

St. Mary's Orthodox Church
217 First Street – Coaldale Pa 18218-1602
Phone.....570-645-2772

OUR WEBSITE...www.stmarysnativity.org

Rector: V. Rev. James Weremedic

Retired Attached: V. Rev Paul Ropitsky

Sunday, March 20, 2022

Choir Director: Wash King

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT – TONE 6

Glory Be to Jesus Christ!

Glory Be Forever!

Services:

Sunday, March 20 9:30 AM – St. Basil Divine Liturgy – St. Gregory Palamas & Coffee hour
Followed by Parastas & Coffee hour

In memory of Alexis Gancasz offered by John & Jeanne Cannon

In memory of Helen Fedora offered by Barbara Faenza & Family

In memory of John & Rose Bench offered by Gloria Bench & Family

Wednesday, March 23- 5:00 PM – Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts, please fast from the noon meal

Friday, March 25 9:30 AM – Vesperal Liturgy – Annunciation of Theotokos

Sunday, March 27 9:30 AM – St. Basil Divine Liturgy – Veneration Precious Cross & Coffee hour

Wednesday, March 30- 5:00 PM – Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts, please fast from the noon meal

Sunday, April 3 9:30 AM – St. Basil Divine Liturgy – St. John Climacus

Prayer List:

Matushka Lovey Ropitsky, Matushka Lisa Weremedic,

Andrew Balliet, Michael Birosik, Clark Andrew Bogosh, Theodore Bogosh, Emmalyn Naomi Buchanan, Evanna Jane Buchanan, Stephanie Chmel, Irene Davis, Ilene Devine, Julia Forte, Karen Harkins, John King, Michael Kulick, John & Olga Kushnir, Nancy Lorchak, MaryAnn & Paul Macenka, Mary Maholick, Mildred O'Shura, Melissa Schmitt, Lynn Sharpe, Althea Shellock, Olga Sidoriak, Mary Simone, Martha Stafiniak, Martha Teno, Michael Teno, Elizabeth Warcholak, Russell Wishousky, Russell Yallas, & Marie Yurchak.

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 contact Fr. James at the Rectory. Emergency Calls: Please call the Rectory (570-645-2772) anytime (day or night) in an emergency.

CONFESSION

Confessions have resumed with minor modifications. Please call the rectory at 570-645-2772 and talk to Father James for a reservation. Call between 9:30 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Individual schedule times will be spread out during the week. Husband and wife can be scheduled together. Anyone wanting to have a confession, but has concerns of COVID-19, should contact Father James to make the appropriate accommodations.

Candles (March 20)

7-Day Vigils/Altar... In memory of **Alexis Gancasz** offered by John & Jeanne Cannon

Altar Candles... In memory of **Helen & Michael Bogosh & Peter, Harry, Kathleen Harahush**
offered by Terri & David Bogosh

Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Andrew & Mary Bybel Family** offered by Family Members

Vigil Crosses... In memory of **Anna Pisko** offered Michael Pisko

7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... In memory of **Kathryn Puschak** offered by Ted Bogosh

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Theodore & Anna Bybel Family & Haspe Family**
offered by Family Members

Candles (March 25 – most rescheduled from March 6)

7-Day Vigils/Altar... For the Health of **Millie O'Shura** offered by Ted Bogosh

Altar Candles... For the Health of **Dr. Ronald Berezniak** offered by Ted Bogosh

Eternal Lamp... In memory of **Peter Wyshosky, Jr.** offered by Julia Forte

Vigil Crosses... For the Health of **Lena Marie Berezniak** offered Ted Bogosh

7-Day Vigils/Tetrapod... For the Health of **Martha Teno** offered by Ted Bogosh

Decorated Candles/Tetrapod- In memory of **Sisters, Olga Weiss & Mary Solomon** offered by
Stephanie Chmel

March Birthdays: 1 Logan Leatherman, 6- Marie Kalavritinos, 16- Anthony Vavra, 21- Mildred O'Shura, 24- Tracy Skripnek, 24- Zachary King, 24- Olga Sidoriak (**100**), 29- Sandra Zuber

Financials 3/13/22: *Operating Acct:* Candles 37 Altar Candles 20 Offerings 380 Holy Days 22 –
Donations 50 = Total \$509.00. Please continue to keep filling your church envelopes. Thank you!

