



Great Lent 2024



2024 LENTEN SCHEDULE

March

Saturday 16th	6:00 PM	Vespers
Sunday 17th	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy - Forgiveness Sunday/Rite of Forgiveness
Monday 18th	6:00 PM	Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Tuesday 19th	6:00 PM	Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Wednesday 20th	6:00 PM	Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Thursday 21st	6:00 PM	Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Friday 22nd	9:30 AM	Presanctified Liturgy
Saturday 23rd	6:00 PM	Vespers
Sunday 24th	8:30 AM	Divine Liturgy - Sunday of Orthodoxy with Icon Procession, Pysanky
Sale	11:00 AM	
	4:30 PM	Sunday of Orthodoxy – Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church 985 Providence Blvd. Pittsburgh, PA 15237
Wednesday 27th	6:00 PM	Presanctified Liturgy - Pot Luck dinner
Friday 29th	9:30 AM	Presanctified Liturgy
Saturday 30th	6:00 PM	Vespers (Panahyda for Soul Saturday afterward)
Sunday 31st	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy - Sunday of St Gregory Palamas

April

Wednesday 3rd	6:00 PM	Presanctified Liturgy - Pot Luck Dinner
Friday 5th	9:30 AM	Presanctified Liturgy
Saturday 6th	6:00 PM	Great Vespers - Annunciation and Veneration of the Holy Cross
Sunday 7th	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy – <u>Annunciation</u> Veneration of the Holy Cross
Wednesday 10th	6:00 PM	Presanctified Liturgy - Pot Luck Dinner
Friday 12th	9:30 AM	Presanctified Liturgy
Saturday 13th	9:30 AM	Pantanassa Akathist - Confessions
	6:00 PM	Vespers (Panahyda for Soul Saturday afterward)
Sunday 14th	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy - St John of the Ladder
Wednesday 17th	6:00 PM	Canon of St Andrew of Crete
Friday 19st	9:30 AM	Presanctified Liturgy

Saturday 20th

**UOL WPA/OH Lenten Retreat 10:00 – 3:30
NO VESPERS**

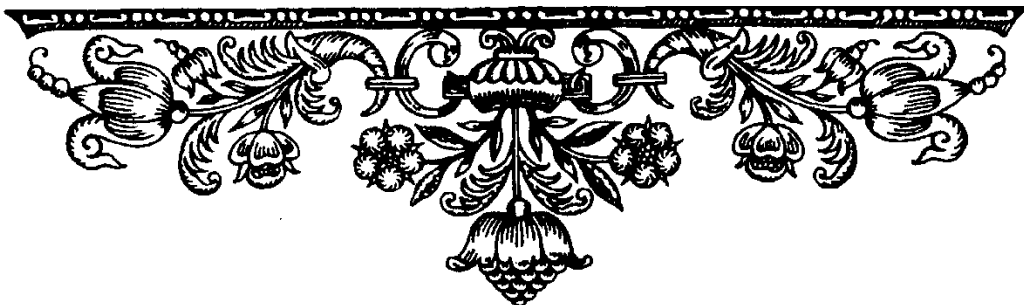
Sunday 21st	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy - St Mary of Egypt
Wednesday 24th	6:00 PM	Presanctified Liturgy - Pot Luck Dinner
Friday 26th	9:30 AM	Presanctified Liturgy
Saturday 27th	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy - Lazarus Saturday
	6:00 PM	Vespers
Sunday 28th	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy - Palm Sunday
Monday 29th	6:00 PM	Bridegroom Matins
Tuesday 30th	6:00 PM	Bridegroom Matins

May

Wednesday 1st	6:00 PM	Holy Wednesday – Unction (Sacrament of Healing)
Thursday 2nd	9:30 AM	Commemoration of first Divine Liturgy
	6:00 PM	Holy Thursday - Passion Gospels
Friday 3rd	9:30 AM	Royal Hours
	6:00 PM	Holy Friday, Vespers, Procession & Burial
Saturday 4th	9:30 AM	Holy Saturday - Anticipation Liturgy (Baskets Blessed)
	9:00 PM	Reading of the Acts of the Apostles
	9:30 PM	Resurrection Services: Nocturnes, Paschal Matins, & Divine Liturgy (Paschal Blessing of Baskets & Agape Feast)
Sunday 5th	11:00 AM	Agape Vespers (Blessing of Baskets)
Monday 6th	9:30 AM	Bright Monday - Divine Liturgy
Friday 10th	9:30 AM	Bright Friday - Divine Liturgy
Saturday 11th	6:00 PM	Vespers
Sunday 12th	9:30 AM	Divine Liturgy - St. Thomas Sunday (Provody) St. Thomas Day Dinner and Grave Blessing

Great Lent is a wonderful time to get spiritually refreshed and confession is an important step on the journey. Fr. John is available for confession by appointment and prior to as well as after all services. On Sunday, Fr. John will stop hearing confessions at 9:20 so that Liturgy may begin on time. Please plan accordingly. If there is something keeping you from confession or communion, please contact Fr. John so that he may assist and accommodate you so that you're able to experience the fullness of the faith.

