

February 11, 2024
Cheese-fare Sunday



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fighting the Good Fight with Faith

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! ~ Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na Viki!
Слава Иисусу Христу! Слава на вики!

Propers for this Sunday: Resurrectional Tone 4: pg. 141 and for Cheesefare: Pg. 218 - 219

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., FEB. 11
8:30 A.M.
CHEESEFARE SUNDAY, SUNDAY of FORGIVENESS
DIVINE LITURGY
+ **Mary Salamon**, offered by Butch & Judy Dzumba

MON., FEB. 12
CLEAN MONDAY, GREAT FAST BEGINS, Strict Fast

(At St. Mary: Wednesday, February 14, 6:00 PM, Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts)

FRI., FEB. 16
6:00 P.M.
FIRST FRIDAY of the GREAT FAST
LITURGY of the PRE-SANCTIFIED GIFTS

SUN., FEB. 18
8:30 A.M.
FIRST SUNDAY of the GREAT FAST, SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY
DIVINE LITURGY
+ **George & Catherine Oleksa**, offered by Mary Elizabeth Olack

In Forgiving we become like God

Nothing makes us so like God as our readiness to forgive the wicked and wrongdoer. ... Christ is seeking in every way possible to hinder our conflicts with one another. For since love is the root of all that is good, by removing from all quarters whatever mars it He brings us together and cements us to one another. For there is not one, not a single one, whether father or mother or friend, who loves us as much as the God who created us.

(St. John Chrysostom, Commentary on Matthew)

Happy Birthday Greetings:

None for the week

Wedding Anniversaries this Week:

None for the week

Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins

Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan

Josephine Maruhnich – **Beaver Elder Care** (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001)

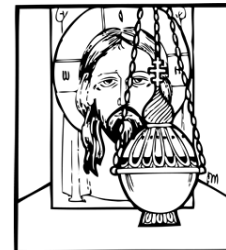
Betty Polas – **Apple Blossom Senior Living** (125 Apple Blossom Way, #307, Moon Twp., PA 15108)

Carol Huchko – **Concordia at Villa St. Joseph** (1040 State St, Baden, PA 15005)

Epistle Readers – February 11: Prudy Peya – February 18: Dan Pinchot

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – February 11: M. Bobanic – February 18: R. Mudron



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP
February 11 - 17, 2024
Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:
+ Monsignor Russell Duker
(In Loving Memory)

Offered By:
Butch & Judy Dzumba

First Saturday of the Great Fast: The Commemoration of the Miracle of Kollyva wrought by Saint Theodore the Recruit Julian the Apostate, knowing that the Christians purify themselves by fasting most of all during the first week of the Fast -- which is why we call it Clean Week -- planned to defile them especially at that time. He secretly commanded that during those days the markets be filled with foods that had been defiled with the blood of animals offered in sacrifice to idols. But by divine command the Martyr Theodore appeared during sleep to Eudoxius, who was Archbishop of Constantinople at the time. The Saint revealed to him the tyrant's plan, then told him to call the faithful together immediately on Monday morning and prevent them from purchasing those foods, but rather to make kollyva to supply their needs. The bishop asked what kollyva might be, and the Saint answered, "Kollyva is what we call boiled wheat in Euchaita." Thus, the purpose of the Apostate was brought to nought, and the pious people who were preserved undefiled for the whole of Clean Week, rendered thanks to the Martyr on this Saturday, and celebrated his commemoration with kollyva. These things took place in anno Domini 362. The Church keeps this commemoration each year to the glory of God and the honor of the Martyr.

We are taking donations throughout the year for our annual Flea Market. Any time you have items to donate, please leave them in the Center marked as for the Flea Market.

Regulations for the Great Fast 2024

The Ruthenian Metropolia prescribes strict abstinence (from meat and dairy products) on the First Monday of the Great Fast (Clean Monday, February 12) and on Good Friday (March 29), and abstinence from meat on all Wednesdays and Fridays. All faithful of the Archeparchy who receive the Eucharist are obliged to observe strict abstinence when prescribed.

The Three Aspects of the Fast

According to Byzantine tradition, the discipline of the fast consists of three parts:

Corporal (bodily) **fast**, by which we give up certain foods, drinks and amusements, in order to break the hold that such things may have over us.

Spiritual or internal fast, by which we seek to turn from any sin, wickedness or evil habits in our lives, so that we may come into God's presence well-prepared to celebrate our Lord's Resurrection and our redemption.

