

ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS



Icon of the Annunciation -- March 25th

March 25, 2012

ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS

FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

SUNDAY OF MARY OF EGYPT

Tone 8

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 26 – APRIL 1

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28 – *OUR VENERABLE FATHER HILARION THE NEW; OUR VENERABLE FATHER STEPHEN THE WONDERWORKER*

6:30 PM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts Special Intention

FRIDAY, MARCH 30 – *OUR VENERABLE FATHER JOHN CLIMACUS, AUTHOR OF “THE LADDER”*

9:30 AM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts Special Intention

SATURDAY, MARCH 31 – *LAZARUS SATURDAY; OUR VENERABLE FATHER HYPATIUS, BISHOP OF GANGARA*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

6:00 PM – Great Vespers with Lytia

SUNDAY, APRIL 1 – *FLOWERY SUNDAY; OUR VENERABLE MOTHER MARY OF EGYPT*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

Looking Ahead:

- ❖ April 1st – Flowery Sunday
- ❖ April 6th – Great and Holy Friday
- ❖ April 8th – The Glorious Feast of Pascha

Pancake Breakfast and Bake Sale

In two Sundays, April 1, will be our annual Pre-Pascha Pancake Brunch and Bake Sale. Paska will be available for sale. Please see Olena Bankston or Mary Kitt to place your order.

Cards for sale

Easter Cards, and various other greeting cards are available for sale in the church hall following each Divine Liturgy. See Mary Kitt to purchase.

Lenten Services at

Holy Angels Byzantine Church

During the Great Fast, Holy Angels celebrates a Morning Service with Communion each Wednesday at 10:00 AM. On Fridays, the Presanctified Liturgy is celebrated at 7:00 PM. Holy Angels is located at 2235 Galahad Road San Diego, CA 92123-3931

Sunday offering for March 18

Amount	Number
\$10.00	2
\$15.00	1
\$20.00	1
\$25.00	1
\$33.00	1 (loose)
\$40.00	2
\$50.00	4
\$75.00	1
\$100.00	1
\$200.00	2
\$300.00	1
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\$1268.00	

Parishioner Total: 1268.00

Average / parish household (39): \$32.51

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2125.00

Shortfall: **-\$857.00**



- God won't ask what kind of car you drove, he'll ask how many people you drove who didn't have transportation.
- God won't ask the square footage of your house, he'll ask how many people you welcomed into your home.
- God won't ask about the clothes you had in your closet, he'll ask how many you helped to clothe.
- God won't ask what your highest salary was, he'll ask if you compromised your character to obtain it.
- God won't ask what your job title was, he'll ask if you performed your job to the best of your ability.
- God won't ask how many friends you had, he'll ask how many people to whom you were a friend.
- God won't ask in what neighborhood you lived, he'll ask how you treated your neighbors.
- God won't ask about the color of your skin, he'll ask about the content of your character.
- God won't ask why it took you so long to seek salvation, he'll lovingly take you to your mansion in heaven.
- Бог не запитає тебе, яким автомобілем їздив, але скількох людей ти підвіз.
- Бог не запитає тебе, яку площу мав твій дім, а скількох подорожніх ти в ньому прийняв.
- Бог не запитає тебе, як ти одягався, а запитає, скількох людей ти зодягнув.
- Бог не запитає тебе скільки грошей ти заробляв, але яким способом.
- Бог не запитає тебе яку посаду ти займав, але чи ти працював чесно і сумлінно.
- Бог не запитає тебе, скільки ти мав приятелів, але для кого з них був приятелем ти.
- Бог не запитає тебе, в якому оточенні ти жив, але як ти ставився до своїх сусідів.
- Бог не запитає тебе, скільки разів ти говорив правду, але запитає скільки разів ти збрехав.
- Бог не запитає тебе, чому ти так довго зводив з покаянням і виправленням. Він з любов'ю запровадить тебе до твого небесного житла.

Watch your thoughts, they become words.
 Watch your words, they become actions.
 Watch your actions, they become habits.
 Watch your habits, they become your character.
 Watch your character, it becomes your destiny.

Пильнуй свої думки, вони стають словами.
 Пильнуй свої слова, вони стають діями.
 Пильнуй свої діла, вони стають звичками.
 Пильнуй свої звички, вони стають характером.
 Пильнуй свій характер, він стає долею.

Eternal Memory!



On March 17th, Mary Hojsan, the sister of Stephen Hojsan fell asleep in the Lord in New Jersey. She was buried in Tom's River, NJ this past Thursday. A local service is being planned and details will be announced. Please keep Mary as well as her family in your prayers.