Frjohn.charest@aol.com 847-910-7120



Lenten Readings

March

- 18 Gen. 1:1-13, Is. 1:1-20, Prov. 1:1-20
19 Gen. 1:14-23, Is. 1:19-31, Prov. 1:20-33
20 Gen. 1:24-31, 2:1-3, Is. 2:3-17, Prov. 2:1-22
21 Gen. 2:4-19, Is. 2:11-21, Prov. 3:1-19
22 Gen. 2:20-3:20, Is. 3:1-14, Prov. 3:19-34
23 2 Tim. 2:1-10, Jn. 15:17-16:2
24 Heb. 11:24-26, 32-40, Jn 1:44-52
25 Gen 3:21-4:7, Is 4:1-6, 5:1-7, Prov 3:34-4:21
26 Gen 4:8-15, Is 5:2-16, Prov 5:1-15
27 Gen 4:16-26, Is 5:16-25, Prov 5:15-22
28 Gen 5:1-24, Is 6:1-12, Prov 6:1-20
29 Gen 5:32-6:8, Is 7:1-14, Prov 6:20-7:1
30 Heb 3:12-16, Mk 1:35-44
31 Heb 1:10-2:3, Mk 2:1-12

April

- 1 Gen 6:9-22, Is 8:12-22, 9:7, Prov 8:1-21
2 Gen 7:1-5, Is 9:9-21, Prov 20:1-16
3 Gen 7:6-9, Is 10:12-20, Prov 9:12-18
4 Gen 7:11-8:3, Is 11:10-16, 12:1-3, Prov 10:1-22
5 Gen 8:4-21, Is 13:2-13, Prov 10:31-11:12
6 Heb 10:32-38, Mk 14-17
7 Heb 4:14-5:6, Mk 8:34-9:1, Heb 2:11-1, Lk 1:24-38
8 Gen 8:22, 9:1-17, Is 14:24-32, Prov 11:19-12:6
9 Gen 9:8-17, Is 25:1-9, Prov 12:8-22
10 Gen 9:18-10:1, Is 26:21-27:9, Prov 12:23-13:9
11 Gen 10:32-11:9, Is 28:14-22, Prov 13:20-14:9
12 Gen 12:1-7, Is 29:13-24, Prov 14:15-26
13 Heb 6:9-12, Mk 7:31-37
14 Heb 6:13-20, Mk 9:17-31
15 Gen 8:21-22, 9:1-7, Is 37:33-38, 38:1-6,
Prov 11:19-31, 12:1-6
16 Gen 15:1-15, Is 40:18-31, Prov 15:17-19
17 Gen 17:1-8, Is 41:1-14, Prov 15:20-16:9
18 Gen 18:20-33, Is 42:5-16, Prov 16:13-17

19 Gen 22:1-18, Is 45:11-17, Prov 17:17-18:5

20 Heb 9:1-7, Lk 1:39-56

21 Heb 9:11-14, Mk 10:32-45

22 Gen 27:1-41, Is 48:17-22, 48:1-5, Prov 19:16-25

23 Gen 31:3-16, Is 49:5-10, Prov 21:3-21

24 Gen 43:26-31, Is 58:1-11, Prov 17:17-18:5

25 Gen 46:1-7, Is 65:8-16, Prov 23:15-24:5

26 Gen 49:22-50:26, Is 66:10-24, Prov 31:8-31

27 Heb 12:28-13:8, Jn 11:1-45

28 Phil 4:4-9, Jn 12:-8

29 Mt 21:18-43, Mt 24:3-43

30 Mt 22:15-23:39, Mt 24: 36 – 26:2

May

1 John 12: 17-50 Mt 26: 6 -16

2 Lk 22:1-45, 1Cor 11:23-32, Mt 26:2-27:2, Jn 13:1-17

3 1Cor 1:18-2:2, Mt 27:1-61, Lk 23:34-43, Jn 19:31-43

4 1 Cor 5 : 6-8, Gal 3:13-14, Mt 27:62-66, Rom 6 : 3 – 11





THE GREAT LENT EPISTLE

OF THE COUNCIL OF BISHOPS OF THE
UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE USA AND DIASPORA



“Let us observe a fast acceptable and pleasing to the Lord.”

Dearly Beloved Brothers and Sisters – Clergy and Laity - Faithful of our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church throughout the World,

CHRIST IS AMONGST US! IS AND ALWAYS SHALL BE!

As we embark on the sacred journey of Eastern Orthodox Great Lent, let us fast not only from food but from sin and everything that leads us into sinful behavior, belief and deeds; let us fast with love and humility as a means to an end and not an end in itself; let us reflect on the purpose of fasting, as a foundation of our spiritual growth and the desire to become one with God. Drawing inspiration from the Holy Fathers, who remind us of the transformative power of repentance, and Holy Scripture, which guides us on the path of humility, may this Lenten season be a time of profound self-reflection, prayer, and adherence to the teachings of our Holy Orthodox Tradition.

In the words of Saint John Chrysostom, “Lent is a healing therapy for the soul,” urging us to purify our hearts and draw nearer to the Divine. Let us heed the call of Saint Isaac the Syrian, who implores us to “make space for God within us.” Through fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, we strive to emulate Christ’s humility and seek a deeper connection with our Creator. The second Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjöld, of the newly created United Nations once expressed a profound thought – “The longest journey is the journey inwards, of him (or her) who has started upon a quest for the source of his (her) being.” As Orthodox Christians we are blessed daily in knowing the “Source of our being” through the Scriptural exposition of creation and God’s unending efforts to express His Love for us, even allowing the sacrifice of His Only-Begotten Son as a ransom for our salvation.

May the wisdom of the Holy Fathers and the guidance of Holy Scripture illuminate our Lenten journey, fostering spiritual renewal, repentance, and a profound sense of gratitude for that sacrifice of our Lord. As we walk this path together, let our collective

prayers and endeavors strengthen our faith, bringing us closer to the Resurrection and the eternal joy that awaits. Each of us must enter Great Lent with the intention to begin the journey inwards with more intensity than ever before in our lives.

