



CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF MARCH 16, 2008

Please Remember in Prayer

Carole Boris and Lambert Weber who are undergoing treatment. If you have a prayer request, please let Fr. John know.



Orthodox Movie Night – Monday, March 17th

On the Mondays of Great Lent, religious films will be shown and discussed at the church at 7:00pm. The titles of the films will be posted in the Sunday bulletins. This week's movie will be on the Apostles Peter & Paul.



Orthodoxy 101 – Wednesday, March 19th

A session of Orthodoxy 101 will be held following the Lenten Vespers service on Wednesday at 7:00pm. The class will look at the historical development of Confession from the early church until the present, as well as the relationship between Confession and Holy Communion and practical ways to prepare for and benefit from this often misunderstood healing mystery. A last portion of the class will be devoted to questions.



Memorial Saturdays

On Saturdays during the Great Fast we are especially called to remember those who have departed this life before us in the hope of the resurrection to eternal life. Memorial services are being offered at 5:30pm during which the names of our departed family members and friends are commemorated. If you have not yet submitted a list for commemoration, please see Fr. John.



Hymns Sung Before Holy Communion

The texts which are now being sung before Holy Communion are available for pickup in the back of the church. These hymns, together with the Pre-Communion Prayers (available in your Orthodox Prayer Book) were written by the Church so that we might approach the Chalice with the fear of God and with faith and love. Likewise, Post-Communion Prayers, which we say in thanksgiving, are also found in your Orthodox Prayer Book. If you do not have a Prayer Book and need a copy of these prayers, please see Fr. John.

READER SCHEDULE

Sunday, Mar. 23rd

Hours: Sandy St. Germain
Epistle: Sandy St. Germain

Sunday, Mar. 30th

Hours: Kathy Parrish
Epistle: Kathy Parrish



Date Changed One More Time: Kielbasa Fundraiser

The new work date for the Kielbasa Fundraiser is March 30. If you would like to help work or if you would like to place an order, please see either Kathy Parrish, Bob Dodge, or Diane Evanusa.

Some Info About the Scrip Fundraiser

In an effort to save on shipping cost, we would like to order the Scrip gift cards in bulk. If you know what you are going to spend on groceries, gas, clothes, toiletries, etc., please consider ordering your gift cards in advance by seeing Kathy Parrish or Jen Alexion.

The Finance Committee

will meet next on Sunday, March 23rd, following the coffee hour.

The Parish Council

will meet next on Sunday, April 6th, following the coffee hour. The new Council for 2008 will be installed with the blessing of His Beatitude at the end of the Divine Liturgy on that day. Backup date is April 13th.



The New Orthodox Study Bibles

are finally available for purchase in the back of our church. The Study Bible includes all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, as well as commentary and explanations from the perspective of the Ancient Church. The cost is \$50.



The Parish Bookstore

has been newly stocked with more reading material. If you haven't already chosen a spiritual book to read during this Great Lent, now is the time to do so. If you would like a recommendation, or would like to order a book which we do not have, please see Fr. John and he will help you.



Update: New Baptismal Font

We now have \$1300 donated towards our new font. The total cost is \$2800. If you would like to make a donation, please see Fr. John or Susan Pappas, our treasurer. The font will most likely be ordered from Holoviak's Church Supply in Berwick, PA.

Our Mission's Listing in Newspapers

If you notice our Mission's listing in newspapers and the address is incorrect, please let Fr. John or one of the Council Members know. Or if you wouldn't mind, please contact the paper with the correct listing. Our new address is available at the top of this bulletin. Thank you!



A WORD ABOUT FASTING

It is necessary most of all for one who is fasting to curb anger, to accustom himself to meekness and condescension, to have a contrite heart, to repulse impure thoughts and desires, to examine his conscience, to put his mind to the test and to verify what good has been done by us in this or any other week, and which deficiency we have corrected in ourselves in the present week. This is true fasting.



Saint John Chrysostom – 4th century



WHY DOES THE PRIEST CENSE US?

During the services, the priest censes many things in church. He also censes the people. Why does he cense the people?

As clouds of smoke from the burning incense rise up, we are reminded that we were created in the "image and likeness of God." It is this image in us that the priest censes. Just as he censes the icons of the saints, he censes each of us.

We are called to be saints. When we turn to God and tell Him we are sorry for our sins, He visits us and blesses us. He encourages us to grow and become more like Himself who is both holy and good. When the priest censes us, he reminds us to keep the divine image in us pure and God-like.

WHAT IS KOLYVA?

Kolyva is boiled wheat which is offered at memorial services. Orthodox Christians consider kolyva to be the symbolic of death and resurrection, according to the words of the Gospel:



Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. (John 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 St. Paul:

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It 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)

This symbolism has its highest expression in the Saints, whose blessed state in heaven have been manifested to the world. For this reason, kolyva is blessed not only at memorials for the departed, but also in commemoration of saints.



Archpastoral Message of Metropolitan Herman at the beginning of Great Lent 2008

To the Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy, Monastics and Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

Standing out among the liturgical services of the Lenten Triodion is the Divine Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts. In the introduction to the service booklet published by the OCA's Department of Religious Education, Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko calls the Divine Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts "one of the great masterpieces of Orthodox piety and liturgical creativity." As this Liturgy draws to a close, we hear the Prayer Before the Ambo. In this prayer Great Lent is called the "all-revered days for purification of souls and bodies, for restraint of passions, and for hope in the resurrection."

