

FIRST SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST



Icon of the Restoration of Holy Images



February 22, 2015

TONE 4

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

THE FINDING OF THE RELICS OF THE HOLY MARTYRS AT THE EUGENE GATE

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 23 – MARCH 1

FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SOPHIE SKOP (ALL SERVICES ARE AT ST. JOHN THE BAPTIZER)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23

5:00 PM – VISITATION

6:30 PM – Parastas

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

9:30 AM – Pokhoron followed by internment at

Greenwood Memorial Park

4300 Imperial Ave.

San Diego, CA 92113

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25

6:30 PM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

9:30 AM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28 – 2ND ALL SOULS SATURDAY; OUR VENERABLE FATHER AND CONFESSOR PROCOPIUS
THE DECAPOLITE; (FEB 29) OUR VENERABLE FATHER AND CONFESSOR BASIL,
FELLOW FASTER OF THE HOLY PROCOPIUS

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy & Panakhyda + For all our beloved deceased

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22 – 2ND SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST; THE VENERABLE MARTYR EUDOKIA OF HELIOPOLIS

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

*If you are reading the bulletin during the Liturgy (including the homily),
please **stop** and be attentive – будьмо уважні!*

LENTEN MISSION

Fr. Pavlo Popov from St. Sophia Parish in Dallas will be giving a Lenten Mission for the San Diego area. The first talk will be Friday evening, March 20 in conjunction with the Presanctified Liturgy. On Saturday, March 21 will be a second talk in the morning followed by the Akathist service, a light meal and finally a third talk. This promises to be a very valuable experience for us all.

Please make every effort to attend!

The Bible in the Liturgy

Come join us as we begin a “Journey through the Liturgy” by examining the scriptural foundation of the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great. Beginning Wednesday, February 18th, following the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, enjoy a lenten meal and bible study.

ABOUT SAINT EPHREM'S PRAYER

The famous lenten prayer of Saint 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 Great Lent, 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.

МОЛИТВА СВ. ЄФРЕМА СИРІЙЦЯ

Господи і Владико життя Мого! Духа лінивства, недбайливости, властолюб'я і пустомовства віджени від мене. *(доземний поклін)*

Духа чистоти, покори, терпеливості й любови даруй мені, рабу твому [рабі Твоїй]. *(доземний поклін)*

Так, Господи, Царю! Дай мені бачити гріхи мої і неосуджувати брата чи сестру мою, бо Ти благословен єси на віки віків. Амінь. *(доземний поклін)*

Боже, милостивий будь мені грішному! *(поклон)*
Боже, очисти гріхи мої і помилуй мене! *(поклон)*
Без числа нагрішив я, Господи, прости Мені! *(поклон)*

Господи і Владико життя Мого! Духа лінивства, недбайливости, властолюб'я і пустомовства віджени від мене.

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PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM THE SYRIAN

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of indifference and discouragement, lust of power, and idle chatter. *(prostration)*

But give rather the spirit of wholeness of being, humble-mindedness, patience, and love to Your servant. *(prostration)*

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own errors and not to judge my brother or sister; For You are blessed unto ages of ages. Amen. *(prostration)*

God, be merciful to me a sinner! <i>(bow)</i>	} 4x
God, cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me! <i>(bow)</i>	
I have sinned without measure, forgive me O Lord! <i>(bow)</i>	

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of indifference and discouragement, lust of power, and idle chatter.

But give rather the spirit of wholeness of being, humble-mindedness, patience, and love to Your servant.

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own errors and not to judge my brother or sister; for You are blessed unto ages of ages. Amen. *(prostration)*

Lenten Services at

Holy Angels Byzantine Church

On Fridays, the Presanctified Liturgy is celebrated at 7:00 PM. Holy Angels is located at 2235 Galahad Road San Diego, CA 92123-3931

Choir Practice

Each Sunday, there will be choir practice to prepare for Lent and Pascha as well as to introduce new melodies for the Divine Liturgy. Practices will begin at approximately 11:40 and last for about 20 minutes. If you haven't sung with the choir, consider joining!