Flower Collection

Special envelopes are available in the back of the church do help with the purchase of flowers for the Feast of Pascha.



WISDOM FROM THE FATHERS

"Every day you provide your bodies with good to keep them from failing. In the same way your good works should be the daily nourishment of your hearts. Your bodies are fed with food and your spirits with good works. You aren't to deny your soul, which is going to live forever, what you grant to your body, which is going to die."

St. Gregory the Great

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR GREAT AND HOLY WEEK – 2012

GREAT AND HOLY MONDAY – Великий Понеділок – April 2

9:30 AM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Great And Holy Tuesday – Великий Вівторок – April 3

6:30 PM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Great And Holy Wednesday – Велика Середа – April 4

9:30 AM – Mystery of Holy Anointing

6:30 PM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts with Mystery of Holy Anointing

Great And Holy Thursday – Великий Четвер – April 5

9:30 AM – Matins of Betrayal

6:30 PM – Vespers of the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil
(Holy Mystery of Repentance after the Service)

Great And Holy Friday – Велика П'ятниця – April 6

9:30 AM – Matins of the Passion (12 Gospels)

5:30 PM – 6:15 PM Holy Mystery of Repentance

6:30 PM – Vespers of the Passion and the Procession with the Shroud
(Holy Mystery of Repentance after the Service)

Great And Holy Saturday – Велика Субота – April 7

9:30 AM – Jerusalem Matins
(Holy Mystery of Repentance After the Service)

The Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ – Pascha – April 8

Воскресіння Господа Нашого Ісуса Христа – Пасха

7:30 AM – Paschal Matins

9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy of the Resurrection,
Blessing of Baskets after the Divine Liturgy on Pascha

7:00 PM – Agape Vespers

PLEASE NOTE: (1) One of the precepts of the Church which binds all faithful is that they receive the Holy Eucharist at least once a year during the Paschal Season. In order to receive worthily and not unto condemnation, the faithful are also required to avail themselves of the Holy Mystery of Repentance before receiving Holy Eucharist. The Holy Mystery of Repentance can be received before or after any of the services throughout Great and Holy Week or by appointment. (2) According to the particular law of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church, Great and Holy Friday is a day of strict fast. This means that no meat, meat products, dairy or alcohol may be consumed on this day (abstinence) and the size of the main meal of the day should be less than the other two meals combined (fasting). For those following the full prescriptions of the Lenten Triodion, these rules apply throughout Great and Holy Week. (3) The proper time for the Blessing of the Paschal Foods is immediately after the Divine Liturgy on Pascha. The foods are then taken home to be eaten by family and friends, thus extending the Feast of Pascha into our homes and the world. (4) For those who cannot participate in the Paschal Matins service, the Divine Liturgy will begin at approximately 9:00 am. (5) Parishioners are invited to return (and bring their family and friends) to the church later in the early evening on Pascha to continue in the great celebration with Agape Vespers.

CONFESSION AS A SOCIAL ACTION

Featured Article on Antiochian.org / By Jim Forest

It is impossible to imagine a healthy marriage or deep friendship without confession and forgiveness. If we have done something that damages a relationship, confession is essential to its restoration. For the sake of that bond, we confess what we've done, we apologize, and we promise not to do it again; then we do everything in our power to keep that promise.

In the context of religious life, confession is what safeguards and renews our relationship with God whenever it is damaged. Confession restores our communion with God and with each other.

It is never easy to admit to doing something we regret and are ashamed of, an act we attempted to keep secret or denied doing or tried to blame on someone else, perhaps arguing—to ourselves as much as to others—that it wasn't actually a sin at all, or wasn't nearly as bad as some people might claim. In the hard labor of growing up, one of the most agonizing tasks is becoming capable of saying, "I'm sorry."

Yet we are designed for confession. Secrets in general are hard to keep, but unconfessed sins not only never go away, but have a way of becoming heavier as time passes—the greater the sin, the heavier the burden. Confession is the only solution.

To understand confession in its sacramental sense, one first has to grapple with a few basic questions: Why is the Church involved in forgiving sins? Is priest-witnessed confession really needed? Why confess at all to any human being? In fact, why bother confessing to God, even without a human witness? If God is all-knowing, then He knows everything about me already. My sins are known before it even crosses my mind to confess them. Why bother telling God what He already knows?

Yes, truly God knows. My confession can never be as complete or revealing as God's knowledge of me and of all that needs repairing in my life.

A related question we need to consider has to do with our basic design as social beings. Why am I so willing to connect with others in every other area of life, yet not in this? Why is it that I look so hard for excuses, even for theological rationales, not to confess? Why do I try so hard to explain away my sins, until I've decided either that

they're not so bad, or even that they might be seen as acts of virtue? Why is it that I find it so easy to commit sins, yet am so reluctant, in the presence of another, to admit to having done so?

