



# CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN OF MARCH 17, 2013

**LET US BEGIN THE FAST WITH JOY!**

### SUNDAY, MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>

#### **Forgiveness Sunday** (*Cheesefare*)

8:40am Hours  
 9:00am Divine Liturgy  
 Rite of Forgiveness  
 Coffee Hour  
 7:00pm 1<sup>st</sup> Lenten Vespers

### MONDAY, MARCH 18<sup>TH</sup>

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

### TUESDAY, MARCH 19<sup>TH</sup>

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

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup>

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

### THURSDAY, MARCH 21<sup>ST</sup>

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

### FRIDAY, MARCH 22<sup>ND</sup>

6:00p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy  
 Potluck Lenten Meal

### SATURDAY, MARCH 23<sup>RD</sup>

5:00p.m. No Class  
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

### SUNDAY, MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup>

#### **Sunday of Orthodoxy**

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

#### READER SCHEDULE

**Sunday, Mar. 24<sup>th</sup>**

Gabriela Jones

**Sunday, Mar. 31<sup>st</sup>**

Jodi McElwee



#### A Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all of our visitors! Please consider staying after the service for fellowship at our coffee hour in the hall.

#### Catechumen Meetings

are held twice a month following the coffee hour. This month's meetings are Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. All welcome!

#### The Great Fast / The Rite of Forgiveness

Today is Forgiveness Sunday, and at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy we will celebrate the ancient Rite of Forgiveness. This is an opportunity for us to begin the Fast by making a fresh start with the Lord and one another. To reap the full benefits of this day, the Church calls us to share this spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation with all those in our lives: at home, at work, in our extended families, and everywhere.



#### Clean Week – March 17-24<sup>th</sup>

There are services offered every evening, which help us enter into the special character of the Lenten season. Be sure to rearrange your schedule to receive the grace offered during this special week.



#### The Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete

is one of the most beautiful and powerful services of the Lenten season, and will be served Monday through Thursday this week at 7:00pm. In this service, only about 50 minutes long, St. Andrew wonderfully weaves our own personal story of sinfulness and restoration in Christ with the accounts of the sinful and righteous of the Old and New Testaments, giving us greater awareness of not only the history of salvation for the people of God, but also greater insight into how we must participate in the writing of our own personal salvation history. This is one of the most important services of Great Lent.

#### Potluck to Follow the 6:00pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgies

Those who wish to bring food are asked to please prepare a light lenten (no meat, dairy, or fish) dish or dessert. Questions? Please see, Mat. Emily. Thank you!

#### Questions Regarding Keeping the Fast?

If you have questions about fasting this Lent, preparing for the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, or anything else, please consider talking to your priest. You can also call or email Fr. John.



**Living:** Fr. Alexander Atty, Fr. Christian, Mat. Dunia, Hayley, Tyler Pelesh, Wallace & Michelle, John Trax, Maleah Morsey, Victoria Kokkinos, Karen Nichols, Denise Royal, Jane Koshutko, Nina Gordon, Mirela & Chris, Bruce Eckerd, Stella, Ari, Nedelina, Liliana, Irene Clenney, Katie Hawley, Alice Peters. **Departed:** Fr. Michael Mihalick, Kathryn, Avramia.

CASH FLOWS THROUGH 2/28/13					CASH FLOWS IN MARCH 2013					FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	ASSETS & LIABILITIES – 3/17		
Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Checking	Overdue	Due 2/2014
8,403	7,750	5,220	5,660	+213	2,115	3,527	750	0	-662	+946	0	-28,025

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## HOMILY FOR THE BEGINNING OF GREAT LENT

*By Fr. John Parker, modeled on St John Chrysostom's Paschal Homily*

If anyone be devout and love God, let him commence this radiant fast with joy! If anyone be a wise servant, let him, rejoicing, enter into the school of repentance.

We, who have wallowed long in sin, let us now begin our return. If anyone has strayed from the first hour, let him today repent with zeal. If anyone has sinned from the third hour, let him with gratitude embrace the fast. If anyone has fled God from the sixth hour, let him have no misgivings about his prompt return; because he shall in nowise be turned away therefore. If anyone has indulged the flesh since the ninth hour, let him draw near, fearing God alone and trusting in His mercy. And if anyone has turned away only at the eleventh hour, let him also not hesitate to turn back with haste.

For the Lord, who is longsuffering and full of compassion and mercy, will accept the last even as the first. He restores him who repents at the first hour, as He does him who turns back at the eleventh. And He shows mercy upon the last, and cares for the first; and to the one He gives, and upon the other He bestows gifts. And He both accepts the confession, and welcomes the intention, and honors the contrite heart and rejoices in the return.

Wherefore, enter all of you into the holiness of your Lord; offer your repentance, both the last, and likewise the first. You rich and poor together, repent, for today we stand outside the closed gates of paradise. You sober and you heedless, prostrate yourselves before your King! Return to the Lord today, both you who have sinned with knowledge and those who have done so in ignorance.