ABOUT THE SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

From the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese – goarch.org

Lent was in origin the time of final preparation for candidates for baptism at the Paschal Vigil, and this is reflected in the readings at the Liturgy, today and on all the Sundays of Lent. But that basic theme came to be subordinated to later themes, which dominated the hymnography of each Sunday. The dominant theme of this Sunday since 843 has been that of the victory of the icons. In that year the iconoclastic controversy, which had raged on and off since 726, was finally laid to rest, and icons and their veneration were restored on the first Sunday in Lent. Ever since, that Sunday been commemorated as the "Triumph of Orthodoxy."

The name of this Sunday reflects the great significance which icons possess for the Orthodox Church. They are not optional devotional extras, but an integral part of Orthodox faith and devotion. They are held to be a necessary consequence of Christian faith in the incarnation of the Word of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, in Jesus Christ. They have a sacramental character, making present to the believer the person or event depicted on them. So the interior of Orthodox churches is often covered with icons painted on walls and



domed roofs, and there is always an icon screen, or iconostasis, separating the sanctuary from the nave, often with several rows of icons. No Orthodox home is complete without an icon corner, where the family prays.

Icons are venerated by burning lamps and candles in front of them, by the use of incense and by kissing. But there is a clear doctrinal distinction between the veneration paid to icons and the worship due to God. The former is not only relative, it is in fact paid to the person represented by the icon. This distinction safeguards the veneration of icons from any charge of idolatry.

THE LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS

Adapted from an article by Very Rev. Thomas Hopko

The eucharistic Divine Liturgy is not celebrated in the Byzantine Church on lenten weekdays, since the full Divine Liturgy has a joyful character not in keeping with the somberness of the Great Fast. However, in order for the faithful to sustain their lenten effort by participation in Holy Communion, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served. The service is an ancient one in the Byzantine Church. We officially hear about it in the canons of the seventh century, which obviously indicates its development at a much earlier date.

On all days of the holy fast of Lent, except on the Sabbath, the Lord's Day, and the holy day of the Annunciation, the Liturgy of the Presanctified is to be served (Canon 52, Quinisext, 692).

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is an evening service. It is the solemn lenten Vespers with the administration of Holy Communion added to it. There is no consecration of the eucharistic gifts at the presanctified liturgy. Holy Communion is given from the eucharistic gifts sanctified on the previous Sunday at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, unless, of course, the feast of the Annunciation should intervene; hence its name of "presanctified."

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served on Wednesday and Friday evenings, although some churches may celebrate it only on one of these days. It comes in the evening after a day of spiritual preparation and total abstinence. The faithful who are unable to make the effort of total fasting because of weakness or work, however, normally eat a light lenten meal in the early morning.

During the psalms of Vespers, the presanctified gifts are prepared for communion. They are transferred from the altar table where they have been reserved since the Divine Liturgy, and are placed on the table of oblation. After the evening hymn, the Old Testament scriptures of Genesis and Proverbs

are read, between which the celebrant blesses the kneeling congregation with a lighted candle and the words: "The Light of Christ illumines all," indicating that all wisdom is given by Christ in the Church through the scriptures and sacraments. This blessing was originally directed primarily to the catechumens -- those preparing to be baptized on Easter -- who attended the service only to the time of the communion of the faithful.

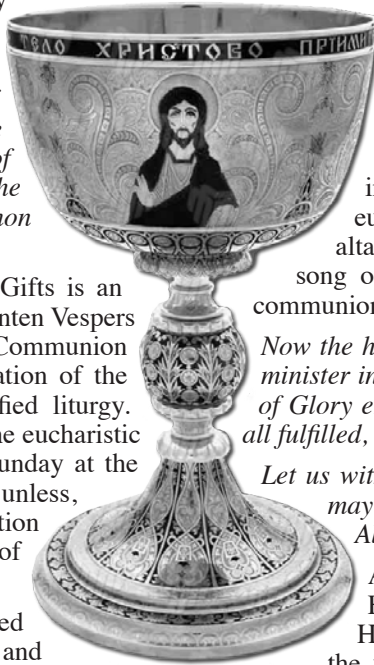
After the readings, the evening Psalm 141 is solemnly sung once again with the offering of incense. Then, after the litanies of intercession and those at which the catechumens were dismissed in former days, the presanctified eucharistic gifts are brought to the altar in a solemn, silent procession. The song of the entrance calls the faithful to communion.