Coffee Hour started two weeks ago. However, due to illness and weather conditions, we were not able to hold this wonderful opportunity to have fellowship time.

We have a sign-up sheet in the vestibule if you would like to host.

Coffee Hour:

March 20	Marie Skripnek
March 27	John Evetushick
April 3	Open
April 10	Weremedics
April 17	Lena Marie Berezniak
April 24	Paska-Blessing of Baskets

STRIVE TO UNITE YOURSELF WITH CHRIST

On this Second Sunday of the Great Fast, the Church provides us with a great teacher on PRAYER. Honored this day is ST. GREGORY OF PALAMAS, famed Byzantine monk and theologian of the 14th century. He was raised in Constantinople, then became an ascetic on Mount Athos. From there he came to Thessalonica, Greece, and became its Archbishop. Born in 1296, Gregory fell asleep in Christ in 1359.

Over the centuries, the ascetics of the East developed a system of mystical contemplation of God which had as its aim the union of the person with the Lord. This has been called “deification in Christ.” The method involved physical exercise, bodily posture, silence, proper breathing, and the Jesus Prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.” The height of this spiritual experience was said to be a vision of the Divine Light, the radiance which Jesus showed at His transfiguration. It is termed “hesychasm,” which means tranquility or quietness.

Here is what St. Gregory had to say about praying without ceasing: “Let no one think that it is the duty only of priests and monks to pray without ceasing, and not of laymen. No, no; it is the duty of all Christians to remain always in prayer . . .” “Bear in mind the method of prayer . . . namely by prayer in the mind. And this we can always do if we wish. For when we sit down to work with our hands, when we walk, when we eat . . . we can always pray mentally - the true prayer pleasing to God. Let us work with the body and pray with the soul . . .”



FASTING



FASTING

Christ fasted and in the process He taught us, His people, to fast as well. In the *Sermon on the Mount* He said:

And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you (Matthew 6:16-18).

WHEN YOU FAST

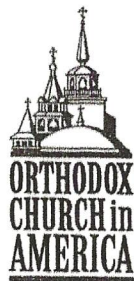
Christ did not say “if you fast” but rather, “when you fast.” He presupposed that we understand fasting as a necessary part of our spiritual lives.

Christ Himself fasted. We know, for example, that He fasted for forty days after His baptism, thereby preparing Himself before making His appearance to the people and beginning His public ministry.

We know also how, when His disciples could not heal a suffering child, Christ upbraided them with the words:

But this kind (of demon) never comes out except by prayer and fasting (Matthew 17:21).

The people of the Old Testament fasted as well. Centuries before the coming of Christ, the prophet Isaiah wrote the following:



Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn... (Isaiah 58:6-8).

The apostles also fasted. They connected their fasting with prayer as Christ taught. They did not separate their fasting from faith and good works rendered in obedience to God's commandments of mercy and love. As the apostles continued in prayer and fasting, they likewise commanded us to do so as well.

A NECESSARY ELEMENT

Fasting, then, is an essential element of the spiritual life which

- ✧ frees us from the passions;
- ✧ enables us to gain dominion over our lives; and
- ✧ enables the Spirit of God to dwell within us and make us instruments of His will.

Fasting is not at all an act of mortification for mortification's sake. It is not a "little suffering" which is somehow pleasing to

God. It is not a "punishment" which is to be sorrowfully endured in payment for sins. It is not given to us in the context of "laws" which, if endured, gain us favor in the sight of God while, if ignored, render us sinful and guilty.

The sin of not fasting is found in our failure to employ a practice which is absolutely necessary in our struggle to overcome sin and to enter into communion with God.