Yes, let us honestly fast from food with the goal of physical, mental, and emotional effect as the first step in this journey inward. The effect should be hunger and comprehension of just how much our Loving God has provided for us. Then the fast must expand to include change of behavior – reading Holy Scripture, worshipping at all the Lenten liturgical services, and putting aside the things that will, without doubt, distract us from the inward journey: our mobile phones, tablets, all forms of social media, all forms of visual entertainment that will not deepen our journey inwards to unity with the Divine.

Is the Lenten journey inwards easy? NO! Our salvation, however, demands that we embark upon it to have any hope at all to experience God's energies. We cannot experience His Essence, but we can, having become one with Him at the core of our being, experience His uncreated and eternal energies or manifestations of His Divinity – as the Apostles Peter, James and John experienced His Divine Light – uncreated and pure – at the Transfiguration. May we all understand completely that the experience of the Apostles on Mt. Tabor is possible for each of us if our journey inwards is real, sincere, and filled with love for God and for each other.

We shall be praying fervently for all of you throughout this Great Lenten Fast-Journey and we beseech your prayers for us, your Spiritual Fathers...

In our Lord's All-Encompassing Love,

+ ANTONY

By the Grace of God, Metropolitan – UOC of USA and Diaspora

+ JEREMIAH

*By the Grace of God, Archbishop
Eparchy of South America*

+ DANIEL

*By the Grace of God, Archbishop
UOC of USA and Diaspora*

Given this 17th Day of March 2024 – Forgiveness Sunday
South Bound Brook, NJ





ВЕЛИКОПОСНЕ ПОСЛАННЯ
СОБОР ЄПІСКОПІВ
УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ ПРАВОСЛАВНОЇ ЦЕРКВИ США ТА ДІАСПОРИ



«Дотримуймося посту, прийнятного й угодного Господу.»

Дорогі Брати і Сестри – Духовенство та Миряни – Вірні нашої Святої Української Православної Церкви по всьому Світі,

ХРИСТОС ПОСЕРЕД НАС! Є І ЗАВЖДИ БУДЕ!

Ступаючи на священну подорож Східно-Православного Великого Посту, ми постимо не лише від їжі, але й від гріха і всього, що веде нас до гріховної поведінки, вірування та вчинків. Давайте постити з любов'ю та смиренням, де основною ціллю не виступає саме дотримання посту, а є радше засобом для досягнення вищої духовної мети; давайте поміркуємо над метою посту, як основою нашого духовного зростання та прагнення з'єднатися з Богом. Черпаючи натхнення у Святих Отців, які нагадують нам про рушійну силу покаяння, і Святого Письма, яке веде нас на шляху смирення, нехай цей період Великого Посту буде часом глибокого переосмислення, молитви та дотримання вчення нашої Святої Православної Традиції.

За словами святого Іоана Золотоустого, «Великий піст — це цілюща терапія для душі», яка спонукає нас до очищення наших сердець і наближення до Божественного. Прислухаймося до заклику святого Ісаака Сиріна, який благає нас «звільнити місце для Бога всередині нас». Через піст, молитву та милостиню ми прагнемо наслідувати Христове смирення та прагнемо тіснішого зв'язку з нашим Творцем. Другий Генеральний Секретар новоствореної Організації Об'єднаних Націй Даг Хаммаршельд одного разу висловив глибоку думку: «Найдовша подорож — це внутрішня подорож, того (тої), хто розпочав пошуки джерела свого буття.» Як православні християни, ми щодня є благословенними пізнавши «Джерело нашого буття» через

Біблійний виклад творіння та безкінечні Божі намагання проявити Свою любов до нас, навіть допустивши жертву Свого Єдинородного Сина, як викуп за наше спасіння.

Нехай мудрість Святих Отців і настанови Святого Письма освітлюють нашу Великопосну подорож, сприяючи духовній віднові, покайню та глибокому почуттю вдячності за жертву нашого Господа. Йдучи цим шляхом разом, нехай наші спільні молитви та зусилля зміцнюють нашу віру, наближаючи нас до Воскресіння та вічної радості, яка на нас чекає. Кожен із нас повинен увійти у Великий Піст з наміром розпочати свою внутрішню подорож, приклавши більше зусиль, ніж будь-коли раніше у своєму житті.

Так, давайте чесно постити від їжі задля фізичної, розумової та емоційної користі, будучи першим кроком на шляху нашої внутрішньої подорожі. Результатом цього має бути голод і розуміння того, як багато дав нам наш Люблячий Бог. Тоді Піст має розширитися, залучаючи зміни у нашій поведінці – читання Святого Письма, відвідування всіх Богослужінь під час Великого посту та відкидання тих речей, які, безсумнівно, відволікатимуть нас від внутрішньої подорожі: наші мобільні телефони, планшети, усі форми соціального спілкування, медіа, всі види телевізійних розваг, які не поглиблюють нашу внутрішню подорож до єдності з Божественним.

Чи легка ця внутрішня подорож під час Великого Посту? НІ! Проте, наше спасіння вимагає від нас приступити до неї, щоб мати хоч якусь надію відчутти Божу енергію. Ми не можемо відчутти Його Сутність, але ми можемо, ставши одним з Ним у глибині нашого ества, відчутти Його нетварні та вічні енергії або прояви Його Божественності – як апостоли Петро, Яків та Іван відчули Його Божественне Світло – несотворене та чисте – під час Преображення Господнього. Нехай цілковите розуміння того, що відчуття та досвід апостолів на горі Фавор є можливі для кожного з нас, якщо наша внутрішня подорож буде справжньою, щирою та сповненою любові до Бога та один до одного.

