

CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

10315 Carey Road; Berlin, MD 21811
 302-537-6055 (church) / orthodoxdelmarva.org /
 frjohn@orthodoxdelmarva.org

BULLETIN OF FEBRUARY 16, 2014



A Warm Welcome!

We warmly welcome all of our visitors! It's good to have you with us!



The Parish Council – Sunday, Feb. 23rd

will be blessed to assume their duties at the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 23rd. Following the coffee hour on this same day, the new council will meet to elect officers. All council members are reminded to prepare themselves for this high calling and important day with prayer, a recent confession, and Holy Communion.

What are Meatfare (2/23) and Cheesefare (3/2) Sundays?

These are the final days we partake of meat and dairy products, respectively, until Pascha. During the week before Great Lent, called Cheese-week, though we aren't partaking of meat anymore, dairy products are permitted on every day, including Wednesday and Friday. This week is given to help transition us into the Great Fast.

The Rite of Forgiveness – Sunday, March 2nd

The day before the start of the Great Fast is called Forgiveness Sunday, for on this day 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.



Work Project

The walls and ceiling of our chapel are currently being beautified. A graphical rendering of the final design is available for your viewing upon request. The new color which you currently see on the walls and ceiling is simply primer, upon which would be placed plaster and then painted stencils. For questions about the project, please speak with Fr. John or Laura Deckmann.



Church Mortgage

On the bottom of the Sunday bulletin you will find a column showing the amount remaining on the church's \$400K / 20 year / 0% mortgage. If you would like to help pay off this loan, please earmark your check "mortgage" or use this checkbox on your envelope.

2014 Annual Meeting of the Parish

Appreciation is expressed to all who prepared reports and attended the 2014 Annual Parish Meeting. A summary, photos, the reports, and draft minutes are available on our website – the later two being also available for pickup at the ushers' stand. Once again – thank you!



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH

Prodigal Son Sunday

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

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND

5:15p.m. Memorial Service
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23RD

Sunday of the Last Judgment

Last Day for Meat Before Pascha

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

Looking Ahead:

- ❖ Feb. 23rd – Meatfare Sunday
- ❖ March 2nd – Cheesefare Sunday
- ❖ March 3rd – Great Lent Begins
- ❖ March 25th – Annunciation
- ❖ April 13th – Palm Sunday
- ❖ April 18th – Holy Friday
- ❖ April 20th – Pascha

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Feb. 23rd

Joanne Patrick

Sunday, Mar. 2nd

Gabriela Jones



CASH FLOWS THROUGH 1/31/14					CASH FLOWS IN FEBRUARY 2014					FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT		
OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	OPERATING		OTHER		ALL	ASSETS & LIABILITIES – 2/16		
Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Income	Expense	Income	Expense	Net	Checking	Overdue	Mortgage
7,092	7,422	700	1,000	-630	2,163	5,989	500	1,348	-4,674	5,526	0	366,660

AN INTRODUCTION TO GREAT LENT

Excerpts from Fr Alexander Schmemmann's *Great Lent*

When a man leaves on a journey, he must know where he is going. Thus with Lent. Above all, Lent is a spiritual journey and its destination is Pascha, "the Feast of Feasts." We must begin, therefore, by trying to understand this connection between Lent and Pascha, for it reveals something very essential, crucial about our Christian faith and life.

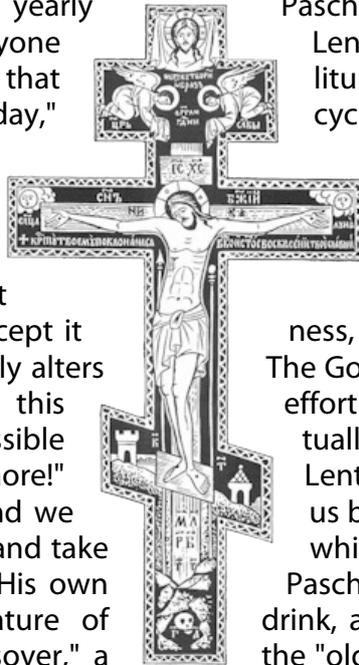
Is it necessary to explain that Pascha is much more than one of the feasts, more than a yearly commemoration of a past event? Anyone who has, be it only once, taken part in that night which is "brighter than the day," who has tasted of that unique joy, knows it. [...] On Pascha we celebrate Christ's Resurrection as something that happened and still happens to us. For each one of us received the gift of that new life and the power to accept it and live by it. It is a gift which radically alters our attitude toward everything in this world, including death. It makes it possible for us to joyfully affirm: "Death is no more!" Oh, death is still there, to be sure, and we still face it and someday it will come and take us. But it is our whole faith that by His own death Christ changed the very nature of death, made it a passage — a "passover," a "Pascha" — into the Kingdom of God, transforming the tragedy of tragedies into the ultimate victory.

