

ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

10383 Albion Rd, North Royalton, OH

March 17, 2024

Sunday of Forgiveness

His Eminence Metropolitan SABA

Archbishop of New York and Antiochian Metropolitan of all North America

His Grace Bishop ANTHONY

Auxiliary Bishop of the Antiochian Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest

V. Rev. Father Andrew Harmon

Rev. Deacon Macarius Tolbert • Rev. Deacon Basil Vazquez

Sub-Deacon Fred N. Bourjaily • Sub-Deacon Samuel Harmon

Sub-Deacon Mark Katzbach • Sub-Deacon Richard Sahley

Sub-Deacon George Simon • Sub-Deacon Samuel Snyder

Reader Anthony Harmon

Church contacts:

Hall rentals: Gail Malaniak [440-552-4586](tel:440-552-4586)

Coffee hour: Electra Floasiu [216-671-0743](tel:216-671-0743)

Kitchen use: Fred Bourjaily [216-219-4656](tel:216-219-4656)

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Email: fatherharmon@outlook.com

Website: stmattroyalton.org

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 33183, North Royalton, OH 44133-3183

Saturday Vespers 5:00 PM

Saturday Confessions 5:30 PM

Sunday Confessions during Matins

Sunday Matins 8:50 AM

Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM

Sunday School 11:15 AM

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS! We are glad to have you praying with us. *The reception of the Sacrament of Holy Communion* is limited to members of the Orthodox Church who are in good sacramental standing & have made proper preparation to receive. All are welcome to receive the blessed antidoron bread at the end of the service.

THE HOLY BREAD OF OBLATION is offered by Gloria Zabala for the health & salvation of her husband, Leonard, on his birthday, and in beloved memory of her mother, Mary (20 years), and her father, Nikolai (50 years); and in beloved memory of Leonard's parents, Josephine & Nicholas; and is offered by David & Rudylin Glaser for the health & salvation of David's grandmother, Pauline, on her 107th birthday; and is offered by Deacon Basil & Joanne for the health & salvation of their granddaughter, Gabriella, on her birthday; and is offered by Maria Simescu for the health & salvation of her brothers Mihael & Ioan; and is offered by St. Matthew parish in beloved memory of Metropolitan PHILIP (10 years).

During today's liturgy we will pray for the health & safety of:

Justin Mosier	Iliana Radivoj	Mary Violanti	Elias Karam
Tony Burhen	James Padzerski	Veronica & child	Tony Mlakar
Lucy Kinkaid	Mary Malaniak	Father Basil Caldaroni	Theodore Bunevich
Marc Balke	Julie Dunn	Charles & Judy Burhen	Judy Yanik
Christopher Samuel	Ed Haddad	Constantine & Maria Kornea	Ann Ghianni
Peter George	Michael Francu	Deacon Macarius Tolbert	Eric Ghianni
Pauline Hanna	Jean Fadil	Christopher Bokjanc	Matt Davenport
Frank Popovich	Victoria Thorp	Christine Simon	Gina DeFilippo
Issa Zaboura	Paraschiva Blaz	Corrine George	Christine Maharg
Argie Katsaros	Dolores Kaleal	Danielle	Nancy Brown
Nancy Yanik	Josephine Katzbach	Joseph Hollis	
Jerry Morriston	Father John Henry	Alice Marantides	

And for the newly departed servants of God: Teodor Stroie (Father-in-law of Fr. Petru at Buna Vestire Church), Patriarch Neofit of Bulgaria, Ambrose, Bishop Antonije, Bishop Hierotheos, George Tabanji, Mark Farage (brother of Chris Farage), Faye Farris, Bud Linder, Adrianne Andrews (sister of Jean Fadil & Elle Parker)

EPISTLE LESSON: Romans 13:11- 14:4

WOMEN'S MONTH EPISTLE READER: Gloria Zabala

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 6: 14-21 **HOMILY:** "Forgiveness: St. Patrick's Example"

WOMEN'S MONTH USHERS: Louise Bouhasin & Lisa Bowden

ALTAR BOY TEAM 1---Caleb Blazek, captain; Christos Allen, Cosby Hunter, Phillip Roach

MARCH IS WOMEN'S MONTH IN OUR ANTIOCHIAN ARCHDIOCESE. Women from our parish will be reading the epistle lesson and serving as ushers each Sunday.

