



Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church

A Parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople



Reverend Dave Urban, *Pastor*
Very Reverend John Brancho, *Pastor Emeritus*
Timothy Martin, *Reader*
Matthew Peifer, Stephen Brancho, & John Radick, *Cantors*
Matthew Peifer, *Church Council President*
www.facebook.com/pg/St-John-the-Baptist-Orthodox-Church-of-Northside-Pittsburgh-169297619784149

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Cheesefare

FEBRUARY 18th

FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY



Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise!

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY

Reading: Romans 13: 11-14:4

Gospel: Matthew 6: 14-21

Ask each other for
forgiveness each evening this
week before bed.

9:30 am – Divine Liturgy

Tone 4

Liturgical Color: **Gold/Purple**

Youth Sunday / Cheese Fare Sunday / Prayers from the Rite of Forgiveness following Liturgy

SERVICES, SAINTS, AND READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday, February 19 – the start of the Great Fast (Lent) – “CLEAN WEEK” Begins –

9:30am The Great Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete (I)

Tuesday, February 20 – 9:30am The Great Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete (II)

Wednesday, February 21 – 9:30am The Great Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete (III)

7pm – Presanctified Liturgy at the Hampton Inn, Wexford

Thursday, February 22 – 9:30am The Great Canon of Repentance of St. Andrew of Crete (IV)

Friday, February 23 – 9:30am Lenten Third Hour with reading of the Kathisma (*Book of Psalms*)

Saturday, February 24 – 9:30am All Soul Saturday (*Zadušna Subota*) Divine Liturgy and

Panachida (*transfer of Ill*) / 11a – 1p Mystery of Holy Confession

The Holy Mystery of Confession is available following every service.

** Mon.	Venerable Bucolus, bishop of Smyrna (ca. 100)	Isaiah 1:1-20	Genesis 1:1-13	Proverbs 1:1-20
** Tue.	Venerable Luke of Mt. Steirion (953)	Is 1:19-2:3	Genesis 1:14-23	Prov. 1:20-33
** Wed.	Great-martyr Theodore Stratelates (319)	Isaiah 2:3-11	Gen. 1:24-2:3	Prov. 2:1-22
** Thu.	Martyr Nicephorus of Antioch (ca. 257)	Isaiah 2:11-21	Genesis 2:4-19	Prov. 3:1-18
** Fri.	St. Anna of Novgorod, wife of Yaroslav I (1050)	Isaiah 3:1-14	Gen. 2:20-3:20	Prov. 3:19-34
** Sat.	Hieromartyr Blaise, bishop of Sebaste (316)	Heb. 1:1-12		Mark 2:23-3:5

**** The Great Fast - Let us imitate Christ and the Saints and fast as they did!**

1st Sunday of Lent

FEBRUARY 25th



GREAT FAST BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS

SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY

Reading: Hebrews 11: 24-26, 32-12:2

Gospel: John 1: 43-51

Bring an icon to church
for a procession.

9:30 am – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Tone 5

Liturgical Color: **Gold**

Additional Collection for our Community Outreach / Procession of Icons following the Divine Liturgy

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A Warm Welcome To Our Visitors!

Glory Be To Jesus Christ! (Glory Be Forever!)

Slava Isusu Christu! (Slava na v'iki!)

We are happy that you have joined us today! **Please join us downstairs** for coffee and a bite to eat. It is our pleasure to have you in our presence this morning and we wish God's Blessings to all who visit with us today and hope you stop in again soon!

If you have any questions in regards to our worship or Orthodoxy, please see Fr. Dave and he will gladly answer any of your questions to the best of his ability. He looks forward to meeting you!

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This Bulletin Is Offered:

If you wish to sponsor a Bulletin *In Memory of* someone or *In Honor of* (anniversary, birthday, new job, etc.), please do so by signing up on the sheet on the table in the Vestibule of the Church or by contacting Fr. Dave. An additional stewardship offering to the Church is requested.