Now the heavenly powers (i.e., the angels) do minister invisibly with us. For behold the King of Glory enters. Behold the mystical sacrifice, all fulfilled, is ushered in.

Let us with faith and love draw near that we may be partakers of everlasting life. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

After the litany and prayers, the Our Father is sung and the faithful receive Holy Communion to the chanting of the verse from Psalm 34: "O taste and see how good is the Lord. Alleluia." The post-communion hymns are sung and the faithful depart with a prayer to God who "has brought us to these all-holy days for the cleansing of carnal passions," that he will bless us "to fight the good fight, to accomplish the course of the fast, and to attain unto and to adore the holy resurrection" of Christ.

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is traditionally considered to be the work of the sixth-century pope, Saint Gregory of Rome. The present service, however, is obviously the inspired liturgical creation of Christian Byzantium.



HOMILY ON “FASTING” -- SEVEN QUESTIONS, SEVEN ANSWERS

His Grace, Michael ~ Orthodox Bishop of New York & the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

Question #1: Why do we fast?

Just as the children of Israel ate the “bread of affliction” (Deuteronomy 16:3) in preparation for the Passover, so Christians prepare themselves for the celebration of Pascha by observing the fast of Great Lent. Moses fasted on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:28), and Elijah on Mount Horeb (I Kings 19:8-12). But most importantly Our Lord fasted in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights (Matthew 4:1-2) and we imitate His example.

Question #2: But, did Jesus really teach fasting?

Yes, He instructs us, “When the Bridegroom is taken away, My disciples will fast” (Matthew 9:15). And He presumes His followers will fast, in His Sermon on the Mount when He teaches, “**When** you fast ...” not “**If** you fast”. He goes on to say, “Anoint your head and wash your face so that you do not appear to be fasting before men ... your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” (Matt. 6:16-18).

Question #3: When did fasting on certain days originate?

As early as the first century, in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, we read: “He (Christ) commanded us to fast on Wednesday and Friday.” The Saints explain, we fast “on Wednesday because on this day Our Lord was betrayed; and on Friday because on this day He suffered death for our salvation.”

Question #4: What is the purpose of fasting?

Although fasting has many health benefits, the primary aim of fasting is to make us conscious of our dependence on God. We voluntarily experience physical hunger in order to become aware of our true spiritual hunger. Another reason we fast is to subdue our passions and self-will. The Saints tell us there is no way we can control our urges for pleasure, money or power, if we cannot control our stomach. Fasting is the first step toward self-control. And our self-will is cut off by being obedient to the Church and her rules.

Question #5: Is fasting only a matter of diet?

No, it is moral as well as physical. True fasting is to be converted in heart and will; it is to return to God, to come home like the Prodigal Son to our Father’s

house. In the words of Saint John Chrysostom it means “abstinence not only from food but from sins.” He says, “The fast should be kept not only by the mouth but also by the eye, the ear, the feet, the hands and the other members of the body.” The eye must abstain from impure sights; the ear, from malicious gossip; the hands, from acts of injustice. Saint Basil says “it is useless to fast from food and yet indulge in cruel criticism and slander: You do not eat meat but devour your brother.” And although we may return to eating meat and cheese after Pascha comes, we should of course strive NOT to return to the sins from which we struggled to abstain during the course of the Fast. We give up rich foods for Lent ... We should give up gossip and laziness and greed, forever.

Question #6: What is the inner significance of fasting?

