh; and as we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion.

The Orthodox idea of fasting is first of all that of an ascetical effort. It is the effort to subdue the physical, the fleshly man to the spiritual one, the "natural" to the "supernatural." Limitations in food are instrumental; they are not ends in themselves. Fasting thus is but a means of reaching a spiritual goal and, therefore, an integral part of a wide spiritual effort. Fasting, in the Orthodox understanding, includes more than abstinence from certain types of food. It implies prayer, silence, an internal disposition of mind, an attempt to be charitable, kind, and - in one word - spiritual. "Brethren, while fasting bodily, let us also fast spiritually..."

And because of this the Orthodox doctrine of fasting excludes the evaluation of fasting in terms of a "maximum" or "minimum." Every one must find his or her maximum, weigh his or her conscience and find in it his or her "pattern of fasting." But this pattern must necessarily include the spiritual as well as the "bodily" elements. The Typikon and the canons of the Church give the description of an ideal fast: no meat, no dairy products, total abstinence on certain days. "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it" (Matthew 19:12). But whatever is our measure - our fasting must be a total effort of our total being.

Keeping this in mind we should fast in order to achieve the goal of prayer, repentance, and forgiveness. To fast means abstaining not only from certain foods, but most importantly from passions, bad habits, overindulgence, rudeness and selfishness. It means also that we should abstain from everything that might take the focus of our life away from the spiritual effort. Among these things are every kind of entertainment, such as going to the movies, watching TV or going on spring vacations. For married couples it will also imply abstaining from intimacy.

The fundamental meaning of the fasting effort is to discover the true values of our life, to discover that we live not for our own sake but in the context of our relationship with each other and with the living God. So we fast not in terms of our individual piety but by linking our life with that of the Church. In essence, fasting is an exercise in being faithful: to each other in observing the same rules and sharing in the same hardship, and to our Lord Himself Who has given us fasting as a school of love.

By Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann



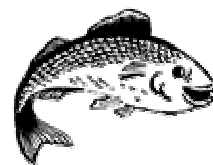
Meat is not permitted on any day.



Dairy is not permitted on any day.



Wine and oil are permitted on weekends, and on a few other days (see your wall calendar)



Fish is permitted only on the Annunciation (March 25th) and on Palm Sunday.

For questions or concerns regarding health and/or spiritual discipline, please speak with your priest.

METROPOLITAN HERMAN'S LENTEN MESSAGE

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

One of the most beautiful hymns of the Divine Liturgy is the Cherubic Hymn. In it, we find a phrase that is deeply powerful and equally comforting: "Let us... now lay aside all earthly cares."

It is not uncommon to find ourselves engulfed by earthly cares. We worry about such radically diverse things as the economy, politics, our children and their future, the price of gas, terrorism, our health, and "making ends meet." Despite our sincere efforts to the contrary, we are so surrounded by the world in which we live that we easily can be consumed by it.

The laying aside of our earthly cares is something that we are especially called to do during the Church's lenten seasons, and specifically during Great Lent. In John 17:15-16, Jesus tells His disciples — and us — that, while we are to be in the world, we are not of the world. Notice that Our Lord does not pray to His Father to take us out of the world; rather, He prays that the Father will keep us from the evil one, that He will keep us safe, that He will allow us to live in the world while focusing on the "cares" that guide us into "the life of the world to come." And elsewhere in Scripture, Our Lord reveals the keys to maintaining our focus: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, the very disciplines we are called to live during Great Lent.

Far from being a time of gloom or "added burdens," Great Lent is a time to free ourselves from our earthly cares, to focus on "the one thing needful," and to change our hearts and our minds, our vision and our spiritual direction, through the spirit of repentance. Thus, we lighten the earthly cares and "baggage" we so often carry. We allow Our Lord to loosen, and ultimately remove, those things that have become yokes. We refrain from worldly concerns and earthly food in order to "taste and see how good the Lord is." We recommit ourselves to carrying out, each of us in our own unique way, Our Lord's mission in and to the world, while we reaffirm that He has indeed conquered the world by His selfless love for us.

As we take the first step in this year's lenten journey on Forgiveness Sunday, let us above all ask one another for forgiveness, especially for those "earthly cares" with which we have burdened others. Let us seek Our Lord's forgiveness, fully acknowledging that He knows our hearts and our intentions. And, having had our burdens lightened by His loving kindness and mercy, let us cling to the One Who is our only Helper and Protector in a world that indeed can consume us unawares.

And finally, I ask your forgiveness, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, for the sins I have committed, and for the times in which I too have failed to lay aside the earthly cares that have so often burdened me.

Let us "begin the honorable Fast with joy," thanking Our Merciful Savior for yet another opportunity to experience the life of the age to come, still to be fully revealed, yet already fully present in the Church.

With love in Christ,

+ HERMAN

Archbishop of Washington and New York,
Metropolitan of All America and Canada



THE TOP 10 LENTEN TIPS

1. Regardless of how you fast, fast every single day.
2. Know exactly what the fasting regulations are and try to approximate them as best you can. Each Lent, try to be more exact in fasting.
3. Particular concerns about fasting? Age, mixed marriages, never fasted before, health issues? Speak with your priest.
4. Be sure to recite the lenten prayer of Saint Ephrem. If you cannot make prostrations just make bows or cross yourself.
5. On weekends, we do not make prostrations and fasting is slightly relaxed.
6. The lenten services and tones are offered only during the week – strive to participate in these services.
7. Sports and outdoor activities are not contrary to the Lenten spirit.
8. Strive to avoid going to movies, parties, vacations, and other entertainments. This we do so we can have more time to devote to spiritual things.
9. Confession and Holy Communion are central to securing the benefits of Lent. Without fail, we should receive the Sacraments.
10. Be mindful of what we look at and how much time we spend on TV and computer. Some give up TV for all of Lent. Others strictly limit their time and watch only educational and news programs. Surfing on the web? Hit the theological sites.