The Great Fast (Lent)

The Holy Season of the Great Fast is now here. We have services frequently during the week specifically designed by the Church for your spiritual and even physical well being. While you may not be able to make all services, as a family please make a decision to attend at least one additional service a week. I know the weekday morning services are difficult with work schedules, but there is also the Wednesday evening Presanctified Liturgy, frequent All Soul Saturday Liturgies, and a service every Sunday around Pittsburgh during the Great Fast (Lent). Please strive to fast more than last year (at a minimum on Wednesdays and Fridays and ALL of Holy Week).

Please do what you can to help the poor and reach out to the lonely and troubled.

It is a time of year to do more for our soul, our spiritual training season!

I beg your forgiveness, Father Dave

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LOOKING AHEAD LOCALLY

Sunday, February 25 – Sunday of Orthodoxy / Additional collection for our Community Outreach / 4:30pm – Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers at Holy Cross in Mt. Lebanon

Wednesday, February 28 – 9:30am Paraklis to the Theotokos / 7pm – Presanctified Liturgy at the Hampton Inn, Wexford

Friday, March 2 – 9:30am Akathist Hymn to the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ

Saturday, March 3 – 9:30am All Soul Saturday (Zadušna Subota) Divine Liturgy & Panachida (II) 11a – 1p Mystery of Holy Confession

Sunday, March 4 – Sunday of St. Gregory of Palamas / 4pm – Syrian Relief Dinner & Prayer Service at St Nicholas Cathedral in Oakland

Monday, March 5 – 9:30am Lenten Third Hour with reading of the Kathisma (Book of Psalms)

Wednesday, March 7 – 9:30am Moleben to the Theotokos / 7pm – Presanctified Liturgy at the Hampton Inn, Wexford

Sunday, March 11 – Sunday of the Holy Cross / Tsar Lazar Male Choir to sing responses / 3pm – Pittsburgh Deanery Lenten Missions at St John's (211 Cable Ave., E Pgh, PA 15112)

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BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Please have submissions for this section to Father by Wednesday.)

Weekly Candle Intentions/Memorials were offered last week by Tim Martin; Viola Peifer; Melanie Shuster; Olga Radick; Eleanor Sanger; Jane Barrett; Joanne Nelson; Julia Potoski; Theresa Sharpless; Pañi Brancho; Cindy Pavilonis; Patty Watson.

"I am the light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." - John 8:12

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"Clean Week", the first week of the Great Fast, is here! This year there will be a service each day of the week in the morning at the church. The Wednesday evening Presanctified Liturgy will be at A New Location, the Hampton Inn off of the Wexford exit of 79 (2622 Wexford Bayne Road, Sewickley, PA 15143). Evening services are also offered at the other Orthodox Churches in the area! Please contact them for their service times.

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The Great Canon – Speaking of the services for Clean Week, The Great Canon of St Andrew is a great service to start the Fast with. The full text of the Canon is divided between the first four days of the week. Each service is just over an hour long. I pray that you make an effort to come (of course, those whose schedule permits). Please read more about this Canon in the Living Orthodoxy section below.

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Fellowship Meal following Presanctified – After our Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts at the Hampton Inn, our tradition is to gather for a meal. Again this year, we are asking people to sign up for a week and bring something (meatless) for all to enjoy. If you wish, you can team up with someone else to share the effort. The Hampton does not have a kitchen, so we will be taking supplies from the hall and we will need to clean up. A sign up sheet is in the Church Hall.

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Ride Request for Presanctified – If you are able to assist in giving someone a ride on Wednesday evenings, please let Father know ASAP. Thank you!