Your pantries are full; empty them to the hungry. The belly enslaves us, let no one be dominated thereby. Enter all of you into the Great Fast;

stripped of heavenly wealth by sin, all draw near to God's rich loving-kindness!

Let no one despair in his sinfulness, for the Bridegroom comes at midnight. Weep all of you for your iniquities, and draw near to the life-giving Cross of our Lord. Let no one put confidence in the flesh, for the Devil has deceived us all thereby, and therewith enslaves us to sin. By turning from God, we are made captives.

We have called good evil and evil good, and put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. And Isaiah, foretelling this, did cry: Woe to those who put darkness for light, and light for darkness!

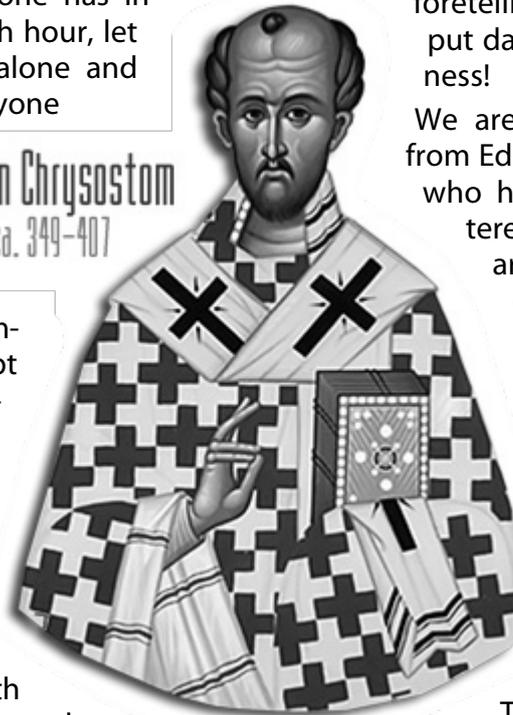
We are embittered, for we are banned from Eden. We are embittered, but it is we who have mocked God. We are embittered, for now we shall surely die. We are embittered, for we have succumbed to the serpent. We are embittered, for we are fettered in chains. We partook of a fruit, and met the deceiver. We were entrusted with paradise, but we chose Hell. Our eyes were opened to see the nakedness of sin.

Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver us! O Lord, make haste to help us!

This is the acceptable time, let us repent! This is the day of salvation, let us crucify the passions! The end is at hand and destruction hangs over us! The end draws nigh, let us come again to our senses! The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, what first-fruit shall we offer? Let us delay not, lest we remain dead in the grave, sold under sin! For God desires not the death of the sinner, but that he should turn from his wickedness and live!

So, let us choose life, and live, for the mercy of God endures forever!

To Him be glory and dominion unto ages of ages. Amen.



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## THE LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS

By VRev. Thomas Hopko

The eucharistic Divine Liturgy is not celebrated in the Orthodox Church on lenten weekdays, since the full Divine Liturgy has a joyful character not in keeping with the somberness of the Great Fast. However, in order for the faithful to sustain their lenten effort by participation in Holy Communion, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served. The service is an ancient one in the Orthodox Church. We officially hear about it in the canons of the seventh century, which obviously indicates its development at a much earlier date.

*On all days of the holy fast of Lent, except on the Sabbath, the Lord's Day, and the holy day of the Annunciation, the Liturgy of the Presanctified is to be served (Canon 52, Quinisext, 692).*

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is an evening service. It is the solemn lenten Vespers with the administration of Holy Communion added to it. There is no consecration of the eucharistic gifts at the presanctified liturgy. Holy Communion is given from the eucharistic gifts sanctified on the previous Sunday at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, unless, of course, the feast of the Annunciation should intervene; hence its name of "presanctified."

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served on Wednesday and Friday evenings, although some churches may celebrate it only on one of these days. It comes in the evening after a day of spiritual preparation and total abstinence. The faithful who are unable to make the effort of total fasting because of weakness or work, however, normally eat a light lenten meal in the early morning.

During the psalms of Vespers, the presanctified gifts are prepared for communion. They are transferred from the altar table where they have been reserved since the Divine Liturgy, and are placed on the table of oblation. After the evening hymn, the Old Testament scriptures of Genesis and

Proverbs are read, between which the celebrant blesses the kneeling congregation with a lighted candle and the words: "The Light of Christ illumines all," indicating that all wisdom is given by Christ in the Church through the scriptures and sacraments. This blessing was originally directed primarily to the catechumens -- those preparing to be baptized on Easter -- who attended the service only to the time of the communion of the faithful.

After the readings, the evening Psalm 141 is solemnly sung once again with the offering of incense. Then, after the litanies of intercession and those at which the catechumens were dismissed in former days, the presanctified eucharistic gifts are brought to the altar in a solemn, silent procession. The song of the entrance calls the faithful to communion.