We are social beings. The individual as autonomous unit is a delusion. The Marlboro Man—the person without community, parents, spouse, or children—exists only on billboards. The individual is someone who has lost a sense of connection to others or attempts to exist in opposition to others—while the person exists in communion with other persons. At a conference of Orthodox Christians in France a few years ago, in a discussion of the problem of individualism, a theologian confessed, "When I am in my car, I am an individual, but when I get out, I am a person again."

We are social beings. The language we speak connects us to those around us. The food I eat was grown by others. The skills passed on to me have slowly been developed in the course of hundreds of generations. The air I breathe and the water I drink is not for my exclusive use, but has been in many bodies before mine. The place I live, the tools I use, and the paper I write on were made by many hands. I am not my own doctor or dentist or banker. To the extent that I disconnect myself from others, I am in danger. Alone, I die, and soon. To be in communion with others is life.

Because we are social beings, confession in church does not take the place of confession to those we have sinned against. An essential element of confession is doing all I can to set right what I did wrong. If I stole something, it must be returned or paid for. If I lied to anyone, I must tell that person the truth. If I was angry without good reason, I must apologize. I must seek forgiveness not only from God, but from those whom I have wronged or harmed.

We are also verbal beings. Words provide a way of communicating, not only with others, but even with ourselves. The fact that confession is witnessed forces me to put into words all those ways, minor and major, in which I live as if there were no God and no commandment to love. A thought that is concealed has great power over us.

Confessing sins, or even temptations, makes us better able to resist. The underlying principle is described in one of the collections of sayings of the Desert Fathers:



If impure thoughts trouble you, do not hide them, but tell them at once to your spiritual father and condemn them. The more a person conceals his thoughts, the more they multiply and gain strength. But an evil thought, when revealed, is immediately destroyed. If you hide things, they have great power over you, but if you could only speak of them before God, in the presence of another, then they will often wither away, and lose their power.

Confessing to anyone, even a stranger, renews rather than contracts my humanity, even if all I get in return for my confession is the well-worn remark, “Oh, that’s not so bad. After all, you’re only human.” But if I can confess to anyone anywhere, why confess in church in the presence of a priest?

It’s not a small question in societies in which the phrase “institutionalized religion” is so often used, the implicit message being that religious institutions necessarily undermine spiritual life.

Confession is a Christian ritual with a communal character. Confession in the church differs from confession in your living room in the same way that getting married in church differs from simply living together. The communal aspect of the event safeguards it, solidifies it, and calls everyone to account—those doing the ritual, and those witnessing it.

In the social structure of the Church, a huge network of local communities is held together in unity, each community helping the others and all sharing a common task, while each provides a specific place to recognize and bless the main events in life, from birth to burial. Confession is an essential part of that continuum. My confession is an act of reconnection with God and with all the people who depend on me and have been harmed by my failings, and from whom I have distanced myself through acts of non-communication. The community is represented by the person hearing my confession, an ordained priest delegated to serve as Christ’s witness, who provides guidance and wisdom that helps each penitent overcome attitudes and habits that take us off course, who declares forgiveness and restores us to communion. In this way our repentance is brought into the community that has been damaged by our sins—a private event in a public context.

“It’s a fact,” writes Fr. Thomas Hopko, rector of St. Vladimir’s Seminary, “that we cannot see the true ugliness and hideousness of our sins until we see them in the mind and heart of the other to whom we have confessed.”

A Communion-Centered Life

Attending the liturgy and receiving Communion on Sundays and principal feast days has always been at the heart of Christian life, the event that gives life a eucharistic dimension and center point.

But Communion—receiving Christ into ourselves—can never be routine, never something we deserve, no matter what the condition of our life may be. For example, Christ solemnly warns us against approaching the altar if we are in a state of enmity with anyone. He tells us, “Leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Matt 5:24). In one of the parables, He describes a person who is ejected from the wedding feast because he isn’t wearing a wedding garment. Tattered clothing is a metaphor for living a life that reduces conscience to rags (Matt ch. 22).

Receiving Christ in Communion during the liturgy is the keystone of living in communion—with God, with people, and with creation. Christ teaches us that love of God and love of neighbor sum up the Law. One way of describing a serious sin is to say it is any act which breaks our communion with God and with our neighbor.

It is for this reason that examination of conscience—if necessary, going to confession—is part of preparation for Communion. This is an ongoing process of trying to see my life and actions with clarity and honesty—to look at myself, my choices, and my direction as known by God. The examination of conscience is an occasion to recall not only any serious sins committed since my last confession, but even the beginnings of sins.