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Our Stewardship Gift To God

Stewardship/Dues:	\$ 890
Candles/Small C./Eternal Lamp/C. box:	\$ 122
Envelopes: Sunday/Feast Day/Special:	\$ 253
Total Collections:	\$ 1265
Capital Improvement Fund:	\$ 69
Fundraising (Pirohi Sale):	\$ 180



Lenten Coin Boxes – "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Mt 28:19)

Coin boxes are available in the Church Hall to collect your spare change throughout the Great Fast for our Community Outreach next month (OCMC). More information is available at www.ocmc.org. "Let them do good, that they may be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share" (1 Tim 6:18)

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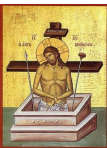
Orthodoxy Sunday Procession – Next week, February 25th, you are encouraged to bring an icon from home to use in the procession of icons following the Divine Liturgy. (See below for the details of the Pan-Orthodox Vespers to be held later that day.)

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IOCC Syrian Relief Dinner & Prayer Service – In lieu of a deanery Lenten Mission on Sunday March 4th, all are encouraged to attend the Syrian Relief Prayer Service and Dinner at 4pm. (You are welcome to come to the prayer service and not stay for the dinner if you need to.) See below for more details.

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Pittsburgh Deanery Lenten Mission: Confession, Service, & Fellowship - Each Sunday Vespers begin at 3pm with Confessions heard beginning around 2:30pm. A light meal is offered after the service.



March 11 – East Pittsburgh
March 18 – Rankin
March 25 – North Side

(The Homilists will be three of our seminarians.)

All are encourage to attend our Lenten Missions throughout the Great Fast! Pray with our Pittsburgh Deanery and see our sister parishes!

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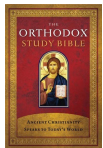
Palms & Pussywillows – We are collecting in the Church Hall our Palms and Pussywillows from prior years. These will not be simply thrown away, but they will respectfully be taken care of. Please bring yours in so that your house will be ready for the new ones in a few weeks!

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Food Drive – For the month of February we will be collecting unexpired food and donations in order to make a delivery to St. Cyril of White Lake Food Pantry on Pittsburgh's South Side. Thank you in advance for your prayers and offerings this month! The list of food items that they are looking for is available in the church hall or at: <http://stmaryorthodoxchurch.net/stcyrilfoodpantry.html>

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Donors needed for Orthodox Study Bibles – An initiative has been started to have a dozen Orthodox Study Bibles available for use around the Church. We are asking that donors offer a bible anonymously, in memory of someone, or on behalf of a group. A minimum \$30 stewardship donation to the Church is requested.

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Tsar Lazar to sing responses – On **Sunday, March 11th** we are blessed to have the Tsar Lazar Orthodox Male Choir coming to St John's to sing responses for the Divine Liturgy for the Sunday of the Cross. *I previously sang with this choir and I believe they will inspire and deepen our prayer!* – Fr Dave

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Visit Our Diocese On-Line

Diocesan Website: www.acrod.org
Camp Nazareth: www.campnazareth.org
FB: www.facebook.com/acroddiocese
Twitter: twitter.com/acrodnews
You Tube: youtube.com/acroddiocese

Book Suggestion for the Great Fast:

"Courage to Pray"

by Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh
(ISBN # 9780881410310)

"The subject of prayer is explored as an essential element of self-awareness. The discovery of prayer, faith, love and man's relationship with God gives us hope and courage to pray."

Go to www.smile.amazon.com
(then link it to "American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox") and you can pick up a used copy for under \$10!

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Coffee Social Steward Schedule

February 25: **Open / "Pot Luck"**

March 4: **Open / "Pot Luck"**

March 11: **Open / "Pot Luck"**

The Divine Liturgy concludes at the final blessing, but the liturgy continues downstairs as we gather in love and fellowship with our parish family and visiting neighbors. (Everyone is also encouraged to help clean up after.) Thank you to all those who support and keep this critical ministry alive in our parish!

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Parish Stewardship Opportunities...