Ми будемо усердно молитися за всіх вас протягом цієї Великої Постової Подорожі і благаємо ваших молитов за нас, ваших Духовних Отців...

У Всеохоплюючій Любові нашого Господа,

+ АНТОНІЙ

Митрополит УПЦ США та Діаспори

+ ЄРЕМІЯ

*Архієпископ Південно-Американської
Єпархії УПЦ США*

+ ДАНИІЛ

Архієпископ УПЦ США та Діаспори

17 березня 2024 року – Неділя Прощення
Саут-Баунд-Брук, Нью-Джерсі



CELEBRATE ORTHODOXY!



THE ORTHODOX CLERGY BROTHERHOOD OF GREATER PITTSBURGH INVITES YOU TO THE PITTSBURGH AREA

GREAT VESPERS OF THE ANNUNCIATION AND PAN-ORTHODOX SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY CELEBRATION

Sunday, March 24, 2024 at 4:30 PM
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Pittsburgh, PA 15237

Celebrant and Homilist: His Eminence Bishop Andrei of Cleveland
Romanian Episcopate of the Orthodox Church in America
Featuring the Pan-Orthodox Choir of Pittsburgh

Great Vespers will be followed by fellowship and Lenten refreshments.

SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2024

Lenten Retreat
April 6, 2024
"His Mercy Endures Forever"

Retreat will focus on Confession



Speakers:

***His Eminence Metropolitan
Antony***

Fr. Anthony Perkins

***Basilian Spirituality Center
710 Fox Chase Rd,
Jenkintown, PA 19046***

Retreat registration:

\$40 for adults (early bird rate) - \$50 after 3/27/24

\$30 for adolescents (aged 13 to 18) - \$40 after 3/27/24

\$20 for children 7 to 12- \$30 after 3/27/24

Registration includes breakfast, lunch and snacks.

For more information contact:
Oleh or Natalie at nsufler@aol.com

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2024

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS		THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 25th		<i>TRIODION WEEKS</i> Publican and the Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week MARCH 3rd		The Prodigal Son Returns! Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare MARCH 10th FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY		The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare MARCH 17th FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY		Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent MARCH 24th		<i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 31st		ST GREGORY PALAMAS Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent APRIL 7th		VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHAI</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4th Sunday of Lent APRIL 14th		ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent APRIL 21st		ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! APRIL 28th GREAT WEEK BEGINS		<i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY MAY 3rd		GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! MAY 5th NO FASTING!		<i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHAI (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

Lenten Project 2024

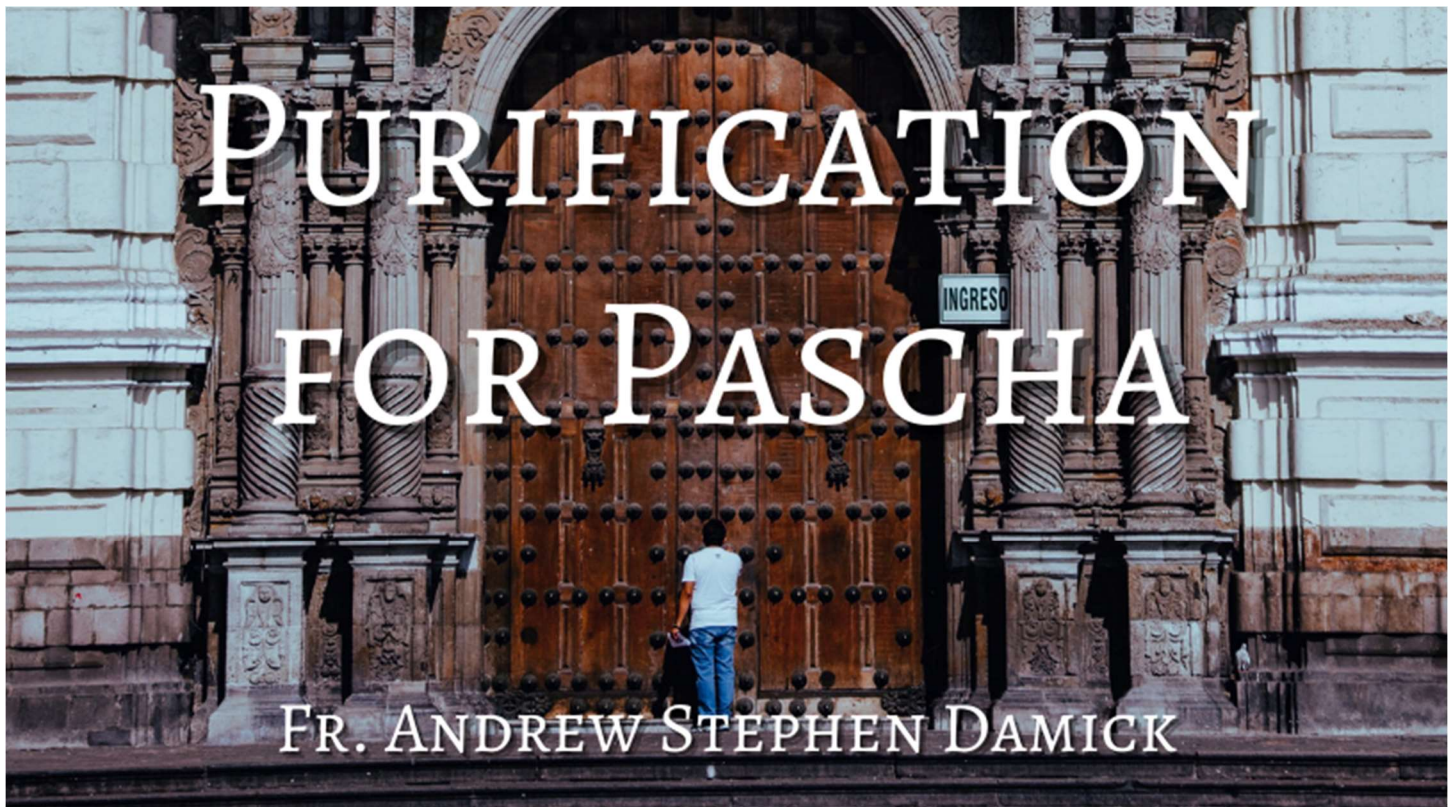
Blessing Bags

Proverbs 19:17 “The one who has mercy on the poor lends to God, And He will repay him according to his gift.”