THE 10 YEAR MEMORIAL SERVICE will be served at the end of liturgy for Metropolitan PHILIP
A SPECIAL OFFERING will be received in front at the end of the liturgy today-----it is for a needy family in Ukraine. Details elsewhere in bulletin.....

PLEASE STAY FOR COFFEETIME RIGHT AFTER THE LITURGY!

Thank you, Florentina Popa, for hosting today!

SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES AFTER COMMUNION---for ages 3- 19

PARENTS---PLEASE HAVE YOUR CHILDREN ATTEND TODAY!

DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 2024

TONE 8 / EOTHINON 8; SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS (CHEESE FARE)

Venerable Alexios the 'Man of God'; Patrick, bishop of Armagh and enlightener of Ireland

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE EIGHT (p. 15)

From the heights Thou didst descend, O compassionate One, and Thou didst submit to the three-day burial, that Thou might deliver us from passion; Thou art our life and our Resurrection, O Lord, glory to Thee.

APOLYTIKION OF ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST IN TONE THREE (p. 16)

With zeal you followed Christ the Master, Who in His goodness appeared to men on earth. He called you from the custom house, revealing you to be a chosen apostle, a trumpet proclaiming the Gospel to the whole world! Therefore, divinely eloquent Matthew, we honor your precious memory. Entreat the merciful God, that He may grant us remission of our sins.

KONTAKION FOR FORGIVENESS SUNDAY IN TONE SIX

O Thou Guide unto wisdom, Bestower of prudence, Instructor of the foolish, and Defender of the poor: establish and grant understanding unto my heart, O Master. Grant me speech, O Word of the Father; for behold, I shall not keep my lips from crying unto Thee: Have mercy, O Merciful One, on me who have fallen.

THE EPISTLE (For Sunday of Forgiveness)

Make your vows unto the Lord and perform them.

God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. (13:11-14:4)

Brethren, now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in chambering and licentiousness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts. But as for the one who is weak in faith, receive him, but not for disputes over opinions. For one believes he may eat anything; but the weak person eats herbs. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to be the judge over the servant of a stranger? To his own master he either stands or falls; but he will be made to stand; for God is able to make him stand.

THE GOSPEL (For Sunday of Forgiveness)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (6:14-21)

The Lord said to His Disciples: If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. 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. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that 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. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

SPECIAL COLLECTION AT THE END OF LITURGY TODAY: Alexander Melkumov and his wife and 2 daughters are in dire distress in Ukraine and we are helping them today with this free-will offering. They live near Kiev and their home was destroyed by a bomb in the current war. What caused even more financial destitution was that Alexander's business was soon shut down as well. He is a producer of items used in Orthodox worship, but his business has been shut down by the government because he is part of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church instead of the new schismatic church supported by the government. If you can help this family---thank you very much and God bless you!

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS:

Today-regular classes **Mar 24-** regular classes* All creative festival projects are due on March 24!*
Mar 31- choir

UPCOMING SERVICES

OUR WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT:

FORGIVENESS VESPERS FOR EVE OF LENT---TONIGHT, 6 p.m. Preceded by meatless potluck meal at 5. At this service we ask God's forgiveness and also forgiveness from each other as the Great Fast begins.

MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, MARCH 18TH, 19TH, 21ST----6:30 p.m.. Great Compline with the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20—6:30 p.m. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy. Followed by potluck Lenten meal.

FRIDAY, MARCH 22—AKATHIST FOR THE THEOTOKOS—7 p.m. Preceded by potluck Lenten meal at 6. Followed by Saints Alive! class (taught by a layperson), at 8 p.m. **TEACHER**—Ginger DeFilippo. **SAINT**—St. Matrona of Moscow

SATURDAY, MARCH 23----Vespers, 5 p.m., as usual.

SUN, MAR 24- 8:50am *Matins*, 10am *Divine Liturgy*; The Holy Bread of Oblation will be offered by Anthony & Judy Yanik in memory of their son, Michael; and will be offered by the Blazeks for their son, Paul, on his 22nd birthday; and by Marcella Simescu for her husband Daniel's birthday, for her son Cristian, & for her grandchildren Zaharia, Emma, & Brian. Also, the Trisagion Memorial Service will be offered by Anthony & Judy Yanik in memory of their son, Michael.