As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them.
(Luke 6:31)

- Donate towards a Study Bible
- Car pool to Presanctified
- Bring in food for our February Food Drive
- Take a Coffee Social week
- Attend additional services

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ORTHODOXY AROUND DA 'BURGH



Sunday of Orthodoxy Pan-Orthodox Service - The Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood of Greater Pittsburgh is hosting the annual Sunday of Orthodoxy Service and Celebration on **Sunday, February 25th** at 4:30 pm at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church in Mt. Lebanon across from the Galleria Mall (123 Gilkeson Rd., Pittsburgh, Pa 15228). His Grace, Bishop Irinej, will be the homilist.

There will be the annual Procession of the Holy Icons and a Pan-Orthodox Choir singing the responses. Come and celebrate Orthodoxy in Pittsburgh! **"This is the Faith of the Apostles. This is the Faith of the Fathers. This is the Faith of the Orthodox. This is the Faith which has established the Universe."**

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IOCC Syrian Relief Dinner & Prayer Service – The evening will begin with a Prayer Service led by various Hierarchs at 4pm followed by Dinner & Reception from 5-7pm on **Sunday March 4th** at St. Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral in Oakland (419 S. Dithridge St., Pittsburgh, PA 15213). Tickets are \$50 per adult & \$20 for ages 7-18 and need to be purchased by **March 2nd**. (A children's room will be available.) *Net Proceeds will benefit*

IOCC's Syrian Crisis Response Fund to aid our brothers and sisters in need. For more info, to purchase tickets, or volunteer, contact Zelfa at 412-417-4706 / zkhalil1@live.com.

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The Annual Diocesan Lenten Retreat: For All Orthodox Christians, Family, & Friends – Will take place on **Saturday, March 17th** from 9am–5pm at St Nicholas Orthodox Church (903 Ann Street, Homestead, PA 15120). His Grace, Bishop Gregory will present "Our Calling as Disciples and Evangelists" for the teens and adults. Fr. Dave Urban will present "Windows to Heaven – Icons & The Feasts Of The Church" for those aged 6-12. The schedule for the day is posted in the church hall. A Continental Breakfast and Light Lunch are included and the cost is covered by a Free Will Offering. The registration deadline is **March 10th** (You may sign up on the sheet in the Church Hall). *(This is sponsored by the National ACRY.)* **Come Escape From The World For A Day and Be Spiritually Renewed!**

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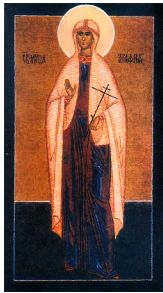
LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Source: www.orthodoxpittsburgh.com/parish-calendar/orthodox-calendar © 1996-2001 by translator Fr. S. Janos

The Holy Martyress Agatha

Commemorated on February 18/5

The Holy Martyress Agatha was the daughter of rich and respected Christian parents from the city of Palermo (formerly called Panorum) in Sicily. During the time of the persecution under the emperor Decius (249-251), the city governor of Catana, Centianus, – having heard about the wealth and beauty of Agatha, sent his soldiers after her to bring her to trial as a Christian. At Catana they housed the saint with a certain rich woman, who had five daughters. They all attempted to provide temptations for Saint Agatha by means of fine clothes, amusements and entertainment, urging her to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, but the saint would not give in to their tricks, and disdaining all the delights, she prayed the Lord to grant her the strength for the act of



martyrdom. At the interrogation under Centianus, the holy martyress was swayed neither by the flattery, nor by the threats, and she was subjected to cruel jeering: they tore at her bosom with iron hooks, and finally, they cut off her breasts. In prison the holy Apostle Peter appeared to her and healed her of her wounds. Led again to torture, Saint Agatha astonished Centianus, in that her bosom was unharmed. They thereupon began to torture her anew. At this moment in the city there began an earthquake, and the earth opened up and swallowed the closest companions of Centianus. The terrified inhabitants rushed to Centianus, demanding that he stop the tortures. Fearing a revolt by the people, Centianus sent Saint Agatha back to prison, where the martyress, in offering up thanks to God, peacefully gave up her soul to the Lord.