SEASONS OF FASTING

The Church reserves certain seasons and days for fasting. These are times when we are mobilized in our struggle against evil, armed in prayerful, vigilant expectancy for the coming of God. We are called to fast in preparation for eucharistic services and during the seasons which prepare us for the celebration of the great festivals of the Lord's presence and power among His People.

During these times, God's People fast as a community; yet within the community each person fasts differently, according to his or her own personal abilities and capabilities.

The essential point during these times and seasons is that all should fast, at least minimally.

As God's People, we are called upon to fast

- ✧ in secret, not revealing to others what we are doing, in obedience to the Lord's specific command not to judge the practices of others; and
- ✧ joyfully, knowing that the aim of fasting is not the fasting itself but rather the acquisition of the Holy Spirit.

JOYFUL SEASONS

Thus, for Orthodox Christians, fasting seasons are joyful seasons. They are not times for remorse, but for repentance. They are not occasions for mere "breast-beating" or, worse yet, for ritualistic but meaningless acts of penitence; rather they remind us of the need for real personal, internal change. In regard to fasting, they are not simply inducements to change our diets, but rather to change our words, actions, and thoughts from those which are evil and inspired by Satan to those which are good and inspired by God.

Thus we sing as we begin the season of Great Lent—the period of greatest fasting which prepares us for the period of greatest celebration:

*Let us begin the most precious Fast with joy,
Shining with the holy commandments of Christ our God,
With the splendor of love,
With the brilliance of prayer,
With the cleanness of purity,
With the strength of blessed courage...,
Fasting from foods and not fasting from passions...,
The true fast is the alienation of evils,
The bridling of the tongue,
The laying aside of anger,
The cutting off of lust, foolish talking, lies and cursing...,
The disappearance of these is a fast true and acceptable.*

These verses, chanted in the first Monday Matins service of Great Lent, reveal the goal and purpose of fasting. We wash our faces. We anoint our heads. We look only to ourselves and to our God. We hide our efforts. We change our lives. We rejoice with delight in our search for God.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 6. St. Gregory Palamas. Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra. The Holy Fathers who were slain at the Monastery of St. Savva: Ven. John, Sergius, Patrick, and others (796). Monastic Martyr Euphrosynus of Sinozérsk (Novgorod—1612). Martyr Photiné (Svetlana, Fatíma), the Samaritan woman, and her sons: Martyrs Victor and Joses, and two others (ca. 66). Virgin Martyrs Alexandra, Claudia, Euphrasia, Matrona, Juliana, Euphemia and Theodosia, of Amisus (310). St. Nikéttas the Confessor, Archbishop of Apollonias in Bithynia (ca. 813-820).

Troparion — Tone 8 - O luminary of Orthodoxy, support and teacher of the Church, / ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians, / O wonderworker Gregory, boast of Thessalonika and herald of grace, / always intercede for all of us that our souls may be saved.

Kontakion — Tone 4 - Now is the time for action! / Judgment is at the doors! / So let us rise and fast, / offering alms with tears of compunction and crying: / “Our sins are more numerous than the sands of the sea; / but forgive us, O Master of All, / so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns.”

Kontakion — Tone 8 - Holy and divine instrument of wisdom, / radiant and harmonious trumpet of theology, / we praise you in song, O divinely-speaking Gregory. / As a mind standing before the Primal Mind, guide our minds to Him, Father, / so that we may cry aloud to you: “Rejoice, herald of grace.”

Hebrews 1:10-2:3 (Epistle)

And: “You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.”

But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool”?

Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? Therefore, we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.

Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (Epistle, Saint)

For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins and then for the peoples, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

For the law appoints as high priests, men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.

Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.

Mark 2:1-12 (Gospel)

And again, He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house.

Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.

Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men.

And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So, when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying.

When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you."

And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?"

Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'?

But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

John 10:9-16 (Gospel, Saint)

I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.

The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.

I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.