SUNDAY, MARCH 24TH--SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY PAN-ORTHODOX EVENING VESPERS--4 p.m., at St. Theodosius Cathedral, 733 Starkweather, Cleveland.

ANNUNCIATION DAY IS MONDAY, MARCH 25---9 months before Christmas we celebrate the Virgin Conception of God the Son in the womb of the Holy Theotokos! Evening Divine Liturgy, 6pm (please note different than usual evening service time). Followed by potluck celebration feast in hall. Because of the great joy of this holy day, the strict Lenten Fast is relaxed—fish, wine, and oil are fine this day.

THE GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE

The Great Compline of St. Andrew of Crete is a penitential canon of hymns written in the 600's A.D. by St. Andrew, bishop of the island of Crete. It is served in the first week of Lent to assist us in our repentance as we begin this season of spiritual struggle and growth. The service is broken down in various ways in various parishes. We will do it in 3 sections (1 per night) in conjunction with the service of Great Compline at 6:30pm on Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday, March 18, 20, & 21, in the first week of Lent. Then the service is done with all 3 sections in it later in Lent in April. In March, Great Compline without the Great Canon will be done at 6:30pm on Tuesday the 26th.

THE PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY

Canon law does not permit celebration of the liturgy on weekdays in Lent due those days being so solemn and the liturgy being so joyful. However, due to increased spiritual struggle in Lent, Holy Communion is more needed than usual! Therefore, our Orthodox Tradition allows the receiving of Communion from the reserved host from the Sunday before. This beautiful and ornate service can be held on Wednesdays and Fridays.

The most common Antiochian practice is to have it on Wednesdays only due to the Friday Akathist services. We will be having at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. In order to receive Holy Communion, the minimal preparation is to fast after a light Lenten lunch if one is not able to fast from after breakfast or all day.

After each of these services, there will be a strictly Lenten potluck meal.

THE AKATHIST SERVICE FOR THE HOLY THEOTOKOS

The Little Compline with the Akathist Hymn originated in Constantinople in the 600's A.D. The city was besieged by the non-Christian Avar barbarians. The people put their hope in the Protectoress of the city, St. Mary. Through her prayers to God, the city was saved. The Akathist hymn of thanks to God and the Holy Virgin was written and the people gathered to sing it. It was customary, as a sign of joy, to stand for the whole service---“akathist” is Greek for “not sitting”. Antiochian practice is to have it on the first five Friday nights of Lent. St. Matthew's will have it at 7 p.m. those 5 evenings. It will be preceded by a Lenten community potluck meal at 6. And after the service at 8, we will have our Saints Alive! classes in the hall.

LENTEN CONFESSIONS

All Orthodox Christians should go to the Sacrament of Confession during Lent or Holy Week. Confessions at St. Matthew are held at 5:45 p.m. most Saturdays (after 5 p.m. Vespers); during part of the 8:50 Matins service on Sundays; and sometimes (not always) before or after other worship services. And it is fine to make an appointment to come for Confession at other times. If you have questions about the sacrament, just contact Father Andrew.....

LENTEN SAINTS ALIVE! CLASSES As we have for many years, we will again have layperson-led brief classes on a different Saint each week. The classes will be in hall on Friday evenings at 8 p.m. after the 7 p.m. Akathist service. If you can lead one, please let Father Andrew know. We are hoping for some “rookie” presenters, so they will have the priority—but if you are a “veteran” presenter and are willing to do it again, please let Father Andrew know because if not enough rookies, then veterans may be called upon! The teacher picks the Saint and gives information about his or her life....and we have some time for questions & answers. Contact Father Andrew for more info.

LENTEN PSALTER GROUP Begins Mar 18. If you wish to participate, it involves reading one Kathisma from the book of Psalms every day from Mar 18 through Apr 26. You read in your own home at whatever time of the day works for you. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Kh. Bonnie at bonniewharmon@gmail.com or text (216)258-4837.

MEETINGS

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY—Mar meeting already held, Apr date to be announced. Meets one Sat a month, 6pm at the church. Studying the Gospel of St. Mark. For more info, contact: Sbdcn Samuel Harmon, 216-598-9230, samuelharmon15@gmail.com or Colton Bose, 440-567-6101

WEST BIBLE STUDY---Mar meeting already held. Apr meeting date to be announced. Meets at the church one Sat a month at 6pm (after 5pm Vespers). We are studying the book of Revelation.