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SUNDAY’S SCRIPTURE READINGS

Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4

An Urgent Appeal

¹¹Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; ¹²the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Do Not Judge Another

¹⁴As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. ²One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. ³Let 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. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Master is able to make him stand.

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Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21

¹⁴For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; ¹⁵but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

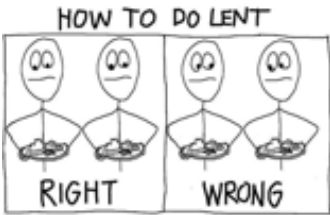
Concerning Fasting

¹⁶“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 received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, ¹⁸that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret

will reward you.

Concerning Treasures

¹⁹“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.



STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

Being Compassionate: None can be saved without being compassionate toward others

We must not be so self-consumed as to have no compassion for others. Saint Basil tells us that a man who has two coats or two pair of shoes, when his neighbor has none, is a thief. In the Holy Scriptures we read, “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell in it (Psalm 24:1).” No one can be saved, according to Saint John Chrysostom, without giving alms and without caring for the poor. We are but stewards of what belongs to God, and must share the gifts of God’s creation with one another as much as we can. To store up earthly possessions, according to Christ, is the



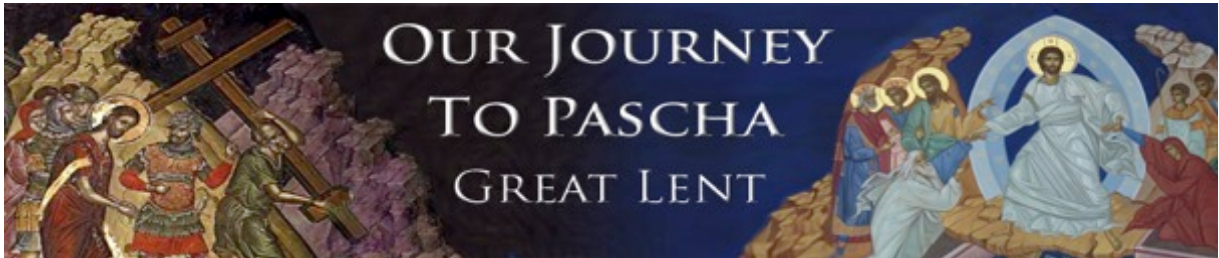
epitome of foolishness, and a rich man shall hardly be saved (Luke 12:15-21).

When we turn our attention towards the needs of others we cease to be consumed with self. In this turning of the heart towards those in need, we are turning our hearts to God. “Verily I say unto you, Since you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me (Matthew 25:40).” In our fasting, increased time spent in prayer, and acts of almsgiving (charity), we are energized in our battle against the passions, and our hearts become at rest in Christ.

With love in Christ, Abbot Tryphon

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LIVING ORTHODOXY



To assist the faithful in making the most of this holy season, additional resources have been added to our Diocesan Website. <http://acrod.org/prayercorner/lentenresources>.

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Our Sports Season Has Arrived!

Modified from: <http://www.dustinlyon.org/?p=1128>

If the Orthodox Church were a sports team (or a ballet or musical group!), we would say that we've entered into our season!

Yes, the Great Fast (Lent) has started

Just as teams put in regular practices (maybe even daily) and one or two games (or shows or concerts) a week, during Lent we too put in the time to practice our faith to grow stronger and build a closer relationship with Christ.

An Athlete's Discipline

Any team, to be in tiptop condition, has to learn discipline through practice, strength conditioning, and coaching.

For Orthodox Christians, this equates to fasting, a spiritual discipline that refines the whole person, renders our faculties more subtle and sensitive to the outside world as well as to the "inner kingdom." [His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, *Encountering the Mystery: Understanding Orthodox Christianity Today*]

An Athlete's Diet

Any athlete also needs to be sure that his or her body is prepared for strenuous work through a proper diet and healthy foods.