The Community Outreach Ministry will be putting together Blessing Bags which will help out people who are homeless, hungry, and in need of basic necessities. We will be putting them together on Sunday April 21st during coffee hour. Afterwards you are welcome to take them so you can distribute them when you see someone who needs it.

Please contact Victoria Swindle (412-506-1412) if you are interested in giving a monetary donation, as she will be purchasing the items. For a **\$10** donation you will be covering the cost of one bag that includes each item mentioned in the list below.

<input type="checkbox"/>	bottle of water
<input type="checkbox"/>	granola bars
<input type="checkbox"/>	tooth brush (in package)
<input type="checkbox"/>	toothpaste
<input type="checkbox"/>	brush/comb
<input type="checkbox"/>	deodorant
<input type="checkbox"/>	socks
<input type="checkbox"/>	mouthwash



Today I want to tell you about something amazing that was sung at Matins today for the first time this year. At every Sunday Matins (and on feast days, too) there are three hymns sung after the Gospel reading, just after Psalm 50 is read. On almost every Sunday throughout the year they are the same, but today they change.

And we sing these new hymns every Sunday from today up through the Fifth Sunday of Lent. So they will be sung nine times, and then they go away for another year.

So today we're going to take a few minutes to look at these hymns and ask what they mean and how they work in terms of our journey to Pascha. Here is the first of these three hymns:

Open to me the doors of repentance, O Life-giver; for my soul goeth early to the temple of Thy holiness, coming in the temple of my body, wholly polluted. But because Thou art compassionate, purify me by the compassion of Thy mercies.

This hymn directly addresses God, calling Him "Life-giver" and saying, "Open to me the doors of repentance." Today we ask God to open these doors as we proceed not just toward Great Lent in three weeks but, as we sing, "to the temple of Thy holiness." So the basic theme is set up here of entering into repentance because the soul is going to the temple of God.

Why do we need to enter into repentance in order to go into God's temple? The hymn says it is because we come "in the temple of [our] body, wholly polluted." In other words, we have a problem—we want to enter into God's temple, but we are polluted. And so we ask for God's compassion here, saying, "Purify me by the compassion of Thy mercies."

So the basic narrative is set up: We want to approach the temple of God, but we are polluted, so we ask God to open the doors of repentance to us, purifying us with His compassion. The next hymn takes us a bit deeper.

In the next hymn, we enlist the aid of the Virgin Mary the Theotokos:

Prepare for me the way of salvation, O Theotokos; for I have profaned myself with coarse sins, and consumed my whole life with procrastination. But by thine intercessions purify thou me from all abomination.

Here we admit that the profanation that we experience is because of our sins. The English word *profane* is very apt here, because historically the word *profane* means something "outside the temple." So if something is profane, it cannot be inside the temple. It belongs outside. And it also prevents entrance into the temple, because it is profane.

Worse still, we admit here in this hymn that instead of doing something about this profanation, we consume our lives with procrastination. We put it off. But now, we ask for the Virgin Mary the Theotokos to prepare the way of salvation, asking her to purify us through her intercessions from all these abominations that keep us outside the temple.

Finally, we sing this third hymn:

If I think upon the multitude of my evil deeds, wretch that I am, I tremble for the terrible Day of Judgment. But, trusting the compassion of Thy mercy, I shout to Thee like David, Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.

Here, realizing the depths of our sins, the “multitude of [our] evil deeds,” we tremble, because the Day of Judgment is coming. And because we realize the seriousness of our situation, we cry out to God as David did—a reference to Psalm 50—“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy great mercy.”

So having heard these three hymns, let’s unpack what’s going on here. Most importantly, we need to understand a theme that appears throughout Holy Scripture—the theme of uncleanness. From the Bible, we know that someone can become unclean through his sins. But we also see that places and objects can become polluted because of sins.

The response that God gives to this pollution is purification. This is what is meant by atonement in the Bible, by the way—it is to purify, to cover over, to purge away what is impure and polluted, whatever is profane and inappropriate for the place where God is worshiped.

This purification is not something that happened only in the Old Testament with its complex system of purifications and sacrifices. It happens in the New Testament, as well, with baptism, with the washing of the feet of the disciples by Jesus, with Peter being told by God that all animals had been made clean by God—and most of all, with the death of Jesus, which purifies the whole world through His sacrifice on the Cross.

We can understand the idea that people and things need to be cleaned up before they are brought into the temple, into the church. But why? Why is it so urgent? Why not just ask to enter into the Great Feast of Pascha, into the Kingdom of God, without having to go through this purification? Why won’t God just open the door and say, “Come on in” to everyone?

It is because of something else we see in the Scriptures, which we might call “death by holiness.” You see, to approach God in a sinful state is actually dangerous. It results in harm. It can result even in sickness or death. St. Paul warns, for instance, that those who receive the Eucharist in an unworthy manner can get sick or even die.

