

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 2, 2025

Reader Hours: Kaitlyn Dymtrow
Reader Epistle: Edward Pierson



SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE (Forgiveness Sunday) Tone 3.
The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.

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.**

SERVICES:

Sunday, March 2	9:30 AM: Divine Liturgy, Vespers of Forgiveness Fellowship, Church School, Cheesefare (Forgiveness Sunday)
Monday, March 3	5:00 PM: Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete and Confessions
Tuesday, March 4	5:00 PM: Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete and Confessions
Wednesday, March 5	5:00 PM: Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (Fast from Noon)
Thursday, March 6	5:00 PM: Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete and Confessions
Friday, March 7	5:00 PM: Vespers of St. Theodore the Recruit, Confessions
Saturday, March 8	4:00 PM: Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday, March 9	9:30 AM: Divine Liturgy, & Fellowship (Orthodoxy Sunday)
Wednesday, March 12	5:00 PM: Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts (Fast from Noon)
Friday, March 14	5:00 PM: General Panikhida for the Departed faithful of the parish.
Saturday, March 15	4:00 PM: Great Vespers, Confessions
Sunday, March 16	9:30 AM: Liturgy of St. Basil & Fellowship (St. Gregory of Palamas)
Sunday, March 16	5:00 PM: Lenten Mission @ St. Michael, Mt. Carmel

Prayer List*: Mat. Lisa

Robert Boguski, Jeanne Cannon, Stephanie Chmel, Kaitlyn & Shannon Dymtrow, Anna Eltgroth, Julia Forte, Julia Harahus, Rose Harkins, Nancy King, Olga Kushnir, Anna Marie Mantey, Dorothy Macenka, Paul Macenka, Olga Martsyniv, Dave Mazaika, Tom McCarthy, Ron Pierce, Odess Remington, Millie O'Shura, Melissa Schmitt, Olga Sidoriak, Jolie Skelton, Amanda Skripnek, Daniel Skripnek, Peter Weremedic

Prayer for Women and the Children to be Born of Them: Mena Maher.

* 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.

Camp registration is Open

The Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania looks forward to St. Tikhon's Summer Camp, scheduled for June 29-July 5, 2025, with registration opened on Friday, February 14, 2025.

Whereas in year's past registration was open for months, it will likely close in days. We need you to register our youths to be campers. We need to have staff and volunteer registrations, too. We cannot do this without our staff and volunteers! Regardless of your parish sending campers, they can still help in many other ways. DANIEL PECK welcomes volunteers. Helping with food preparation helps our other volunteers to be with the youth for other activities and builds relationships. Some parishes are choosing to donate prepared foods. Thank you. DANIEL PECK AND DIMITRI RESSATAR are on point to receive help in this manner!

If anyone is in need of a priest, please call Fr. 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 2)

7-day Vigils-Altar: In health of **Mat. Lisa Weremedic** offered by Julia Forte

Altar Candles: In memory of **Helen Butts** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

Eternal Lamp: In memory of **Theresa Wyshosky** offered by Julia Forte

7-day Vigils-Tetrapod: In memory of **Olga Hebda** offered by Raymond & Mary Jo Danchak

Vigil Candles: In memory of offered by

March Birthdays: 1- Logan Leatherman, 6- Marie Kalavritinos, 7- Clarissa Buchanan, 14- Mary Hertzog, 21- Mildred O'Shura, 24- Olga Sidoriak,

Financials 2/23/2025: Operating Acct: Envelopes \$942, Non-envelope \$25, Altar Candles \$80, Candles \$90, Building Fund \$50, Holy Day \$10, Donations \$1,720, Fuel \$40

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.

Fellowship Hour Hosts:

3/2 Berezniak 3/9 Helen King 3/16 John Evetushick 3/23 Michael Tatusko 3/30 Berezniak

We are not required to bring a tenth of our income to the Church; we can bring twenty, thirty, or even one-hundred percent, as did the poor widow (*Mark 12:42-43*). But we can start with a small step. We can at least bring as much as the Old Testament Hebrews, at least the ten percent that rightly belongs to God and not us. But if we don't have as much zeal for the temple of God as the Old Testament people had, then the Lord will accept and bless even seven or five percent or any other amount offered with a pure heart. **We must begin**

somewhere! [On Tithing | A Russian Orthodox Church](#)

Website (pravmir.com)

How much is my tithe?!

Weekly Income	10%	5%	4%	2%
\$200	\$20	\$10	\$8	\$4
\$500	\$50	\$25	\$20	\$10
\$750	\$75	\$38	\$30	\$15
\$1,000	\$100	\$50	\$40	\$20
\$1,500	\$150	\$75	\$60	\$30
\$2,000	\$200	\$100	\$80	\$40



DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

The Most Rev. Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia • Orthodox Church in America

Great Lent 2025

Dear Reverend Fathers, Matushki and Faithful,

Christ is in our midst!