It's for this very reason that we have Presanctified Liturgies during Lent. Through regular communion, Christ feeds us giving us the strength we need for this intense spiritual season.



Jeff gives it up for Lent.

An Athlete's Coach

An athlete is also prepared for his or her season through regular coaching. They learn proper techniques and correct improper forms that may hurt them in the long run.

Confession is the Church's way of coaching us through our season. Through confession, we are freed from the burden of our sins, we break the cycle of evil, and we're transformed.

An Athlete's Joy

Finally, any athlete can tell you the exuberant excitement he or she feels at the big game. Win or lose, knowing you did your best, met your goals, and maintained good sportsmanship keeps the high going.

For Christians, praying the Akathist and other Para-Liturgical services during the Great Fast is like going to the game. We receive immense joy as we praise Christ's mother through some of the Church's most beautiful hymns. And, of course, the "Big Game" comes during Holy Week finally culminating at Pascha (Easter)!

P.S. Come and Join the Team!

So, I encourage you, this Great Fast (Lent), dust off that old catcher's mitt, pull out that old instrument you haven't played for a while, and join the team. Practice is just beginning!

Keep an eye on the calendar/bulletin for the schedule of services offered on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays throughout the Great Fast!

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The Great Canon Of St Andrew Of Crete

Modified from: <http://www.orthodox.net/greatlent/great-canon-of-andrew-of-crete-explanation.html>

The Great Canon of St Andrew, Bishop of Crete, is the longest canon in all of our services, and is associated with Great Lent, since the only times it is appointed to be read in church are the first four nights of the Great Fast (Lent) on Clean Monday through Clean Thursday, at Great Compline, and at Matins for Thursday of the fifth week, when it is read in its entirety (in this latter service, the entire life of St Mary of Egypt is also read).

There is no other sacred hymn which compares with this monumental work, which St Andrew wrote for his personal meditations. Nothing else has its extensive typology and mystical explanations of the scripture, from both the Old and New Testaments (OT and NT). One can almost

consider this hymn to be a "survey of the Old and New Testament". Its other distinguishing features are a spirit of mournful humility, hope in God, and complex and beautiful Trinitarian Doxologies and hymns to the Theotokos in each Ode.

The canon is a *dialog between St. Andrew and his soul*. The ongoing theme is an urgent exhortation to change one's life. St Andrew always mentions his own sinfulness placed in juxtaposition to God's mercy, and uses literally hundreds of references to good and bad examples from the OT and NT to "convince himself" to repent.

A canon is an ancient liturgical hymn, with a very strict format. It consists of a variable number of parts, each called an "ode". Most common canons have eight Odes, numbered from one to nine, with Ode 2 being omitted. The most

penitential canons have all nine odes. Some canons have only three Odes, such as many of the canons in the “Triodion” (which means “3 Odes”).

In any case, all Odes have the same basic format. An “**Irmos**” begins each Ode. This is generally sung, and each Irmos has a reference to one of the **nine biblical canticles**, which are selections from the OT and NT, which can be found in an appendix in any complete liturgical Psalter (book of Psalms, arranged for reading in the services). A variable number of “**troparia**” follow, which are short hymns about the subject of the canon. After each troparion a “**refrain**” is chanted. At the end of each Ode, another hymn, called the “**Katavasia**”, either the Irmos previously sung, or one like it is sung.

The troparia of the Great Canon in all its twelve Odes are usually chanted by the priest in the center of the church, with the choir singing the Irmos and Katavasia. There are varying traditions about bows and prostrations. Some prostrate and some make the sign of the cross and bow three times after the Irmos and each troparion.

General Themes of the Great Canon.

How we should think about ourselves

Where shall I begin to lament the deeds of my wretched life? What first-fruit shall I offer, O Christ, for my present lamentation? But in Thy compassion grant me release from my falls (Monday:1.1).

Desire to change—dialogue with the soul

Come, wretched soul, with your flesh, confess to the Creator of all. In the future refrain from you former brutishness, and offer to God tears of

repentance (Monday:1.2).