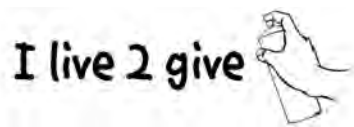
The deepest meaning of fasting is best summed up in the triad: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Fasting is valueless if not combined with prayer. In the Gospel, Our Lord tells us that the devil is cast out by “prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17:21); and Acts of the Apostles records the early Christians “fasted and prayed” (Acts 13: 3). The Great Fast is certainly a time to improve our prayer life, both personally at home, and by our participation in Lenten services at church.

Question #7: And what about almsgiving?

Prayer and fasting should be accompanied by almsgiving – by love for others expressed in practical form. The second century Shepherd of Hermas insists that the money saved from abstaining from rich foods during the fast should be given to the widow, the orphan, and the poor. Lent is certainly the time to increase our works of mercy for “the least of His brethren,” for those who are in need. So, as we begin Great Lent, let our hearts sing out this hymn of the Church: Let us set out with joy upon the season of the Fast, and prepare ourselves for spiritual combat. Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh; and as we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion. Rejoicing in the virtues of the Spirit, may we persevere with love.

LIVE TO GIVE... WHAT?

From Parish Publishing LLC



Waiting for a red light to turn green, my eye caught some bold graffiti on a corner telephone pole. “I live 2 give,” was the large black spray-painted message. “Well, that’s different,” I thought to myself. In fact, it struck me as a rather noble sentiment... at first. But then, the incongruity of a generous thought delivered by means of a careless defacing of property became apparent.

WHAT MAKES A GIFT A REAL GIFT?

I wondered what kinds of gifts does this person “live to give?” And what types of “gifts” are unwelcome ones... graffiti? Thoughtlessness? Cheap attention getters? What makes a gift a real gift? How about quality control! And before judging another, how about my own kind of gifts and my own quality control? Who sets my standard?

Because God gives first to you and to me, giving should be a response to God’s loving gifts. God’s gifts set the standard! My gifts cannot be on par with God’s gifts to me, by my gifts, large or small, can be my way of showing love and glorifying God. With the best of intentions, I should give my best, knowing that God’s grace will overcome my inadequacy. Hopefully, I, too, “can live 2 give,” but live to give my best to God and others!

Remorse is always a prisoner of the past; it does not shrug its shoulders and forget it. The past is present; the fault is ever before the eyes, but there is no way to undo it....

Repentance is also self-reproach, like the other states, but it is never sterile; it lays hold of the past by undoing it through penance. Both Judas and Peter denied Our Lord, but Judas repented unto himself, which was regret and remorse, and took his own life; Peter repented unto the Lord, which produced a new man

Abp. Fulton J. Sheen

On the Church

“The likeness of Thy Church, O Lord, is that woman who went behind and touched the hem of Thy garment, saying within herself: ‘If I do but touch His garment I shall be whole’ (Mt. 9:21). So the Church confesses her wounds, and desires to be healed.”

– St. Ambrose of Milan, 4th C

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On the Holy Images

In former times God, who is without form or body, could never be depicted. But now when God is seen in the flesh conversing with men, I make an image of the God whom I see. I do not worship matter; I worship the Creator of matter who became matter for my sake, who willed to take His abode in matter; who worked out my salvation through matter. Never will I cease honoring the matter which wrought my salvation! I honor it, but not as God. How could God be born out of things which have no existence in themselves? God's body is God because it is joined to His person by a union which shall never pass away. The divine nature remains the same; the flesh created in time is quickened by a reason endowed soul. Because of this I salute all remaining matter with reverence, because God has filled it with His grace and power. Through it my

salvation has come to me. Was not the thrice-happy and thrice blessed wood of the Cross matter? What of the life bearing rock, the holy and life-giving tomb, the fountain of our resurrection, was it not matter? Is not the ink in the most holy Gospel-book matter? Is not the life-giving altar made of matter? From it we receive the bread of life! Are not gold and silver matter? From them we make crosses, patens, chalices! And over and above all these things, is not the Body and Blood of our Lord matter? Either do away with the honor and veneration these things deserve, or accept the tradition of the Church and the veneration of images.

St. John of Damascus

**For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit
www.mytheosis.com**