Such is that faith of the Church, affirmed and made evident by her countless Saints. Is it not our daily experience, however, that this faith is very seldom ours, that all the time we lose and betray the "new life" which we received as a gift, and that in fact we live as if Christ did not rise from the dead, as if that unique event had no meaning whatsoever for us? [...] We simply forget all this — so busy are we, so immersed in our daily preoccupations — and because we forget, we fail. And through this forgetfulness, failure, and sin, our life becomes "old" again — petty, dark, and ultimately meaningless — a meaningless journey toward a meaningless

end. [...] We may from time to time acknowledge and confess our various "sins," yet we cease to refer our life to that new life which Christ revealed and gave to us. Indeed, we live as if He never came. This is the only real sin, the sin of all sins, the bottomless sadness and tragedy of our nominal Christianity.

If we realize this, then we may understand what Pascha is and why it needs and presupposes Lent. For we may then understand that the liturgical traditions of the Church, all its cycles and services, exist, first of all, in order to help us recover the vision and the taste of that new life which we so easily lose and betray, so that we may repent and return to it. [...] And yet the "old" life, that of sin and pettiness, is not easily overcome and changed. The Gospel expects and requires from man an effort of which, in his present state, he is virtually incapable. [...] This is where Great Lent comes in. This is the help extended to us by the Church, the school of repentance which alone will make it possible to receive Pascha not as mere permission to eat, to drink, and to relax, but indeed as the end of the "old" in us, as our entrance into the "new." [...] For each year Lent and Pascha are, once again, the rediscovery and the recovery by us of what we were made through our own baptismal death and resurrection.

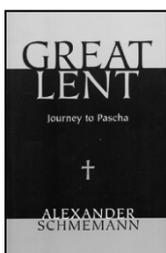
A journey, a pilgrimage! Yet, as we begin it, as we make the first step into the "bright sadness" of Lent, we see — far, far away — the destination. It is the joy of Pascha, it is the entrance into the glory of the Kingdom. And it is this vision, the foretaste of Pascha, that makes Lent's sadness bright and our lenten effort a "spiritual spring." The night may be dark and long, but all along the way a mysterious and radiant dawn seems to shine on the horizon. "Do not deprive us of our expectation, O Lover of man!"



Suggested Reading: *Great Lent*

By Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

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."





ASK FATHER: 1 QUESTION / 1 ANSWER

Question: I am wondering about the subject of "tithing" spoken about in the Old Testament. What is the Orthodox view on this? How much should we be giving to the Church?

Answer: A lot can be said on this important subject of Christian stewardship, but I will try to be as concise as possible. The following is adapted from a stewardship presentation recently given at our mission.

False Stewardship Models

Equal Giving: 1) Each person gives the same dollar amount, dividing the sum needed by the number of people. 2) Each person offers the same percentage amount, such as the 10% tithe.

Explanation: Every person differs according to financial resources and spiritual maturity. Equal dollar amounts unfairly burden the poor, not even meeting the Old Testament standard, which used a 10% scale (the tithe) as small step toward equity. The tithe, equal percentage, is also unfit for Christians for a series of reasons. The tithe: 1) only considers income not assets and liabilities, as does, for instance, the secular US tax system, 2) doesn't address how to properly manage the other 90% of one's income, nor teach the proper use of existing wealth, 3) doesn't develop the necessary discernment between needs and wants, which allows the Christian to properly see the connection between one's treasure and one's heart, and 4) is not taught by the Lord nor the Fathers, except being referenced as something below Christian stewardship.

Orthodox Christian Stewardship

Equal Sacrifice: New Testament stewardship is the only model that is equitable, faithful to the Gospel, and spiritually sound. Each person is equally free, yet equally accountable, for 100% of everything God has entrusted to his or her temporary care.