Recognizing Reality

The end is drawing near, my soul, is drawing near! But you neither care nor prepare. The time is growing short. Rise! The Judge is at the very doors. Like a dream, like a flower, the time of this life passes. Why do we bustle about in vain? (Monday:4.2)

How to pray - Laments and supplications to God

Thou art the Good Shepherd; seek me, Thy lamb, and neglect no me who have gone astray. (Monday:3.5).

OT and NT examples of righteousness and unrighteousness, for the purpose of emulation or avoidance.

Do not be a pillar of salt, my soul, by turning back; but let the example of the Sodomites frighten you, and take refuge up in Zoar. (Genesis 19:26) (Thursday: Ode 3:5)

I have reviewed all the people of the Old Testament as examples for you, my soul. Imitate the God-loving deeds of the righteous and shun the sins of the wicked (Tuesday: Ode 8)

The Most Important Thing To Know About The Great Canon

The Great Canon was written by a holy man to teach himself the right way to live. We cannot benefit from it unless we make it a priority to stand in prayer, in the church, and listen to it, with a great desire and expectation for God’s grace to teach us and heal us. Our theology is first and foremost—experienced and prayed, and not only “studied”.

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SPIRITUAL VITAMINS FOR THE WEEK

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY

O Master, Teacher of wisdom, Bestower of virtue Who teaches and protects the poor, strengthen and enlighten my heart. O Word of the Father, let me not restrain my mouth from crying to You: “Have mercy on me, a transgressor, O Merciful Lord.” - *Kondak from the Sunday of Forgiveness*

CLEAN MONDAY

Our fasting must be of the spirit as well as the body. +St. Basil the Great asks: “What good is your fast, if you don’t eat meat but tear your neighbor apart in hatred?”

CLEAN TUESDAY

The Fathers of the Church tell us that
our whole being ought to be involved in the matter of fasting and abstaining.

“Let your **mind** abstain from evil thoughts;
let your **memory** fast from evil remembrances;
let your **tongue** abstain from lies, gossip, and every evil word;
let your **ears** fast from listening to evil jokes and songs, as well as gossip;
let your **hands** rest from the taking of another’s goods;
let your **feet** fast from carrying you on errands of sin.
Such is the true fast that awaits the Christian!”

CLEAN WEDNESDAY

“Adam, God’s first-formed man, transgressed: could He[God] not at once have brought death upon him? But see what the Lord does, in His great love towards man. He casts him out from Paradise, for because of sin he was unworthy to live there; but He puts him to dwell over against Paradise: that seeing whence he had fallen, and from what and into what a state he was brought down, he might afterwards be saved by repentance.” +St. Cyril of Jerusalem

CLEAN THURSDAY

“So long as the soul is in a state contrary to nature, running wild with the weeds and thorns of sensual pleasures, it is a dwelling place of grotesque beasts.” +Saint Theodoros

CLEAN FRIDAY

“For the most part people weigh well how much they give; but how much they seize they neglect to consider. They count, as it were, their wage, but refuse to consider their defaults. Let them hear therefore what is written, “He that has gathered wages has put them into a bag with holes” (Hag. 1:6).”
+St. Gregory the Great

CLEAN SATURDAY

“Nobody can become a Christian by being lazy. It needs work, lots of work.” - Elder Porphyrios

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PRAYER CORNER

Our Parish Prayer List for Special Intentions and Other Needs *

A Prayer For The Sick: O Christ, You alone are prompt to defend us; quickly visit Your suffering servant name. Through the prayers of the Theotokos, deliver him/her from sickness and bitter pain. Heal him/her so that he/she may sing to You and always praise You for You alone love us. Amen.