SOUTH BIBLE STUDY--- *Will not meet during Lent.. They will resume meeting on May 21.*

WOMEN’S PRAYER GROUP— Tues, Mar 19, 10:30am. Meets monthly at Tara Reidy’s (274 Elmwood, Berea). For info, call Sandy Tolbert, [440-773-9162](tel:440-773-9162).

HOMESCHOOL ENRICHMENT GROUP--- Meets at the church on Fridays from 9:30-1:30 (Aug-May). Includes classes for preschoolers & social time for moms. Contact Olivia: oharmon15@gmail.com,

KNIT/CROCHET GROUP---Next date to be announced. Meets quarterly at the church. Do you knit or crochet? Would you like to learn? Please join us! Contact Lisa Bowden at [440-667-2767](tel:440-667-2767) for info.

CHESS CLUB--- Mar meeting already held, Apr date to be announced. Meets monthly at church.

TEEN CLUB MEETING—After liturgy on Sunday, March 31st.

MINISTRY NEWS

STREET DELIVERY TO THE HOMELESS----- Mar 24th is the next monthly day that parishioners deliver food, clothing, etc. to homeless in downtown Cleveland. The alms box to help fund the lunches is near main hall doors. **WHITE SOCKS NEEDED**—box is by main hall entry doors. Call Josie Katzbach, [440-668-9831](tel:440-668-9831), for information.

NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS- are being collected in the big wooden box under the coat rack. They will go to St. Herman's Homeless Shelter this month.

MEAL SERVING AT ST. HERMAN ORTHODOX HOMELESS SHELTER TODAY is our next monthly date to serve a meal to the poor at St. Herman Orthodox Homeless Shelter in Cleveland. If you can help by providing food, cooking, or serving the meal, please contact Deacon Basil, 440-665-3591.

MARTHA MINISTRIES--- We are a group of parishioners who cook or deliver some freezer meals to families in time of need (new babies, recovering from illness/surgery, grieving a loss...). Can you help by cooking or delivering? Please see/email/call Erin Musarra: [440-799-0838](tel:440-799-0838) Erin.musarra@gmail.com.

ST. MATTHEW'S PRISON MINISTRY--This new ministry will be in conjunction with the national Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry. We will have a zoom meeting with their director, Mark Santana, after liturgy (12:30 p.m.) on Sunday, March 31. If you wish to get involved or just want more info for now, please attend! It is possible to help with prison ministry even without ever going inside a prison. For more info, contact our local prison ministry leader, Vincent Defilippo, 330-352-6678 vdefilippo@neo.rr.com

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

BREAD OBLATION SIGN-UP—Please use the chart in the hall (chart is on the right wall by the counter) to sign up for which Sundays you wish to offer the oblation for the liturgy. *If you are not sure how oblations work, just check with Father Andrew.*

HOSTING COFFEETIME AFTER SUNDAY LITURGY- *THE NEXT AVAILABLE DATE IS MAR 31-fasting food please.* If you can bring food for Mar 31 or another date please sign up on the chart to the left of the counter in the hall! Contact Electra Floasiu with questions, 216-671-0743.

VACUUMING VOLUNTEERS-Sign-up sheet is in the narthex to vacuum the nave after liturgy!

ANCIENT FAITH MEN'S RETREAT- at Antiochian Village in Bolivar, PA Aug 22-25, 2024; Forge enduring connections with Orthodox brothers, strengthen your faith, be encouraged, and challenge yourself at the first ever Ancient Faith Men's Retreat. Join us for engaging speakers, daily services, and fellowship with like-minded Orthodox men! Get more info and register at: <https://store.ancientfaith.com/2024-ancient-faith-mens-retreat/>

ANNUAL PARISH RETREAT

Led by Fr. Josiah Trenham of St. Andrew Parish in
Riverside, California

Weekend of September 22

Please mark your calendars!

More details later

Antiochian Village Summer Camp

Cosby Hunter Camper Spotlight



What session will you attend?

Session 1

What is your favorite camp memory?

Partying at decades night

What is a favorite activity at Antiochian Village camp?

Evening program

What are you looking forward to about camp?

