

St. Mary's Orthodox Church
217 First Street, Coaldale Pa 18218

Phone: 570-645-2772

OUR WEBSITE:

www.stmarysnativity.org

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic

Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky

President: Dr. Ronald Berezniak

Sunday, March 17, 2024

Reader Hours: Gloria Bench

Reader Epistle: Edward Pierson



Cheesefare Sunday (Forgiveness Sunday) – The Expulsion of Adam from Paradise.

SERVICES:

Sunday, March 17	8:00 AM – Matins (Forgiveness Sunday-Cheesefare)
Sunday, March 17	9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy, Fish Dinner
Sunday, March 17	4:00 PM – Forgiveness Vespers
Monday, March 18	5:00 PM: Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Tuesday, March 19	5:00 PM: Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Wednesday, March 20	9:30 PM: Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts
Wednesday, March 20	5:00 PM: Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Thursday, March 21	5:00 PM: Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Friday, March 22	5:00 PM: Akathist to the Theotokos
Saturday, March 23	5:00 PM: Great Vespers & Confessions
Sunday, March 24	8:00 AM: Matins (Sunday of Orthodoxy)
Sunday, March 24	9:30 AM: Divine Liturgy, Fellowship Hour
Monday, March 25	5:00 PM: Vesperal Liturgy, The Annunciation of Holy Theotokos
Friday, March 29	5:00 PM: Akathist to the Theotokos, Confessions
Saturday, March 30	5:00 PM: Great Vespers, Confessions
Sunday, March 31	9:30 AM: Liturgy of St. Basil & Fellowship (St. Gregory of Palamas)
Sunday, March 31	4:00 PM: Lenten Mission @ St. Michael, Mt. Carmel
Wednesday, April 3	5:00 PM: Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (Fast from Noon)
Friday, April 5	5:00 PM: Akathist to the Theotokos, Confessions
Saturday, April 6	2:00 PM: Youth Group
Saturday, April 6	4:30 PM: Parastas, Jennie Harb, Michael Harahus, Martha Stafiniak, Michael & Anna Tatusko, Gertrude Tatusko
Saturday, April 6	5:00 PM: Great Vespers, Confessions
Sunday, April 7	9:30 AM: Liturgy of St. Basil & Fellowship (Veneration of Precious Cross)
Sunday, April 7	4:00 PM: Lenten Mission @ St. Mary's, St. Clair

We welcome all our visitors today! We want to let you know that we are so glad you came to pray with us. Please come again; join us after the Divine Liturgy in the parish hall for fellowship. If you do not have a home church, we invite you to become a part of our parish family.

Only those Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through strict Fasting on the morning of the Liturgy, recent Confession and at peace with each other may approach the Chalice and receive Holy Communion.

Prayer List*:

Sbdn. James Weremedic

Jeanne Cannon, Stephanie Chmel, Julia Forte, Julia Harahus, Karen & Rose Harkins, Edward Hojnicky, Nancy King, Olga Kushnir, Anna Marie Mantey, Dorothy & Joseph Macenka, Anna Pierson, Melissa Schmitt, Helen Sheers, Olga Sidoriak, Marie Yurchak

* Names will cycle off approximately every 30 days. You may request to have your name or the name of a loved one placed back on the list at any time by contacting Fr. James directly.

**If anyone is in need of a priest,
please call Father James Weremedic at 570-645-2772.**

Visitation of the Sick and Infirm: If you are going into the hospital for any reason, please inform Fr. James at the Rectory. Emergency Calls: Please call the Rectory (570-645-2772) anytime (day or night) in an emergency.

Candles (March 17)

7-day Vigils-Altar: In memory of **Michael & Helen Bogosh** offered by Terri & David Bogosh

Altar Candles: In memory of **Lillian Yelsh** offered by William Yelsh

Eternal Lamp: In memory of **Kimberly Evetushick** offered by Russell & Geri King

7-day Vigils-Tetrapod: In memory of **Helen Butts** offered by Raymond & MaryJo Danchak

***Donations of flowers on the Tetrapod will now be \$50, due to the increase from Porvaznik's Flowers (under new management) in Lansford.**

March Birthdays: 1- Logan Leatherman, 7- Clarissa Buchanan, 14- Mary Hertzog, 21- Mildred O'Shura, 24- Olga Sidoriak, 28- Helen Law

Financials 3/10/2024: *Operating Acct:* Envelopes \$320, Non-Envelope \$250, Candles \$56, Altar Candles \$60, Donations \$1,150, Fuel \$25

Fellowship Hour Hosts:

March 17 Fish Dinner

March 24 Mike Tatusko

March 31 Russell King

April 7 OPEN

April 14 Russell King

If you have any Redner receipts, please call or get them to Helen King.
Please use your Boyer's card when shopping at Boyers; if you need one call Helen King.

**March 17, 2024 SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE Tone 8
The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.**

Ven. Aleksy the Man of God (411). Ven. Macarius the Wonderworker, Abbot of Kalyázinsk (1483). Martyr Marinus. St. Patrick, Bishop of Armagh, Enlightener of Ireland (ca. 461).