Great Lent is here, and the Lord gives us wonderful opportunities to redirect our lives and hearts to Him. Hopefully, we will take full advantage of this time to renew our relationship with the Lord through repentance, confession, increased prayer, reading of the Holy Scriptures, fasting, and almsgiving. As Fr. Alexander Schmemmann comments in his book on Great Lent, "Let us abstain from frivolous conversation and various forms of entertainment." The fast is not simply from certain foods but from feeding the passions and sin. In the Gospel of the Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46), we understand that when the Lord returns in glory, His judgment will not simply be based upon the absence of sin but on the development of virtue. Essentially, are we loving and compassionate, and is this evident in concrete ways through our actions? Remember the hymnography of Lent: the demons do not eat either. Let us seek to minimize time spent on the internet or watching television. Let us strive to be at peace with one another, forgiving and offering forgiveness. Read through Genesis, Isaiah, Psalms, and Proverbs during this holy season.

Let us use this time to rid our lives of the distractions that clutter our minds. As we ponder the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian, let us abstain from "the spirit of sloth, despair (faint-heartedness), lust for power, and idle talk" and open our hearts to chastity, humility, patience, and love. May the Lord help us to see our own sins and not judge our brother. Do we believe change is possible for ourselves and others? Are we willing to utilize the tools the Church, in her wisdom, gives us to do so?

Sadly, some of our clergy and faithful have never embraced the Lenten school of repentance and its discipline. We will try everything the world offers to seek mental and physical health but never embrace the tried and proven gift of Great Lent. If you have never engaged in the Lenten prescription above, try it this year. By the time we reach Holy Week, things we once considered unchangeable in our lives suddenly begin to be addressed or resolved through a lengthy and determined effort. Many talk about what they are "giving up" for Lent but do not consider what they have the opportunity to get rid of—namely, bad habits that ultimately separate us from communion with the Lord.

St. Mark the Ascetic remarks, "We beg and plead with God to deliver us from our sins, yet we continue to love and nurture their causes." As we embrace the discipline of the Church, we are giving up nothing but gaining true and authentic freedom and the gift of eternal life. Doing things our own way is what landed us in this mess. Let us seek to embrace the discipline of the Church so that we might experience the authentic freedom and joy Christ graciously bestows upon those beloved of Him.

Asking for your holy prayers, I remain your unworthy father in Christ,

+ Mark

+MARK, Archbishop of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania

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"Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in Thee." Augustine

March 2, 2025 SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE (Forgiveness Sunday) Tone 3.

The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.

Mark 16: 9-20 (3rd Matins Gospel)

Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe. After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either. Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

Tone 3 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. He has trampled down death by death. He has become the first born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world // great mercy.

Tone 6 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 8 Prokeimenon

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God! (Ps. 75:10a)

V. In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel. (Ps. 75:1)

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 6

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

V. It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Your Name, O Most High. (Ps. 91:1)

V. To declare Your mercy in the morning, and Your truth by night. (Ps. 91:2a)

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.

Great Lent

The season of Great Lent is the time of preparation for the feast of the Resurrection of Christ. It is the living symbol of man's entire life which is to be fulfilled in his own resurrection from the dead with Christ. It is a time of renewed devotion: of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. It is a time of repentance, a real renewal of our minds, hearts and deeds in conformity with Christ and his teachings. It is the time, most of all, of our return to the great commandments of loving God and our neighbors.

In the Orthodox Church, Great Lent is not a season of morbidity and gloominess. On the contrary, it is a time of joyfulness and purification. We are called to "anoint our faces" and to "cleanse our bodies as we cleanse our souls." The very first hymns of the very first service of Great Lent set the proper tone of the season:

*Let us begin the lenten time with delight . . . let us fast from passions as we fast from food, taking pleasure in the good words of the Spirit, that we may be granted to see the holy passion of Christ our God and his holy Pascha, spiritually rejoicing.
Thy grace has arisen upon us, O Lord, the illumination of our souls has shown forth; behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the time of repentance (Vespers Hymns).*

It is our repentance that God desires, not our remorse. We sorrow for our sins, but we do so in the joy of God's mercy. We mortify our flesh, but we do so in the joy of our resurrection into life everlasting. We make ready for the resurrection during Great Lent, both Christ's Resurrection and our own.

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..." (Matt. 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.

JOIN US FOR

COAL REGION

PAN-ORTHODOX LENTEN MISSION VESPERS

SUNDAY, MARCH 16TH @ 5:00PM
ST. MICHAEL'S ORTHODOX CHURCH (OCA)
131 WILLOW STREET, MT. CARMEL, PA 17851

SUNDAY, MARCH 23RD @ 5:00PM
ST. NICHOLAS ORTHODOX CHURCH
(CARPATHO-RUSSIAN DIOCESE)
113 WEST BERTSCH STREET, LANSFORD, PA 18232

SUNDAY, MARCH 30TH @ 5:00PM
ST. MARY'S ORTHODOX CHURCH (OCA)
217 1ST STREET, COALDALE, PA 18218

SUNDAY, APRIL 6TH @ 5:00PM
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH
(CARPATHO-RUSSIAN DIOCESE)
9 WEST RAILROAD STREET, NESQUEHONING, PA 18240

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AS WE WORSHIP AS ONE BODY OF CHRIST

A FELLOWSHIP TO FOLLOW EACH VESPERS SERVICE

