

February 19, 2023
Cheesefare Sunday, Forgiveness Sunday



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fighting the Good Fight with Faith

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! - Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na Viki!

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

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., FEB. 19
8:30 A.M.
CHEESEFARE SUNDAY, FORGIVENESS SUNDAY
DIVINE LITURGY

+ Clara Duganich, offered by Butch & Judy Dzumba

4:00 P.M.
SUNDAY EVENING VESPERS for the GREAT FAST

MON., FEB. 20
CLEAN MONDAY, GREAT FAST BEGINS

(At St. Mary: Wednesday, February 22, 6:00 PM, Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts)

FRI., FEB. 24
6:00 P.M.
FIRST FRIDAY of the GREAT FAST
DIVINE LITURGY of the PRE-SANCTIFIED GIFTS

SUN., FEB. 26
8:30 A.M.
FIRST SUNDAY of the GREAT FAST, Sunday of Orthodoxy
DIVINE LITURGY

+ Michael Golovich, offered by Sr. Mary Virginia

(4:00 P.M. At St. Mary: Sunday Evening Vespers for the Great Fast)

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, the blessing of Icons will take place at the end of the Divine Liturgy. **Please bring your icons to be blessed and place them on the table that will be set up in the front of the Church.**

Happy Birthday Greetings:

February 22: Reaghan Cody

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, Mary Salamon

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)

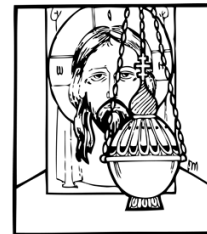
Epistle Readers – Feb. 19: Joanne Futato – Feb 26: Dan Pinchot

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – Feb. 19: R. Mudron – Feb. 26: F. Hersh

If you would like to be a Trioca Holder, please see one of them following Liturgy.

We could always use the help!



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

February 19 - 25, 2023

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

+ Mary Popovich

(In Loving Memory)

Offered By:

Daughters, Mary Ann & Diane

Open to me the doors of repentance, O Life-Giver! For my soul goes early to the temple of your holiness, driving on the temple of my body wholly polluted. But because you are compassionate, purify me by the tenderness of your mercy, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. For I have profaned my soul with shameful sins and consumed my whole life in laziness, but by thine intercessions purify me from all immorality.

The Post-Gospel Hymn of the Great Fast

Lenten Banks are now available in the Narthex

Regulations for the Great Fast 2023

The fasts of the liturgical year are to be kept in accordance with the Norms of Particular Law of the Byzantine Metropolitan Church sui iuris of Pittsburgh.

In the Great Fast, abstinence from meat, fish, dairy products, alcohol, and foods cooked in oil was prescribed for ALL days except days of mitigation. All Saturdays and Sundays, February 24, March 9, Wednesday to Friday of the Fifth Week, and the Prefestive Day and Otdanije (Post Feast) of the Annunciation were all mitigations for wine and oil. The Feast of the Annunciation (March 25) and Palm Sunday were general mitigations.

The Ruthenian Metropolia prescribes strict abstinence (from meat and dairy products) on the First Monday of the Great Fast (Clean Monday, February 20) and on Good Friday (April 7), 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**.

Is this the Face of Jesus?

See the Full size Shroud replica. Hear the history, the science. Experience the Passion of Jesus in a new way, presented by Shroud Talks. Sunday, March 5 at 2:00 P.M., Most Sacred Hear of Jesus Parish, St. Margaret Mary Church location, 1 Parish Place, Moon Township, PA 15108



A Note from Fr. Geoff

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the fasting seasons of the Church year, I find that it is sometimes helpful - in addition to our fasting regimen - to have something to spend time meditating on; some scripture, the lives of the saints, sayings of the Fathers, or some other edifying text to meditate on. This year, I intend to spend some increased time meditating on the **Beatitudes**, which we often sing on the Sundays of the Great Fast (as well as at Funeral Liturgies). The Beatitudes form the beginning of Christ's famous "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew 5.1-12. (They are found in another form in Luke 6.20-26.) In Matthew's telling, they are as follows:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when they revile you and persecute you, and utter all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.
Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

In a nutshell, the Beatitudes give us an image of what to expect the lives of Christ's followers to look like. Those who would be Christians will look like the Lord: poor in spirit, mourning, meek, seeking justice, merciful, pure of heart, making peace, and the like. (The Beatitudes can also be helpful when making an examination of conscience before the Sacrament of Confession.)

This Lent, consider picking a passage of Scripture to meditate on, letting the Scriptures speak to you and take root in your heart. For my part, I will be using the Beatitudes of Christ not only for my personal meditation. I will also use them for my homilies at the Presanctified Liturgies this year. (Wednesday evenings at St. Mary's; Friday evenings at St. George's.) Consider joining us for these beautiful services this year as we seek to make a good beginning of the Great Fast.

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Geoff

Eternal Memory

Our Church family offers prayerful condolences to the family of Venetia Valiga who fell asleep in the Lord on February 5. In blessed repose, grant O Lord, eternal rest to the soul of Your departed servant Venetia and remember her forever! *Vičnaja jej pamjat'!*

Sunday of Cheesefare, Forgiveness Sunday

“What is the treasure of our life? What do we value most?” Let us not answer this question flippantly, or with ease, but let us ask it seriously. The things we value most are those we tend to spend the most time with, and for. What we value most we tend to guard and keep secure. What we value most we tend to have on our mind and on our lips. What we value most we tend to invest our lives in.

A good test may be to consider what we talk about the most when we speak with others. A good test may be to consider what we look forward to most in our life each day, each week and each year.



The time of Great Lent, which begins this Sunday evening with the service of mutual forgiveness, offers us forty days to re-order our lives and make the things which we know are the most important—namely our relationship with the Lord—actually the most important. The time of Lent is a time in which we, with the grace of God, begin to focus our life on God and order all things in relationship to him.

And our relationship with the Lord is not a vague decision which we make. It is a practical reality that affects all aspects of our life; how we spend our time, what and how much we eat and when, where we go for entertainment, what we read, the types of friends we choose, etc. There is no aspect of our life which is hidden from the Lord, and there can be no aspect of our life which is not impacted by our relationship with him.

Let Us Begin the Fast With Joy!

The Sunday of Forgiveness is the last Sunday prior to the commencement of Great Lent. During the pre-Lenten period, the services of the Church include hymns from the Triodion, a liturgical book that contains the services from the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the tenth before Pascha (Easter), through Great and Holy Saturday. On the Sunday of Forgiveness focus is placed on the exile of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, an event that shows us how far we have fallen in sin and separated ourselves from God. At the onset of Great Lent and a period of intense fasting, this Sunday reminds us of our need for God's forgiveness and guides our hearts, minds, and spiritual efforts on returning to Him in repentance.

The Sunday of Forgiveness, the last of the preparatory Sundays before Great Lent, has two themes: it commemorates Adam's expulsion from Paradise, and it accentuates our

need for forgiveness. There are obvious reasons why these two things should be brought to our attention as we stand on the threshold of Great Lent. One of the primary images in the Triodion is that of the return to Paradise. Lent is a time when we weep with Adam and Eve before the closed gate of Eden, repenting with them for the sins that have deprived us of our free communion with God. But Lent is also a time when we are preparing to celebrate the saving event of Christ's death and rising, which has reopened Paradise to us once more (Luke 23:43). So sorrow for our exile in sin is tempered by hope of our re-entry into Paradise.

The second theme, that of forgiveness, is emphasized in the Gospel reading for this Sunday (Matthew 6:14-21) and in the special ceremony of mutual forgiveness at the end of the Vespers on Sunday evening. Before we enter the Lenten fast, we are reminded that there can be no true fast, no genuine repentance, no reconciliation with God, unless we are at the same time reconciled with one another. A fast without mutual love is the fast of demons. We do not travel the road of Lent as isolated individuals but as members of a family. Our asceticism and fasting should not separate us from others, but should link us to them with ever-stronger bonds.

The Sunday of Forgiveness also directs us to see that Great Lent is a journey of liberation from our enslavement to sin. The Gospel lesson sets the conditions for this liberation. **The first one is fasting**—the refusal to accept the desires and urges of our fallen nature as normal, the effort to free ourselves from the dictatorship of the flesh and matter over the spirit. To be effective, however, our fast must not be hypocritical, a “showing off.” We must “appear not unto men to fast but to our Father who is in secret”. **The second condition is forgiveness—“If you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you”.** The triumph of sin, the main sign of its rule over the world, is division, opposition, separation, hatred. Therefore, the first break through this fortress of sin is forgiveness—the return to unity, solidarity, love. To forgive is to put between me and my “enemy” the radiant forgiveness of God Himself. To forgive is to reject the hopeless “dead-ends” of human relations and to refer them to Christ. Forgiveness is truly a “breakthrough” of the Kingdom into this sinful and fallen world.

The Sunday of Forgiveness is also known as Cheesefare Sunday. This is the last day that dairy products can be eaten before the Lenten fast. The full fast begins the following day on Clean Monday, the first day of Great Lent. On the evening of the Sunday of Forgiveness the Church conducts the first service of Great Lent, the Vespers of Forgiveness, a service that directs us further on the path of repentance and helps us to acknowledge our need for forgiveness from God and to seek forgiveness from our brothers and sisters in Christ. This is the first time that the Lenten prayer of St. Ephraim accompanied by prostrations is read.

Orthodox Christians are encouraged to enter Great Lent in repentance and confession by attending these services, coming for the Sacrament of Confession, and dedicating themselves to worship, prayer, and fasting throughout the Lenten period. The first day of Lent, Clean Monday, signifies the beginning of a period of cleansing and purification of sins through repentance.

“If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you”

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Religious: Sr. Mary Virginia O' Carm

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



Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, Louisa Hersh, David Klacik 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."