But this is a theme set up from the very beginning. In Genesis, Adam and Eve are expelled from Paradise not because Paradise needed to be protected from them, but because they needed to be protected from Paradise. It became dangerous for them because of their transgression against God.

When the earth was filled with the wickedness of the giants in the presence of the Lord, the Flood came and wiped out all living things except those on the ark with Noah.

In Leviticus, Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, were struck down by God because they approached the altar and offered incense while in a drunken and careless state, offering up “strange fire” before the Lord that was not the fire appointed.

In Acts, Ananias and Sapphira are struck down dead by God when they lie to St. Peter, which he says was a lie to the Holy Spirit. So they approached one of God’s own apostles with lies in their hearts.

So here we are, entering on the path toward Pascha, toward eating the sacrifice of the holy altar on the holiest day of the year. And we pause. We take stock. We see ourselves for who we really are. And we begin to repent. We begin to come back to God and to be faithful, to be loyal, to be persistent in our worship, our fasting, our chastity, our almsgiving—and why? It is because this is how we are purified.

We are being purified so that we can come to the temple and commune with our savior Jesus Christ, to be with Him at the table and receive not destruction because of what happens when holiness comes into contact with sin, but rather the great elevation and perfection of humanity that comes when we are prepared to be with Him.

<https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/asd/2022/02/14/purification-for-pascha/>



ASSEMBLY OF CANONICAL
ORTHODOX BISHOPS
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mission Sunday 2024

“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace. Who bring glad tidings of good things!” (Romans 10:15)

To the Reverend Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful
of the Holy Orthodox Churches in the United States:

On Sunday, March 17th, just prior to Great Lent, Orthodox Christian churches throughout our nation will once again observe **Mission Sunday**, the day that reminds us of the importance of preaching Christ’s “gospel of peace” and **offering our support** to those who bring these “glad tidings”! As St. Paul further reminds us: “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him in whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?” (Romans 10:14)

The Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) is the agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America that coordinates our missionary efforts by:

- **Sending Missionaries** – Currently, 17 OCMC missionaries and their families have been sent to *preach the gospel of peace* in Albania, Brazil, Fiji, Guatemala, Mexico, Romania, and Tonga.
- **Supporting Mission Priests** – Almost 500 local priests, mostly in Africa, receive monthly financial assistance so that they might help their local people to *hear about Jesus Christ*.
- **Supporting seminaries and training Church Leaders and Clergy** – In Albania, Guatemala, Kenya, Madagascar, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere OCMC sends missionaries and/or funds to help train future clergy and church leaders who guide people who have heard the Good News, *to believe in Jesus Christ and call upon Him*.
- **Funding Missions Initiatives** – In 2023, just over \$1 million was sent around the world so that the Church could bring the *good things* that Christ promises to His creation – reaching unevangelized regions, establishing the Church, and tending to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of His people.

Therefore, on Mission Sunday, and every day, I pray that each of us will support the Holy Church’s most critical mission by one or more of the following:

1. **Pray** for the missionaries and mission priests around the world who, like the apostles, preach the Lord’s gospel of peace!
2. **Support** OCMC in its efforts to help more people call on the Lord.
3. **Engage** your communities and youth in this important work throughout Great Lent by ordering special missions Coin Boxes and Sunday School Lesson Plans to help spread glad tidings of good things offered by Christ Himself!

May your Lenten journey be blessed and may we all have the courage to preach Christ’s gospel of peace and bring His glad tidings to the ends of the earth!

With Blessings in Christ,

Archbishop Daniel
Episcopal Liaison to OCMC



MISSION SUNDAY

M A R C H 1 7 , 2 0 2 4

The Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) is the missions and evangelism agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America.. **OCMC annually supports Orthodox missionaries, mission clergy, and mission projects worldwide.** Please support and pray for these life-transforming ministries. Visit <http://www.ocmc.org> to learn how you can get involved with OCMC.



1-877-463-6784
WWW.OCMC.ORG
MISSIONS@OCMC.ORG



Youth Health Kit Drive and Assembly

Youth Volunteers and Monetary Donations Needed!

April 13, 2024 | 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

HOLY CROSS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

123 Gilkeson Rd. (Mt. Lebanon), Pittsburgh, PA 15228

All Orthodox Youth Groups are asked to participate.
Students, please bring your volunteer forms for school credit.

**Our goal is to assemble several thousand health kits.
Donations are needed to purchase bulk health kit supplies.**

To donate, please make checks payable to "Holy Cross AGAPE Fund"
with "IOCC Health Kit Project" in the memo, and mail to
Nick Terezis, c/o IOCC, 306 Marberry Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15215

Please contact Ava Terezis at 614.569.2414
or AvaT.Orthodox@gmail.com
to coordinate your youth group attendance.



IOCC®

INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

Miraculous Weeping Icon of the Blessed Virgin Mary



This icon of the Theotokos has been oozing large amounts of fragrant oil for 12 years. This has been confirmed by numerous Orthodox archbishops, bishops and clergy of many Christian Faiths.

Join us for a prayer service with this icon on Friday, April 5. Father Mark Leasure, custodian of the icon from St. George Orthodox Church in Taylor, Pa. will share many of the miraculous stories associated with the icon.



Friday, April 5, 2024
7:00 p.m.

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
Sixth Street
Monongahela, Pa.

FASTING

The fast for the forty days of Lent is indicated below, though many are not able to hold to the strict fast. We offer the following guidelines to be considered prayerfully with the guidance of your spiritual father and in consideration of any medical condition or dietary requirements.