Spiritual renewal, by which we seek a greater practice of the virtues, a deeper life of prayer, repentance for our sins, and a greater conversion (metanoia) of heart, which manifests itself in good works. All of these are oriented to a deeper union with God – *theosis*.

The Lenten discipline is summarized in the **Prayer of Saint Ephrem the Syrian**.

Stay for Fellowship Hour - We extend a warm welcome to our parishioners, visitors, and friends. We are thankful that you have come to worship with us today. We invite you to join us following the Sunday Divine Liturgy for Fellowship Coffee and doughnuts today and every Sunday!



*We invite **EVERYONE** to **STAY** and join us.*



Happy Valentine's Day

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you" (John 13:34)

The Best Valentine is GOD

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

John 3:16



A Note from our Pastor

Dear Parishioners,

I'm excited to begin Lent with all of you, kicking it off this week with presanctified liturgies on Wednesday and Friday. I was very pleased to meet and even remember some names in our first Sunday together. I continue to work with Fr. Geoff into this week on paperwork and transitioning the parish. He's been great, truly helpful to me. Our clean Monday Fast will begin with our fast and abstinence. I've asked JoAnn, who kindly organizes our bulletin to include Archbishop William Skurla's rules for observance of clean Monday and Wednesdays and Fridays of Lent. We as a community are urged by him to observe a common sacrifice to God, when physically and morally able, to unite our inconveniences intentionally and in prayer with those of our Lord and Savior Jesus, who often commends fasting in the New Testament. Lent was a time of rigorous fasting at its invention by monks and possibly for monks as early as the first quarter of AD 300. Our records show that Lent was fully in swing in the Roman empire by AD 350. It started off as just fasting but then hymns were composed and readings and all the Lenten ceremonies we've come to enjoy, especially presanctified are fully in place by AD 700. The details, however, are difficult to find in writing until about one hundred years later.

Of course, the forty days of Lenten fasting and penance were, from the beginning, seen as imitating Jesus's fast of forty days and nights, where he simply followed his predecessors doing the same in the Old Testament. More important than fasting, though not eliminating it, is charity or love our neighbor in some concrete way. Ancient stories like the *Sayings of the Fathers of the Desert* recorded many times when monks became proud for eating meat but neglecting kindness and charity in the form of alms. The most famous stories are like those of St. Theophilus, archbishop of Alexandria, Egypt, who invited strict monks for supper. When Theophilus informed them that the stew they had been eating contained meat... they altogether put it down and declared: "We until now have had the rule since our religious profession not to eat meat." Theophilus complimented them and replied: "As for me, I have vowed not to let the sun ever go down without reconciling with my neighbor." They bowed before and acknowledged that his way was better. So many stories of great saints included willingness to eat meat, cheese, and even scandalize people about their diets when the more important principle was being threatened: Prioritize real people as the reasons why I do good actions; namely, so that they can directly benefit from my good action or intention for their own benefit. That is our challenge this Lent, to balance self-denial with a practice that makes our character warm and generous. Good luck!

Fr. Christiaan

Lenten Banks are now available in the Narthex

As we begin our Journey of the Great Fast

The Lord said, "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."



Every year in our parishes during this Holy Season of the Great Fast we are faced with the same dilemma... "What is the good of keeping a Fast for forty days without considering the meaning of it?" The answer is that there is no good in it at all. It is better not to keep the Fast than to do it thoughtlessly!

And what is the meaning of the Fast? It is to nurture the good that is in us and put to death that which is not, to increase in ourselves the likeness to God. "I aspire," writes St. Gregory of Nazianzus, "to be purified as gold in the fire." If that is our desire, then we must begin somewhere and there is no better place than with forgiveness. Do we wish to be purified? First we must lay aside all malice towards others. The connection in today's Gospel reading (Mt 6:14-21) between forgiveness and fasting is clear. Remember what we read today? The movement between the admonition to forgive so that we might be forgiven and the words, "When you fast..." is seamless and intentional. Immediately after the Lord teaches His disciples to pray, He teaches them how to fast. If we are going to pray we must be ready also to fast. That is why the Church calls us all on this eve of the Great Fast to be part of the Ritual of Forgiveness that centers not only on petitions about repentance and forgiveness, but on an action in which we can all take part. "Faith without works is dead," writes the holy apostle James. Forgiveness without action is not forgiveness.