John 20: 11-18 (8th Matins Gospel)

But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?"

She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.'" Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

You descended from on high, O Merciful One! You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! // O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

Tone 4 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

O Master, Teacher of wisdom, Bestower of virtue, Who teach the thoughtless and protect the poor, strengthen and enlighten my heart! O Word of the Father, let me not restrain my mouth from crying to You: "Have mercy on me, a transgressor, // O merciful Lord!"

Tone 3 Prokeimenon (from the Lenten Triodion)

V. Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God!

V. In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel.

Romans 13:11-14:4 (Epistle)

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.

Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables.

Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

Tone 3

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Your Name, O Most High.

V. To declare Your mercy in the morning, and Your truth by night.

Silent Prayer before the Gospel:

Illumine our hearts, O Master Who lovest mankind, with the pure light of Thy divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of Thy gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of Thy blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto Thee. For Thou art the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto Thee we ascribe glory, together with Thy Father, Who is from everlasting, and Thine all-holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Matthew 6:14-21 (Gospel)

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting.

Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. **For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

Forgiveness Sunday

In the Orthodox Church, the last Sunday before Great Lent – the day on which, at Vespers, Lent is liturgically announced and inaugurated – is called Forgiveness Sunday.

On the morning of that Sunday, at the Divine Liturgy, we hear the words of Christ: “If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses...” (Mark 6:14-15).

Then, after Vespers – after hearing the announcement of Lent in the Great Prokeimenon: “Turn not away Thy face from Thy child for I am afflicted! Hear me speedily! Draw near unto my soul and deliver it!” [and] after making our entrance into Lenten worship, with its special memories, with the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian, with its prostrations – we ask forgiveness from each other, we perform the rite of forgiveness and reconciliation. And as we approach each other with words of reconciliation, the choir intones the Paschal hymns, filling the church with the anticipation of Paschal joy.

What is the meaning of this rite? Why is it that the Church wants us to begin Lenten season with forgiveness and reconciliation? These questions are in order because for too many people, Lent means primarily, and almost exclusively, a change of diet, the compliance with ecclesiastical regulations concerning fasting. They understand fasting as an end in itself, as a “good deed” required by God and carrying in itself its merit and its reward. But, the Church spares no effort in revealing to us that fasting is but a means, one among many, towards a higher goal: the spiritual renewal of man, his return to God, true repentance and, therefore, true reconciliation. The Church spares no effort in warning us against a hypocritical and pharisaic fasting, against the reduction of religion to mere external obligations. As a Lenten hymn says: “In vain do you rejoice in no eating, O soul! For you abstain from food, but from passions you are not purified. If you persevere in sin, you will perform a useless fast.”

Now, forgiveness stands at the very center of Christian faith and of Christian life because Christianity itself is, above all, the religion of forgiveness. God forgives us, and His forgiveness is in Christ, His Son, Whom He sends to us, so that by sharing in His humanity we may share in His love and be truly reconciled with God. Indeed, Christianity has no other content but love. And it is primarily the renewal of that love, a return to it, a growth in it, that we seek in Great Lent, in fasting and prayer, in the entire spirit and the entire effort of that season. Thus, truly forgiveness is both the beginning of, and the proper condition for the Lenten season.

One may ask, however: Why should I perform this rite when I have no “enemies”? Why should I ask forgiveness from people who have done nothing to me, and whom I hardly know? To ask these questions is to misunderstand the Orthodox teaching concerning forgiveness. It is true, that open enmity, personal hatred, real animosity may be absent from our life, though if we experience them, it may be easier for us to repent, for these feelings openly contradict Divine commandments. But, the Church reveals to us that there are much subtler ways of offending Divine Love. These are indifference, selfishness, lack of interest in other people, of any real concern for them—in short, that wall which we usually erect around ourselves, thinking that by being “polite” and “friendly” we fulfill God’s commandments. The rite of forgiveness is so important precisely because it makes us realize – be it only for one minute – that our entire relationship to other men is wrong, makes us experience that encounter of one child of God with another, of one person created by God with another, makes us feel that mutual “recognition” which is so terribly lacking in our cold and dehumanized world.

On that unique evening, listening to the joyful Paschal hymns, we are called to make a spiritual discovery: to taste of another mode of life and relationship with people, of life whose essence is love. We can discover that always and everywhere Christ, the Divine Love Himself, stands in the midst of us, transforming our mutual alienation into brotherhood. As I advance towards the other, as the other comes to me – we begin to realize that it is Christ Who brings us together by His love for both of us.

And because we make this discovery – and because this discovery is that of the Kingdom of God itself: the Kingdom of Peace and Love, of reconciliation with God and, in Him, with all that exists – we hear the hymns of that Feast, which once a year, “opens to us the doors of Paradise.” We know why we shall fast and pray, what we shall seek during the long Lenten pilgrimage. Forgiveness Sunday: the day on which we acquire the power to make our fasting – true fasting; our effort – true effort; our reconciliation with God – true reconciliation.