STRICT FAST

No Meat, Fish, Milk, Dairy Products, Oil, or Oil Products

PALM SUNDAY

Fish, Oil & Wine permitted

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Fish, Oil & Wine Permitted

Shellfish are permitted throughout Great Lent

Resource:

The Orthodox Daily Planner and Resource Guide published by the Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries provides daily guidance in fasting, scripture, feast days and more.

St. John Chrysostom on Fasting

Do you fast? Give me proof of it by your works.

If you see a poor man, take pity on him.

If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him.

Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands and all the members of our bodies.

Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice.

Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.

Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful.

Let the ear fast, by not listening to evil talk and gossip.

Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism.

For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes,
but bite and devour our brothers?

May He who came to the world to save sinners strengthen us to
complete the fast with humility, have mercy on us and save us.

Jesus' Instructions on Fasting

"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."

Gospel of Matthew Chapter 6:16-18

REPENTANCE & CONFESSION

Repentance has its roots in the apostles. In the Book of Acts the Apostle Peter says, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:37-38)

When we fall away from God, we have removed ourselves from His communion – with Him and with other Christians. We have excommunicated ourselves. To re-enter communion with God is the on-going activity of all Christians. We fall away daily in some way or another. No one is exempt.

Often, when children play in competitive games, one will call out “that’s a do over!” Haven’t we all wished for that chance to undo the past and start over? Repentance offers us this new beginning.

We are telling God that we have changed our mind about our past direction and want to be back in communion with him. The Greek work for repentance, *metanoia*, implies a very deep change in the way we see ourselves, our world, and our relationship to God. To change our mind in repentance is the starting point in our Lenten journey. We leave behind regret as we move toward hope. Repentance is not a single action but an attitude, a frame of mind.

Think back over your life of things which you regret having said or done – hurtful, inconsiderate, selfish, deceitful. Think also of those things which you have done which may not have directly affected others, but which you know to be wrong according to the teachings of the Church. Bring them to mind as if they were occurring right now. Think of how it would have been if you had acted differently. Take this regret and turn it into repentance. Acknowledge that you have offended another person or the Church, and in doing so you have offended God.

If we are to be forgiven by God, He requires of us that we also forgive one another. For many of us, this is the most difficult aspect of repentance and confession. Yet we say it each time we pray the Lord’s Prayer, “forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Just as God’s love for us is personal, so must ours be for Him. As the Christian grows from child to adult, his or her personal response to God becomes crucial. This personal response is the act of confession.

PRAYER

Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Jesus Christ.

-St. Paul’s letter to the Philippians

One key to a more fulfilling life is prayer. For Orthodox Christians, the aim of prayer is to enter into conversation with God. Prayer is sometimes referred to as dialogue with God. Often it is a waiting on God in silence. In the church it is defined as the lifting of the mind and heart to God, and also as walking in the presence of God. We turn our mind and thoughts toward Him. We mentally gaze at Him and speak with Him in reverence, fear, and hope. At times we speak to Him with words and at other times we stand in reverent silence, saying nothing, but being aware of His presence. In this dialogue with God we praise Him and thank Him. We ask Him for what we need. Our mind and our heart are opened to Him. Prayer is not only repeating words, it is trust in God that he hears and directs us in His Way involving spiritual growth and development.

The Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian

Read each week-day during Great Lent

O Lord and Master of my life,
take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk.
But give rather the spirit of
chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant.
Yea, O Lord and King,
grant me to see my own transgressions,
and not to judge my brother,
for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages.
Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth,
present in all places and filling all things,
the treasury of blessings and Giver of life:
come and abide in us.
Cleanse us from all impurity, and save our souls,
O Gracious Lord.

Alms Giving Opportunities

IOCC- International Orthodox Christian Charities

Mission- IOCC. In the spirit of Christ's love, offers emergency relief and development programs to those in need worldwide, without discrimination, and strengthens the capacity of the Orthodox Church to so respond. IOCC will respond without discrimination, to those who are suffering and in need, to enable them to continue to improve their own lives and communities and to have means to live with dignity, respect and hope.

Donate at: www.iocc.org or send donation to IOCC, 110 West Road, Suite 360 Baltimore, MD 21204 or by phone 877-803-4622



OCMC- Orthodox Christian Mission Center

Mission- To help fulfill the Great Commission of Christ(Matthew 28:16); the Orthodox Christian Mission Center(OCMC) strives to establish vibrant Eucharistic communities throughout the world, to develop and support indigenous church leaders, and to strengthen the infrastructure of their churches. OCMC carries out this work primarily, though not solely, in countries where Christianity is in the minority and where the Gospel message has not been proclaimed. OCMC will recruit, train, send, and support Orthodox missionaries to preach, teach, baptize, construct, and minister to the spiritual and physical needs of those being served and saved.



Donate at: www.ocmc.org or send donation to: OCMC, 220 Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086

Neighborhood Resilience Project

Creating resilient healing and healthy communities. One block at a time. Rooted in the Gospel and teaching of the Orthodox Church, inspired by the Civil Rights Movement (American 1950s-1960s), the mission of the Neighborhood Resilience Project is to support the transformation of neighborhoods from Trauma Affected Communities to Resilient Healing and Healthy Communities through Trauma Informed Community Development.



Our Vision

To inspire a movement in which suffering people are raised up from the ashes of trauma in unconditional love to become empowered healers, community builders, and positive change makers.

Neighborhood Resilience Project and the Orthodox Church

The Neighborhood Resilience Project has a faith-based affiliation with the Orthodox Christian Church through a relationship with Saint Moses the Black Orthodox Church in the Hill District. The church provides pastoral support and spiritual direction as well as limited legal oversight.