Seeing old friends and counselors



SAVE THE DATE

2024 DIOCESE OF TOLEDO PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE

All Saints and Holy Transfiguration invite you to join us for a few days of Christian fellowship, prayer, and fun for all ages. Whether you are new to the Diocese or have been attending PLCs for many years, we welcome each of you and your families.

We look forward to seeing you and getting to know you at the Toledo Diocese Parish Life Conference in Chicago-Land in June 2024!

DATE

June 26-29

Wednesday - Saturday

LOCATION

Chicago Marriott Oak Brook

1401 W 22nd St, Oak Brook, IL 60523



IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Adopt a Camper

Here's how:

- CHOOSE A CAMPER YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR. (SEE KENDRA HUNTER OR GAIL MALANIAK FOR A LIST OF CAMPERS.)
- COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW AND TURN IT IN TO THE DONATION BOX WITH YOUR CHECK, IN AN ENVELOPE.

When:

- FROM NOW UNTIL APRIL 15, 2024.

Cost:

- TUITION IS \$1,100 BUT ANY AMOUNT TOWARDS THAT IS APPRECIATED.
- CHECKS SHOULD BE MADE OUT TO "ST. MATTHEW CHURCH" WITH "CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND" IN THE MEMO.

ON A RECENT SURVEY DONE BY OUR ARCHDIOCESE, ANTIOCHIAN VILLAGE CAMP WAS FOUND TO BE THE LARGEST FACTOR THAT IMPACTED THE FAITH OF OUR YOUTH.

Thank you for your generosity!

.....

• CAMPER'S NAME: _____

• AMOUNT: _____

• SPONSOR'S NAME: _____

• DO YOU WISH TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS? _____



GREATER CLEVELAND COUNCIL OF
Orthodox Clergy



**MARCH 24, 2024
@ FOUR O'CLOCK
SAINT THEODOSIUS**

**GREAT VESPERS FOR
ANNUNCIATION ON THE
SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY**

CHIEF CELEBRANT & HOMILIST

Metropolitan Nicolae
of the Romanian Orthodox
Metropolia of the Americas

EVERYONE IS WELCOME

All are Encouraged
to bring Holy Icons & kids will
carry them during the
procession

Join us at Saint Theodosius Cathedral
for Great Vespers & a Reception to Follow
733 Starkweather Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44113

Theotokos of Vladimir



**EASTERN ORTHODOX WOMEN'S GUILD
OF GREATER CLEVELAND
Unity Through Participation**

Saturday, March 23, 2024

10:00 A.M.

Memorial Service for Deceased EOWG Members

St. Theodosius Cathedral

**733 Starkweather Ave
Cleveland, OH 44113**

Program following Memorial Service

- **Lenten Refreshments**
- **Presentation by Father Ján Čižmár**
- Mini retreat explaining the significance of Memorial Saturday, why we have a memorial service and why we pray for the departed



ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN WOMEN PRESENTS

ANNUAL LENTEN RETREAT

SATURDAY APRIL 20TH

9:30AM – 3PM

ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH

755 S. CLEVELAND AVE.

MOGADORE, OH 44260



FR. BARNABAS POWELL

AUTHOR AND SPEAKER

**“BE WATCHFUL – BE SOBER,
ST. PAUL’S WISDOM FOR
SPIRITUAL MATURITY”**

Fr. Barnabas Powell was born and raised in Atlanta, GA. His journey to Orthodoxy came as a result of many years searching for a “lifestyle” that would be truly Christian. After years in Evangelical Protestant ministry and serving in Christian media, both radio and television, he launched Faith Encouraged Ministries to use what he learned in sharing faith through media for the Orthodox Faith. Fr. Barnabas is an author, pastor, podcaster, and teacher committed to offering a credible witness of the timeless Orthodox faith for this culture.

**\$20 TICKETS INCLUDE CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST,
MORNING SESSION, LENTEN LUNCH, AND AFTERNOON
SESSION**

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO OCW AND REMIT TO:
SUSAN EVANOFF**

404 19TH STREET NE. MASSILLON, OHIO 44646

RSVP BY FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2024

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:
SANDY GRAHAM 330-988-8107 OR NANCY STUDEBAKER
330-655-9638**

Hall Use Calendar:

(The hall and kitchen will be unavailable on the shaded days)

IF YOU ARE GOING TO USE THE HALL OR KITCHEN for any purpose...
you must first contact a Hall Committee member to make sure it is still available.