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For the Health of... Mildred, Anna Mae, Andrew, Julie, Jane, Eleanor D., Mark, Viola, Juliana, Fredrick, Katie, Kenneth, Michael, Roberta, Wendy, Gary, Barbara, Matthew, Patricia, Lino, Mary, Michael, Pañi Connie, Joseph, Anthony, Maria, David, Joshua, Eli, Samuel, Lucy, and everyone battling the flu ...*through the prayers of St. Nectarios the Wonderworker; St. Luke, the Surgeon; and St. Panteleimon, the Healer.*

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For the Special Intentions of... Bishop Gregory, Stephen, David, Joshua, Anastasia, Nicholas, Cassandra, Alexander, Nancy, Andrea, Jason, Tyrone, Sarah, John S., Ameer, Joshua, and Anthony and our Church Council, Curators, and Relocation Committee: Matthew, John, Timothy, Patricia, Theresa, Lawrence, Donald, Jane, Cynthia, Katherine, Eleanor, Kenneth, Gina, Robert, Jillian, Wendy, Olga, John, Melanie, Michael, John, Richard, John, Margaret, Sarah, Patricia, and for those working towards our Community Outreach, St. Cyril of the White Lake Food Pantry...*through the prayers of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker; St. John the Baptist; the Archangels Michael & Gabriel; and the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary.*

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Birthday Prayers for... John Petrovich (2/18), Theresa Sharpless (2/22), Father's nephew, Brian Verbanick, Jr (2/22), Fr Stephen Krivonak (2/23) ...*May God allow them to grow in peace and love all the days of their lives and may He grant them many and blessed years! Na Mnohaja I Blahaja L'ita!*

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For those preparing for Marriage... Nicole & Seminarian Nathaniel and Kristyn & Seminarian Vince ...*through the prayers of Sts. Adrian & Natalia & all Holy Martyrs.*

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For Expectant Mothers... Pañi Ileana, Pañi Svetlana, Ashley, Katie, Meredith, Brittany, Harmonie, Pañi Stacey, and Aimee ...*through the prayers of St Anna, the mother of the Virgin Mary, & St Irene Chrysovalantou.*

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For the soul of the newly departed...

...*May the Lord God grant them blessed repose where there is no pain sorrow or mourning. Eternal Memory!*

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* This is to be used for the special intentions of our brothers and sisters and can be inserted as a prayer itself into our daily prayers. Please let Fr. Dave know if you would wish to make additions or subtractions (in the case of answered prayers) to our Parish List. The words of the Gospel are true: **it is good to pray for one another**. Let this be a place where we lay out our concerns and beg the help of our brothers & sisters in Christ. This prayer list is NOT limited to Orthodox Christians.

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DEVOTIONAL PRAYERS FOR THE GREAT FAST:

The Prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian

in the Ruthenian tradition as found in St. Peter Mogila's 1639 Liturgikon (Sluzhebnik)

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. + [Prostration]
But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love. + [Prostration]
Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins, and not judge my brother, for blessed are You forever and ever. Amen. + [Prostration]

The following triplet is recited 4 times (making a total of 12 bows):

O God, be merciful to me, a sinner. [bow]

O God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me. [bow]

O Lord, forgive me, for my sins are many. [bow]

Then the prayer again with only one prostration:

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust for power, and vain talking. But give to me, Your servant, the spirit of purity, humility, patience, and love. Yes, Lord and King, grant me to see my own sins, and not judge my brother, for blessed are You forever and ever. Amen. + [Prostration]



A Prayer inspired by Psalm 50

by Archimandrite Laurence Mancuso

You forgive our sinfulness over and over, Lord, washing away attitudes and actions You cannot possibly approve. We beseech you: Let Your tender mercies draw us away from all that is offensive to You. Draw us ever closer to Yourself and enable us to share in Your spirit of holiness. After all, Lord, You are always merciful, eternally tender and compassionate, and ever ready to receive us back into Your good graces. Let us not abuse Your goodness, then, but help us to change the way we live. So that ever filled with health of soul and body, we may confidently glorify Your wondrous and blessed name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.