Explanation: Of course, this does not mean that 100% of what we possess or obtain must be given to the Church and the poor (although some have done this), but it does mean that 100% of our financial resources should be acquired, stored, and used in a godly manner. As Christians we should be working hard and honorably, saving prudently to provide for those entrusted to our care, supporting the work of the Church, helping the poor, rendering taxes to Caesar, living within our means, curbing unnecessary wants, and in all things using our treasure to redirect our hearts to God and our fellow man. If truly practiced, this means that the stronger will help the weaker, yet no one will excuse himself or herself from stewardship as each person has been entrusted with time, talent and treasurer by God.

This model of 100% stewardship: 1) applies to each and every person equally, 2) burdens no one unfairly, 3) offers everyone, whether rich or poor, married, single, or monastic an equal opportunity to offer his or her own self completely to God's service, 4) educates us to see the connection between our treasure and our heart, as well as the difference between our needs and wants, and most importantly, 5) is the teaching and example given by the Lord, who not only gave His whole life for us but also asks us to give our whole life back to Him. Understood in this manner, stewardship is an integral part of our common struggle and shared path, leading to a loving, self-sacrificial and full union with God and our fellow man.



MEMORIAL SATURDAY OF MEATFARE

Commemorated this year on February 22nd / From OCA.org

On the day before Meatfare Sunday, on which we remember the Last Judgment, the Orthodox Church prays for those of its members who may have died unexpectedly because of wars, plagues, starvation, or any other sort of death while they were in a foreign country, or while they were traveling by sea, by land, or by air. The Church also prays for the poor, or for those who may not have received a proper burial, or who had no one to request Memorial Services to be offered for them.

We pray for the departed on this Saturday because the Orthodox Church has established Saturday as the proper day of the week for remembering the dead. On this day before we hear the Gospel about the Last Judgment, we should pause to recall our own inescapable death when we shall appear before Christ to give an account of our lives. May we have "an acceptable defense before His dread Judgment Seat."

As we prepare for the spiritual struggles of the Great Fast, we should remember that we have been given this present life for repentance and for entreating God's mercy. When Christ comes in glory to judge the world, it will be too late then to say that we repent, or to ask for mercy. Therefore, we should make the most of the time that has been given us in order to struggle against every sinful impulse which separates us from God, to confess our sins, to correct ourselves, and to pursue a life of virtue and holiness.

MEMORIAL SERVICES AND KOLLYVA

From orthodoxwiki.org

During memorial services (Greek: Parastas, Slavonic: Panikhida), the family or friends of the departed will often prepare a Kollyva, an offering of boiled wheat, which is placed in front of the memorial table before which the service is chanted. Orthodox Christians consider Kollyva to be the symbolic of death and resurrection, according to the words of the Gospel:

Truly, truly, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. (Jn. 12:24)

Wheat which is planted in the earth and rises in new life is symbolic of those beloved departed who have died in the hope of resurrection, in accordance with the words of Saint Paul:

So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body...(I Corinthians 15 :42-44)

Memorial services are held on the third, ninth, and fortieth days after the repose of an Orthodox Christian, as well as on the one-year anniversary. In addition, there are several Soul Saturdays during the church year (mostly during Great Lent), as well as Radonitsa (on the second Tuesday after Pascha), on each of which general commemorations are made for all the departed.

While recipes may vary widely, the primary ingredient in today's Kollyva consists of wheat kernels which have been boiled until they are soft. These are usually mixed with a variety of ingredients which may include pomegranate seeds, sesame seeds, almonds, ground walnuts, cinnamon, sugar, raisins, anise and parsley.

The Kollyva mixture is then placed on a platter and shaped into a mound or cake, to resemble a grave. The whole is then decorated with a powdered sugar covering, often with Jordan almonds, raisins, or other sweets decoratively placed on the surface. A cross is traced or created with the sweets on the top, and on its sides are placed the initials of the departed for whom the memorial is held. A candle, often placed in the center of the Kollyva, is lit at the beginning of the requiem service and extinguished at its end; the candle symbolizes the light wherewith the Christian is illumined in Baptism, and also the light of the world to come, which knows no setting.