On this Forgiveness Sunday as we stand before the journey of the Great Fast we are to remind ourselves that we have all sinned against one another whether by what we have done and even more by what we have left undone. The life of our parish family depends upon our willingness to obey the Lord and to lay down our lives for one another. So, we are invited to embrace forgiveness by giving and receiving it as we embark together on a great journey to the Cross and the Empty Tomb. This cannot be done in the privacy of our homes.

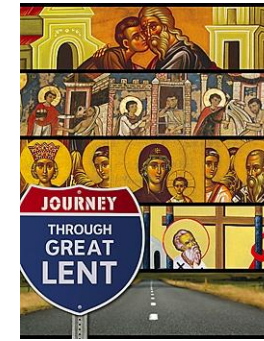
Next Sunday: First Sunday of the Great Fast

The First Sunday of the Great Fast is also called the Sunday of Orthodoxy in commemoration of the victory of orthodoxy-true faith in controversy over Holy Icons in the year 843. As part of this commemoration, please bring your family icons for a blessing of Icons, which will take place at the end of the Divine Liturgy. There are icons available for purchase in our Church store if you need any icons for your home. If you have any Icons, Crosses, and religious items you would like to have blessed, please place them on the table that will be set up in front of the Church.

"Do not neglect the Fast; it constitutes an imitation of Christ's way of life."

"Lent comes providentially to reawaken us, to shake us from our lethargy."

Advancing into the Great Fast/Lent



Why is this upcoming season called the "Great Fast-Lent?" In the Eastern Church this season is called "GREAT" Fast-Lent to distinguish it from the other three Lenten seasons: the Fast of the Nativity (Advent), the Fast of the Theotokos in August (Spasovka) and the Fast of the Apostles in June (Petrovka).

It is called "Great" because it is more intense than the other fasting periods. For Christians, the Great Fast-Lent is a season to be taken seriously. The time of repentance should affect all aspects of our life: our diet, our prayer life, our daily schedule, our daily attitude.

Regardless of how strictly we choose to fast, every Christian's eating habits should be remarkably different during this season. The message is to simplify our life-style, to get away from being creatures of habit, always "giving in" to our cravings, to consider those in our midst who have no choice but who need to fast on a constant basis due to poverty, etc.

Tips to all our faithful for this Lenten season:

Our Holy Church challenges us to be more than "Sunday Catholics"; to turn to prayer. Take the opportunity offered to us during the Lenten season of attending Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts. Sometimes, we simply keep the Great Fast, if we do at all, by just adhering to the fasting regulations. This year plan to attend the Lenten services that we celebrate in our parish during this important season. Remember, if we just do the minimal requirements, then we will feel left unnourished.

Find a spiritually edifying book and undertake to read it during the Great Fast as a part of your Lenten struggle. Spiritual reading, which is something that we should do at all times of the year, is particularly important during the period of the Great Fast and is something which can deepen and broaden our spiritual lives. We have Lenten books and resources available in our Church Store and Church Library. As we prepare to enter the forty-day journey of the Great Fast-Lent let us make use of this golden opportunity to enrich ourselves!

What is True Fasting?

Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works.

- If you see a poor man, be moved to pity for him.
- If you see an enemy, be reconciled to him.
- If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him.

Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands and all the members of your bodies.

- Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice and greed.
- Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.
- Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful.
- Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip.
- Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism (slander, calumny, detraction).

For what good is it if we abstain from food, but bite and devour our brothers and sisters?"

(St. John Chrysostom)

ST. GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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Holy Protection Convent, 1000 Clinton St. 724-378-0238



Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, Louisa Hersh, David Klacik, Dan Pinchot

Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff - Grounds Keepers: Rich Mudron, Rob Dzumba, Francis Hersh

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation Before and after Liturgies, or by appointment

Holy Mysteries of Initiation Contact the pastor

Holy Mystery of Anointing Contact the pastor prior to surgery or in the event of illness

Holy Mystery of Marriage Contact the pastor six months prior to wedding

Pirohi Sales 2nd Friday of each month

St. George Ladies’ Guild & Men’s Club Everyone welcome to participate

Opportunities for StewardshipChurch and grounds cleaning and maintenance: Every Saturday,

Pirohi making: 2nd week of each month

If it is to be real, then we must embrace one another as brothers and sisters. We must look one another in the face and say, “Forgive me.”