Conscience is an inner faculty that guides us in making choices that align us with God’s will, and that accuses us when we break communion with God and with our neighbor. Conscience is a reflection of the divine image at the core of each person.

In *The Sacred Gift of Life*, Fr. John Breck points out that “the education of conscience is acquired in large measure through immersing ourselves in the ascetic tradition of the Church: its life of prayer, sacramental and liturgical celebration, and scripture study. The education of our conscience also depends upon our acquiring wisdom from those who are more advanced than we are in faith, love, and knowledge of God.”

Conscience is God’s whispering voice within us calling us to a way of life that reveals God’s presence and urges us to refuse actions that destroy community and communion.

ASK FATHER: 3 QUESTIONS / 3 ANSWERS

Q. How does Confession help prepare me to receive Holy Anointing and Holy Communion?

A. Each Sacrament in the Church has its own unique function in bringing about the healing and restoration of man, who, as we read in Genesis, was tricked by the serpent and became sick and subject to death having been infected with the poisonous venom of sin. According to the Fathers, Confession is the first step on the road to healing, for through Confession man can spit out the devil's deadly poison and purge himself from sin. Then once the poison has been expelled, the spiritual and physical wounds left by the bite can be healed through the anointing of Holy Anointing. And through the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ, the Sustenance of eternal life, man can regain his strength and return to health of body and soul. Yet, just as anointing a snake bite with oil and feeding a man healthy food, will not bring about healing unless the poison is first removed, so too the reception of Holy Anointing and Holy Communion will not profit a man unless he first purges himself of sin through Holy Confession.

Q. How often should I confess my sins?

A. One should confess one's sins and spit out the devil's poison whenever one is spiritually bitten to the point that one's health is in danger. One may reach this point from a single deadly bite, such as murder, adultery, fornication, or some other very serious sin, or from a series of lesser bites, such as anger, over-eating, judging others, or lustful thoughts. As a general rule, the frequency of one's confession should depend on the amount of poison with which one has been infected.

Q. Is it necessary to confess every time I receive Holy Communion?

A. If one receives from the Holy Chalice infrequently, say once or twice a year, then yes, one should go to confession each time before receiving Holy Communion. However, for the frequent communicant, one who receives Holy Communion every Sunday, it is not necessary to confess one's sins before each time one receives, that is, unless one has fallen into a serious sin. In such cases, one should not approach the Chalice until one has first confessed one's sin and fulfilled the advice or penance of one's father confessor. Finally, although it is not necessary for the frequent communicant to confess his or her sins each time he or she approaches the Chalice, confession should be made at least during each of the four fasting seasons, lest the poison received over time through small sins lead to the same spiritual death as that which comes through a single deadly bite.



**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква
Святого Йоана Хрестителя
St. John the Baptizer
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

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On the Annunciation

Most of the holy fathers, and patriarchs, and prophets desired to see Him, and to be eye-witnesses of Him, but did not attain thereto. And some of them by visions beheld Him in type and darkly; others, again, were privileged to hear the divine Voice through the medium of the cloud, and were favored with sights of holy angels. But to Mary the pure Virgin alone did the Archangel Gabriel manifest himself luminously, bringing her the glad address, 'Rejoice, thou that art full of grace!' And thus she received the Word, and in the due time of the fulfillment according to the body's course, she brought forth the Priceless Pearl. Come, then, beloved brethren, and let us chant the melody which has been taught us by the inspired harp of David, and say, 'Arise, O Lord, into your resting place, you and the ark of your majesty' (Ps. 132:8). For the holy Virgin is in truth an ark, wrought with gold both within and without, that has received the whole Treasury of the sanctuary. 'Arise, O Lord, into your resting place.' Arise, O Lord, out of the bosom

of the Father, in order that You may raise up the fallen race of the first-formed man. Setting these things forth, David in prophesy said to the rod that was to spring from himself, and to sprout into the flower of that beauteous Fruit, 'Hear, O daughter, and see, and turn your ear; and forget your people and your father's house. So shall the King desire your beauty, for He is your Lord, and you must worship Him' (Ps. 45:11-12). Hearken, O Daughter, to the things which were prophesied before of you, in order that you may also behold the things themselves with the eyes of understanding. Hearken to me while I announce things before to you, and hearken to the Archangel, who declares expressly to you the perfect mysteries. Come then, dearly beloved, and let us fall back on the memory of what has gone before us; and let us glorify, and celebrate, and laud, and bless that rod that has sprung so marvelously from Jesse!

*St. Gregory the Wonderworker,
Bishop of Neo-Caesarea*