Donate at: <https://neighborhoodresilience.org/>

ZOE for Life

Many women are fortunate to have the love and support structure to lead them to marriage, children, and a meaningful life. Others, however, are not as fortunate. They find themselves in a crisis pregnancy. They have made the wrong choices and are in turmoil. They're not thinking, they're panicking.

ZOE serves as a conduit, guiding women to a wider range of support organizations, providing them with a more attractive set of options and hopefully a more promising outlook on their situation. For example, there is counseling, housing assistance, medical assistance, prenatal care, adoption and other services available that are usually unknown to most women in crisis pregnancies. It is ZOE's goal to offer more options to women in distress to empower them to make life saving decisions for their babies as well as themselves.



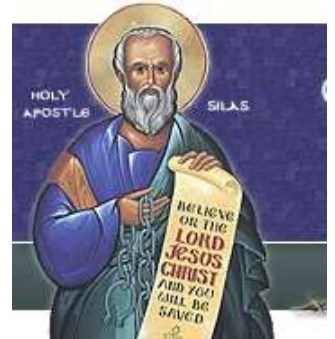
ZOE for Life!™ is a pan-Orthodox outreach of Orthodox Christians. It is funded privately, and has received 501(c)(3) status from the Internal Revenue Service. All gifts are tax-deductible as specified by law.

Donate at <https://zoeforlife.org/> or
3352 Mayfield Road , Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118

OCPM – Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry

Mission - The goal of OCPM is to bring the love of Christ to those who are in prison by providing encouragement, material support, transition and reintegration services, Christian education, spiritual guidance and the sacramental life of the Church.

Donate at: <https://theocpm.org/> or send donation to :
Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry (OCPM)
P.O. Box 1597
New York, NY 10025



DTCare Ukraine Operations

Since the onset of the war in Ukraine in early 2022, DTCare has been actively and systematically involved in sending cargoes of emergency relief supplies, building distribution networks, and providing psychological support for Ukrainian veterans, veteran families, and civilians. DTCare partnered with multiple organizations in Ukraine and Poland that continue to enable our humanitarian response to aid Ukrainians. In the initial stage of DTCare's Ukrainian Crisis Relief Campaign, we joined forces with the ZHP (Polish Scouting and Guiding Association) to distribute essential supplies to reception and transit centers in Poland and across the Ukrainian-Polish border to our Ukrainian partners. In light of the scale of the crisis in Ukraine, DTCare established a permanent office in Ukraine. After the finalization of DTCare UA's registration in mid-2022, we launched a broader effort to provide critical support throughout the conflict and help Ukraine rebuild. With the help of our partners, donors, and volunteers, we sent 23 humanitarian shipments (18 air freight and 5 ocean freight shipments) to Ukraine and Poland in 2022 and 16 humanitarian shipments (6 air freight and 10 ocean freight shipments) to Ukraine in 2023. In total, DTCare has sent close to a million dollars worth of over 280,000 pounds of humanitarian supplies to assist Ukrainian citizens.

More info and donate: <https://www.dtcare.org/ukraine>

St Andrew's Society

Saint Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Society was founded in 1990 by the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA as a religious and charitable organization.

As an integral ministry of the Church, the Society's philanthropic mission focuses on providing humanitarian assistance to the needy and supporting church-related projects in Ukraine. Since its founding, the Society has raised over 1.3 million dollars towards the support of religious, educational and humanitarian projects.



Saint Andrew's Society Mission supports:

- the Christian spiritual rebirth of the Ukrainian people and reverse the consequences of Soviet militant atheism;
- the efforts of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in re-establishing the universal principle of humanity, justice, charity and tolerance;
- the rebirth of the persecuted and devastated Church in the former Soviet Union.
- humanitarian aid to the needy, the orphans, the elderly, and the refugees in Ukraine;
- financial and logistical assistance to seminaries in Ukraine and scholarships for theological students to study abroad;
- publications of religious literature, assistance towards medical projects and church restorations.

Donations may be forwarded to:

St. Andrew's Society
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA
PO Box 495
So. Bound Brook, NJ 08880

There are many other worthwhile charities, causes and monasteries one can donate to during this Lenten season. Here are several links where additional information can be found.

www.uocofusa.org

www.assemblyofbishops.org

Internet Lenten Resources

ANCIENT FAITH MINISTRIES

<http://www.ancientfaith.com/>

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE

<http://www.antiochian.org/lent>

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE

<https://www.goarch.org/triodion> <https://www.goarch.org/lent>

MYSTAGOGY: GREAT LENT RESOURCE PAGE

<http://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2011/03/great-lent-resource-page.html>

My Beautiful Lent

<https://mybeautifullent.com/>

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN NETWORK

<http://myocn.net/>

FAST from discouragement and FEAST on hope.

FAST from lethargy and FEAST on enthusiasm.

FAST from suspicion and FEAST on truth.

FAST from thoughts that weaken and FEAST on promises that inspire.

FAST from shadows of sorrow and FEAST on the sunlight of serenity.

FAST from idle gossip and FEAST on purposeful silence.

FAST from problems that overwhelm you and FEAST on prayer that sustains.

FAST from criticism and FEAST on praise.

FAST from self-pity and FEAST on joy.

FAST from ill-temper and FEAST on peace.

FAST from resentment and FEAST on contentment.

FAST from jealousy and FEAST on love.

FAST from pride and FEAST on humility.

FAST from selfishness and FEAST on service

FAST from self-concern and FEAST on compassion for other.

Abbot Tryphon of All-merciful Savior Orthodox Monastery

SS. Peter & Paul
Ukrainian Orthodox Church
PO Box 835
Carnegie, PA 15106

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED