

February 18, 2024
First Sunday of the Great Fast, Sunday of Orthodoxy



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 5: pg. 146 and for Sun. of Orthodoxy: Pg. 220 – 222
Typica: pp. 16-17, Beattitudes: pp. 23-24, St. Basil melodies: pg. 96

Divine Services for the Week:

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
FRI., FEB. 23 6:00 P.M.	SECOND FRIDAY of the GREAT FAST LITURGY of the PRE-SANCTIFIED GIFTS
SUN., FEB. 25 8:30 A.M.	SECOND SUNDAY of the GREAT FAST DIVINE LITURGY, Panachida + John Pinchot, offered by Ed & Isabel Maruhnich

Announcements - Saturday February 24th (according to the *Typikon* or rule book for celebrations) does not permit an All-Souls Saturday Divine Liturgy, since the day is replaced by the discovery of the relics of St. John the Baptist. Only a Panachida is allowed. Therefore, we will attach a Panachida for all the deceased at each parish at the 8:30 AM St. George Liturgy and at 11:00 AM Liturgy of St. Mary on Feb. 25

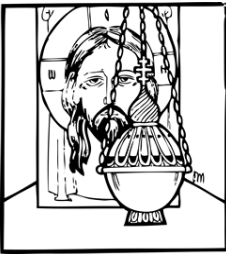
There will be NO liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at St. Mary on Wed., February 21 due to recarpeting of the church for the week. Presanctified will return 28 February (Wed), at 6 pm at St. Mary. Friday, February 23 at St. George will be as usual at 6:00 PM.

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
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)

Epistle Readers – February 18: Dan Pinchot – February 25: JoAnn Hersh
Ushers – Stand in as needed
Troica Holders – February 18: R. Mudron – February 25: F. Hersh



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

February 18 - 24, 2024

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

+ John Pinchot

(In Loving Memory)

Offered By:

Butch & Judy Dzumba

First Prayer of the Faithful at Presanctified

O God, great and worthy to be praised, Who through the life-giving death of Your Christ has transferred us from corruption to incorruption: Deliver all our senses from deadly passions, setting over them our inner being as a sure guide. Let our eyes be blind to every evil sight; let our ears be deaf to idle chatter; and let our tongue be cleansed of unbecoming speech. Purify our lips which praise You, O Lord. Make our hands abstain from evil deeds and do only those things which are pleasing in Your sight. By Your grace strengthen our bodies and our minds. For to You belongs all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and ever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

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.

St. Anthony the Great reminds us:
“Do not neglect the Fast; it constitutes an imitation of Christ’s way of life.”

PRAYER OF SAINT EPHREM

To be said daily during the Great Fast

This famous Lenten prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian summarizes our entire struggle during the forty day fast – that of turning from vice to virtue, sin to holiness, and self-love to love of God and neighbor. This powerful prayer is said every day of the Great Fast, except on Saturdays and Sundays. It should be part of our morning and evening prayers but may also be said at any other time throughout the day – especially in time of temptation.



**Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of
indifference, despair, lust for power, and idle chatter.**

(Prostration)

**Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity,
humility, patience, and love.**

(Prostration)

**Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my
brothers and sisters; for you are blessed forever and ever. Amen.**

(Prostration)

D	N	U	O	R	G	I	M	T	H	GALILEANS BLOOD	SINNERS	REPENT
I	R	I	G	U	S	S	A	N	S	PERISH	EIGHTEEN TOWER	SILLOAM
G	S	A	I	F	R	N	O	E	I	GUILTY	PARABLE	FIG
O	I	L	Y	B	E	A	L	P	R			THREE
T	T	F	L	E	N	E	I	A	E			
Y	H	O	T	S	N	L	S	R	P			
T	O	R	W	L	I	I	S	A	A			
D	T	E	E	E	S	L	V	B	R			
T	N	E	P	E	R	A	O	L	A			
E	N	E	E	T	H	G	I	E	B			

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.



A Note from Fr. Christiaan

Dear Parishioners,

We keep in prayer Mrs. Carol Huchko (Eternal Memory!), whose soul went to the Lord on February 10th and whom we buried on Friday, February 16th. She was a serving member of our parish council of St. George, along with her husband Ronald, who had been a president of the parish council, himself passing in 2003. I was pleased to celebrate my first funeral at our parish, St. George, which – during Lent – is done without a Divine Liturgy. A decree issued each Lent by our Archbishop William Skurla reminds us that the Byzantine tradition – recently restored throughout the United States – reserves the Eucharistic liturgy only for feast days of the highest order so that celebration and feasting take a back seat to sacrifice and fasting during this season.

I have also been so very pleased with how many have come to presanctified liturgy, which is a sacrifice at a time when most of us have just returned from work and would like to eat. Thank you for being present, it definitely heartens me that my going back and forth from both Latrobe and Pittsburgh allows many of you to pray and to celebrate Lent in a public way in our churches. I'll continue to make some mistakes and missteps, no doubt, as I attempt to maintain as possible the traditional observances and important events at our parishes. I am impressed by how friendly you've been whenever you've brought such information to my attention. My transition to our parishes has not been a great burden for me in what amount to be nearly two weeks now. I thank you for your continued patience as I attempt to figure out how make an efficient schedule, as there will likely be an adjustment period to figure this all out. My hope is that by finding a rhythm of life between all these campuses, I'll be able to report success to the archbishop so that – if he wishes – this might be a sustainable model of service for him to look to myself, not just to other possible candidate, to appoint as pastor of our parishes during my temporary administration during the interim.

I hope your fasting on Clean Monday was successful and simply remind those able to observe it; to remember the abstinence from meats on Wednesday and Friday during the whole of Lent. As we near the second week of Lent, I hope our new carpet at St. Mary's will prove to enhance our worship experience. We continue our marathon of Lent together this week, such that we ought to remember that slip ups or temporary forgetfulness of our resolutions and sacrifices are only a moment. We can renew our intention and commitment each hour and day to obtain whatever virtue or good habit we seek. Have a Blessed Lent!

Fr. Christiaan

Eternal Memory

In blessed repose, grant O Lord eternal rest to the soul of Your departed servant Carol and remember her forever! *Vičnaja jej pamjat'!*

Gospel Reflection

Trees! They are a big part of the imagery and experience of reading the Bible. In Genesis 2-3, Adam and Eve are given the opportunity to eat from the Tree of Life, but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, (Genesis 2:9) they were strictly prohibited from eating its fruit. Nevertheless, they eat from it, and at that very moment, they felt ashamed and hid. (Genesis 3: 6-7) It is interesting to point out that in verse 7 it says that they sewed fig leaves to cover themselves like aprons. Some biblical scholars say that since they used fig leaves, and considering this occurs immediately after they eat of the forbidden tree, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was indeed a fig tree.



The fig tree has always been prominent in the biblical narrative, as witnessed in Genesis, but also in the Gospel reading that we hear today, taken from St. John 3: 43-51. Here, Phillip introduced Nathanael, who was standing under a fig tree, to Jesus Christ. (St. John 1:45) Both of these men would eventually go on to be loyal apostles of Christ and give their lives as martyrs.

Nathanael was skeptical of Jesus and said to Phillip, “What good could come out of Nazareth?” (St. John 1:46) As Nathanael approached Jesus, Jesus made an exclusive statement about him: “Behold, an Israelite, in whom there is no deceit.” Jesus and Nathanael met face to face. In their first conversation, Jesus told Nathanael that he had seen him under the fig tree. Nathanael was impressed, to say the least because it was understood that the Messiah would have miraculous “giftings,” such as the ability to see super-naturally.

In the book of Genesis, Adam and Eve used the fig tree to cover up the shame of sin. In the Gospel of John, the fig tree was a place where Nathanael stood underneath as a starting point of his journey with Messiah Jesus. Both stand in stark contrast to each other.

As Christians either we can live a life of integrity, honesty, and good character or we can live with deceit, trickery, and dishonesty; the latter is represented by the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the former the fig tree that Nathanael stood under. Which tree are we working with? Adam and Eve represent dishonesty toward God. Nathanael represents honesty toward God. Are we like Adam and Eve or like Nathanael?

Repentance, Fasting, Prayer, Almsgiving

First Sunday of the Great Fast

We bow before your sacred image, O gracious Lord, and beg forgiveness for our offenses, O Christ our God.

Each of the Sundays of the Great Fast-Lent has its own special theme. In the course of Church history, almost each Lenten Sunday has obtained a second theme, a historical theme. Originally the Great Fast was the time for catechumens to prepare for baptism and entry into the Church. The Sunday spiritual themes were part of the early Christian catechesis.

Today, we arrive to the First Sunday of the Great Fast-Lent which is called in our Holy Church the Sunday of Orthodoxy. The historical theme for this Sunday is the final victory over the iconoclasts. What was Iconoclasm? Iconoclasm was a heresy of the eighth century which taught that the veneration or relative worship of holy images is unlawful. Around the year 726 A.D. Emperor Leo the Isaurian published an edict which led to the destruction of holy images and the persecution of their defenders.

In the year 787 A.D., the Seventh Ecumenical Council declared that “both the figure of the sacred and life giving Cross and also the venerable images-are to be place suitable in the holy churches of God...” The council stated further that the honor paid to them is only relative, that is, given for the sake of what they represent, not for the sake of images themselves, which are to receive veneration, not adoration. But in the year 814 A.D. iconoclasm broke out again through the instigation of the Emperor Leo the Armenian and his successors. This persecution lasted until the Empress Theodora became regent in the year 842 A.D. The final defeat of iconoclasm and the restoration of holy images to the churches took place on February 19th which in 842 A.D. happened to be the First Sunday of the Great Fast-Lent. This is why we still celebrate the victory of the true faith on this Sunday. The principal defenders of the teaching of the Church in this great struggle were St. John Damascene and St. Theodore the Studite.

As we celebrate this Sunday of “Restoration of Holy Images”, let us remember that during this Lenten journey we are called to recover within us the image of what it means to be an authentic human being, a genuine person created in the image and likeness of God. This season of Lent is the opportunity of repentance, recreation, and restoration of that image.



ST. GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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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, Dan Pinchot

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

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation Before Liturgies, or by appointment

Holy Mysteries of Initiation Contact the priest

Holy Mystery of Anointing Contact the priest 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

Lent stimulates us to let the Word of God penetrate our life and in this way to know the fundamental truth: who we are, where we come from, where we must go, what path we must take in life...