It can be easy to look at fasting as a chore. Sometimes the coming of Lent is even filled with a measure of dread. There are more services and it seems like such a long time to live without foods and diversions that are so pleasing to us. The above prayer, however, reminds us that Great Lent is a holy time, "all-revered". In the Gospel, our Lord teaches us that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."(Mark 2:27) The times and seasons of the liturgical year are gifts given to us by God for our healing, edification and ongoing growth in His Divine image. Great Lent is a time to cherish as a precious gift, knowing that the fruits it offers are well worth the extra effort.

Great Lent offers us the gift of the "purification of souls and bodies". Just as an engine cannot work properly unless it is clean, we cannot function properly if we are impaired by physical and spiritual pollutants. Fasting is good for the body and the soul. It cleanses us physically and allows us a spiritual clarity that can only come through ascetic struggle. Our Lord Jesus Christ reminds us that some unclean spirits can only be expelled "by prayer and fasting."(Matthew 17:21) Being more alert, more focused, we pray with less distraction, making ourselves more open to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit within us.

Through our fast God is able to work within us and we are given the gift of the "restraint of passions." The original meaning of "passion" is suffering. Suffering is not limited to physical pain but can also be the result of deep inner conflict. Every Christian faces the inner tension between following the Way of Christ and following the precepts of our fallen nature; this choice is at the heart of "repentance", the "change of mind" away from sin and towards God to which we are called again and again during Great Lent. Although it seems like an easy choice, it is in fact a very difficult one to make and even harder to maintain. Thus, St. Paul says to the Romans: "For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do."(Romans 7:15) Through the self-discipline of the fast, we are more open to the active presence of God within us. The active presence of God within us gives us the strength, wisdom and courage needed to veer away from our sinful inclinations and to fix our gaze on the heavenly Kingdom. As St. Paul says to the Galatians, "it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me"; this is the first fruit of our fasting.

The holy season of Great Lent is indeed a time of increased effort. It is a time to take a sober and honest look at ourselves, at our life and relationship with God. This is not easy work and it is crucial that we keep the context of our efforts in mind. We do not apply ourselves to this task in a gloomy fashion but with joyful "hope in the resurrection." It is the anticipation of Pascha, the triumph of the Risen Christ, that we hold in our hearts as we fast. We struggle with self-denial, seeking cleansing of soul and body and inner healing of passions to more perfectly participate in the radiance of Christ's resurrection.

In his letter to the Church of Corinth, St. Paul says, "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver."(2 Corinthians 9:6,7) Though the Apostle speaks specifically of monetary gifts, this principle applies to any and all giving that we do for Christ, including the "giving-up" that we do during the fasts. Borrowing these words of St. Paul, we can say that

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Message of Metropolitan Herman continued from page 3...

we are called to fast "each one as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or sparingly or of necessity," but cheerfully, knowing that our goal is the celebration of the life-giving feast of feasts--Pascha, the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It is our tradition at the beginning of Great Lent to ask forgiveness of those whom we have angered, affronted or sinned against in some other way. We still find ourselves at a point in our history when many feel pain and anger as a result of misdeeds that have occurred in our Church. If I have sinned against you in any way, and especially if my actions in addressing these misdeeds have caused you pain, I ask for your forgiveness and prayers.

Wishing you a spiritually edifying Lenten season and Passion Week, and a joyous celebration of Holy Pascha, I bestow my archpastoral blessings and with paternal love, I remain

With love in Christ,



+ HERMAN
Archbishop of Washington and New York
Metropolitan of All America and Canada



ABOUT THE SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

From the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese – goarch.org

Lent was in origin the time of final preparation for candidates for baptism at the Paschal Vigil, and this is reflected in the readings at the Liturgy, today and on all the Sundays of Lent. But that basic theme came to be subordinated to later themes, which dominated the hymnography of each Sunday. The dominant theme of this Sunday since 843 has been that of the victory of the icons. In that year the icono-iconoclastic controversy, which had raged on and off since 726, was finally laid to rest, and icons and their veneration were restored on the first Sunday in Lent. Ever since, that Sunday been commemorated as the "Triumph of Orthodoxy."

The name of this Sunday reflects the great significance which icons possess for the Orthodox Church. They are not optional devotional extras, but an integral part of Orthodox faith and devotion. They are held to be a necessary consequence of Christian faith in the incarnation of the Word of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, in Jesus Christ. They have a sacramental character, making present to the believer the person or event depicted on them. So the interior of Orthodox churches is often covered with icons painted on walls and domed roofs, and there is always an icon screen, or iconostasis, separating the sanctuary from the nave, often with several rows of icons. No Orthodox home is complete without an icon corner, where the family prays.

Icons are venerated by burning lamps and candles in front of them, by the use of incense and by kissing. But there is a clear doctrinal distinction between the veneration paid to icons and the worship due to God. The former is not only relative, it is in fact paid to the person represented by the icon. This distinction safeguards the veneration of icons from any charge of idolatry.

MARCH CONGRATULATIONS!

Birthdays:

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|------|---------------------|
| 3/5 | Mat. Emily Parsells |
| 3/8 | Monica Stoicovy |
| 3/21 | Fr. John Parsells |
| 3/23 | Ginny Borodulia |
| 3/24 | Mat. Dunia Hubiak |
| 3/26 | Megan Borodulia |

Namesdays:

- | | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 3/1 | St. Evdokia |
| | Mat. Dunia Hubiak |
| | Karen Nichols |

If your name is not on this list and it should be, please see Fr. John, as soon as possible!