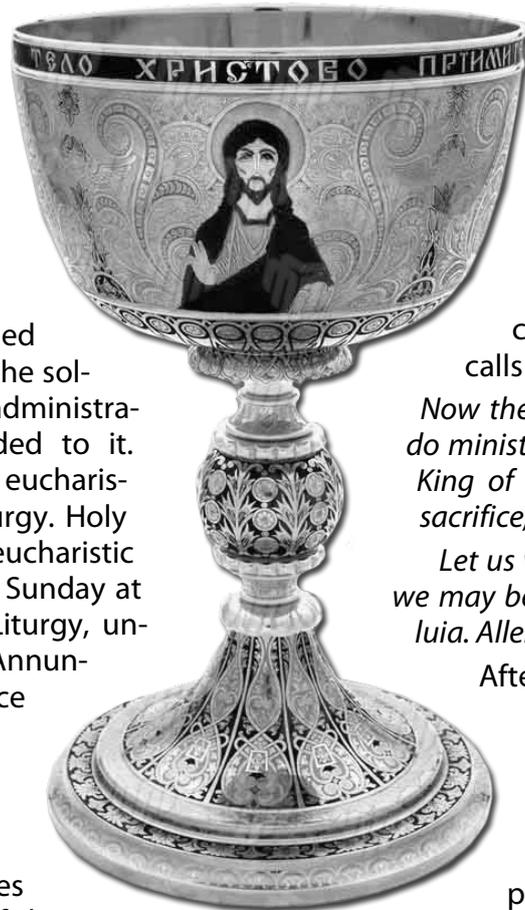
*Now the heavenly powers (i.e., the angels) do minister invisibly with us. For behold the King of Glory enters. Behold the mystical sacrifice, all fulfilled, is ushered in.*

*Let us with faith and love draw near that we may be partakers of everlasting life. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.*

After the litany and prayers, the Our Father is sung and the faithful receive Holy Communion to the chanting of the verse from Psalm 34: "O taste and see how good is the Lord. Alleluia." The post-communion hymns are sung and the faithful depart with a prayer

to God who "has brought us to these all-holy days for the cleansing of carnal passions," that he will bless us "to fight the good fight, to accomplish the course of the fast, and to attain unto and to adore the holy resurrection" of Christ.

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is traditionally considered to be the work of the sixth-century pope, Saint Gregory of Rome. The present service, however, is obviously the inspired liturgical creation of Christian Byzantium.



## ON THE POWER OF LOVE

*Extracts from the writings of St. Isaac the Syrian*

What is a merciful heart? It is a heart on fire for the whole of creation, for humanity, for the birds, for the animals, for demons, and for all that exists. By the recollection of them the eyes of a merciful person pour forth tears in abundance. By the strong and vehement mercy that grips such a person's heart, and by such great compassion, the heart is humbled and one cannot bear to hear or to see



any injury or slight sorrow in any in creation. For this reason, such a person offers up tearful prayer continually even for irrational beasts, for the enemies of the truth, and for those who harm her or him, that they be protected and receive mercy. And in like manner such a person prays for all because of the great compassion that burns without measure in a heart that is in the likeness of God.

Paradise is the love of God, wherein is the enjoyment of all blessedness. The person who lives in this love reaps the fruit of life from God, and while yet in this world, even now breathes the air of the resurrection.

As for me I say that those who are tormented in hell are tormented by the invasion of love. What is there more bitter and violent than the pains of love? Those who feel they have sinned against love bear in themselves a damnation much heavier than the most dreaded punishments. The suffering with which sinning against love afflicts the heart is more keenly felt than any other torment. It is absurd to assume that the sinners in hell are deprived of God's love. Love is offered to all impartially. But by its very power it acts in two ways. It torments sinners, as happens here on earth when we are tormented by the presence of a friend to whom we have been unfaithful. And it gives joy to those who have been faithful.

That is what the torment of hell is in my opinion: remorse. But love inebriates the souls of the sons and daughters of heaven by its wondrous taste.

Blessed is the one who partakes of love! Immoral people have tasted it and become chaste; sinners have tasted it and have forgotten the pathways of stumbling; drunkards have tasted it and become fasters; the rich have tasted it and desired poverty, the poor have tasted it and been enriched with hope; the sick have tasted it and become strong; the unlearned have tasted it and become wise.

## ABOUT SAINT EPHREM'S PRAYER

The famous lenten prayer of Saint Ephrem the Syrian summarizes our entire struggle during the forty day fast – that of turning from vice to virtue, sin to holiness, and self-love to love of God and neighbor.

This powerful prayer is said every day of Great Lent, except on Saturdays and Sundays. It should be part of our morning and evening prayers, but may also be said at any other time throughout the day – especially in time of temptation.



### THE PRAYER OF SAINT EPHREM

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, lust of power, and idle talk. (Prostration)

But grant rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to thy servant. (Prostration)

Yes, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen. (Prostration)

O God, cleanse Thou me a sinner. (12 times, with as many bows, and then again the whole prayer from the beginning to end, and after that one great prostration)

*Note: If one cannot make prostrations, then make bows, or simply the sign of the Cross.*