Electra Floasiu [216-671-0743](tel:216-671-0743) **Gail Malaniak** [440-552-4586](tel:440-552-4586)

March 2024				
		Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Friday	1	Homeschool 9-2		Chili cook off 5-9
Saturday	2			
Sunday	3			
Monday	4			
Tuesday	5	Orthodox Clergy meeting 10-1		
Wednesday	6			
Thursday	7			
Friday	8	Homeschool 9-2		
Saturday	9			
Sunday	10			
Monday	11			
Tuesday	12			
Wednesday	13			
Thursday	14			
Friday	15	Homeschool 9-2		
Saturday	16			
Sunday	17			
Monday	18			
Tuesday	19			
Wednesday	20			
Thursday	21			
Friday	22	Homeschool 9-2		
Saturday	23			
Sunday	24			
Monday	25			
Tuesday	26			
Wednesday	27			
Thursday	28			
Friday	29	Homeschool 9-2		
Saturday	30			
Sunday	31			

PASCHA THIS YEAR IS MAY 5TH

THE LENTEN FAST

Great Lent is a time to especially work on spiritual disciplines to help us grow in Christ. These disciplines include such things as extra worship services, beginning or strengthening the habit of daily prayer, Confession, more Bible reading, almsgiving, and fasting.

Fasting is a discipline meant to help us in several ways: learning self-denial, gaining self-control, helping us to focus more on God and less on food, allowing us to spend less on food and, thus, give more to the poor.

The Lenten fast involves both eating less and giving up certain types of food. Throughout Lent, we should eat less and avoid snacks, in addition to abstaining from some types of food.

Lent this year is from March 18 through April 26. During Lent, Orthodox give up meat and animal foods (such as eggs, dairy, & fish) plus wine and olive oil. Shellfish are eaten. On Annunciation Day, March 25, wine, oil, and fish are consumed. And wine and oil are used on all Saturdays and Sundays in Lent. During Holy Week, April 27- May 4, the fast is the same as in Lent itself except that wine, olive oil, and fish are used on Palm Sunday. Also, Holy & Great Friday and Holy & Great Saturday, May 3rd and 4th, are to be observed as especially strict fast days, with as little eating & drinking as possible.

As with all fasting, the Church's Lenten fasts allows for adjustments for children, pregnant mothers, nursing mothers, and those with health problems that require certain foods. Also, those who are new to fasting may need to begin with a less strict fast and then "tighten up" year by year---on the other hand some new folks do just fine with diving right in. We should always remember that unless we fast strictly enough to make it hard, it will be of little value to us. One should always feel free to speak to one's spiritual father about how to personally observe, & make the best spiritual use, of the Lenten fast.

The Bible and the Saints are clear that fasting is not a way to earn salvation, but is a tool to help us grow. We must guard against pride when we fast and concentrate most on fasting from sin---gossip, pride, lust, etc.

The prescribed Lenten Fast is sometimes called "the black fast" to distinguish it from less strict fasting. How strictly each person follows the recommended fast is not anyone else's business. We should only be concerned with our own fasting, not judge what others eat. ***A good rule of thumb: fast yourself as strictly as you can; and pay no attention to what anyone else eats.***

However, when we gather together at church during Lent at coffeetime and meals, we should all abide by the full Lenten fast.

ST. PATRICK THE ENLIGHTENER OF IRELAND

St. Patrick of Ireland, whom we commemorate today, is one of the greatest Orthodox missionaries in history. He was born in Britain (he wasn't Irish at all!) in 385 A.D. He was kidnapped by barbarian raiders and sold into slavery in Ireland, still a pagan nation. After 6 years, he escaped and went home to Britain. After some time he went to the European mainland for theological education. Then he was ordained priest and went back to Ireland to help the nation that had enslaved him. He spent the rest of his life (first as priest, later as bishop) converting the Irish people to Jesus Christ. He died peacefully on March 17, 461 A.D. Unfortunately, the Irish church followed Rome out of the Orthodox Faith in the Great Schism in 1054 A.D. Fortunately, Orthodoxy has returned to Ireland in modern times and we do now have parishes there again---which must make St. Patrick happy!