

SAINTS PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH
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BULLETIN OF MARCH 30, 2008

SUNDAY/MARCH 30th
3rd Sunday of Great Lent (Tone 3)
Veneration of the Holy Cross
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour

Mid-Point of 40 Day Fast
End of the 3rd and beginning of
the 4th week of the Great Fast

4:00p.m. Deanery Vespers in Wayne

MONDAY/MARCH 31st
7:00p.m. Vespers

TUESDAY/APRIL 1st
7:00p.m. Vespers; Confession

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 2nd
9:30a.m. Akathist of Repentance; Confession
6:30p.m. Presanctified Liturgy

THURSDAY/APRIL 3rd
3:00p.m. Akathist to the Passion; Confessions

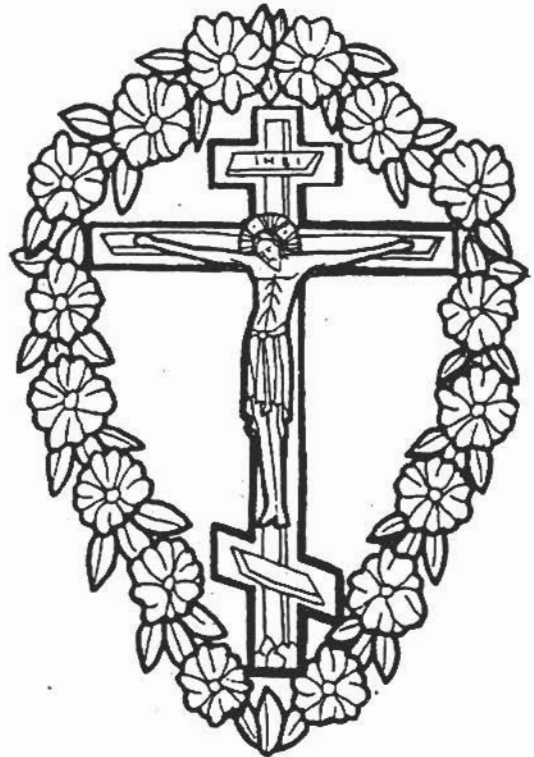
FRIDAY/APRIL 4th
7:00p.m. Vespers; Confessions

MEMORIAL/SATURDAY/APRIL 5th
9:30a.m. Akathist for Departed; Confessions
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/APRIL 6th
4th Sunday of Great Lent (Tone 4)
St. John of Sinai
9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Church School
Book-for-the-Month from Library

End of the 4th and beginning of
the 5th week of the Great Fast

4:00p.m. Deanery Vespers in Clifton



Hymns on the Beginning of the
Fourth Week of the Great and Holy Fast

O you faithful, let us venerate the holy wood on which the Maker of all was raised. It lies before us, sanctifying in soul and body those who draw near, cleansing the defilement of sin from all who fast with faith and ever sing in praise of Christ, the only Benefactor!

Reaching the middle of the Forty Days' Fast, with eager hearts let us go forward with Christ to the divine Passion; that crucified with Him, we may be sharers in His Resurrection!

O brethren, having come to the middle of the Fast, in good courage and with willing hearts let us complete with God's help the part which still remains, that in great joy we may behold the Passover of the risen Christ!

Preparing for Holy Communion

In the time of Great Lent, we partake more frequently of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ "for the remission of sins and life everlasting." Let us be mindful of the discipline expected of us in preparing to receive the Holy Gifts.

*A total fast from food and drink is held from midnight. Medicines may be taken at anytime.

(A fast for the evening Presanctified Liturgy should be held from at least 12:00 noon.)

*Pre-Communion Prayers are recited from the Prayer Book on the evening before or morning of the Divine Liturgy.

*Participation in the evening service on Saturday is part of the discipline for minimal preparation for receiving Holy Communion. This being said, not everyone can be present due to health, work, dependence on rides, etc. Nonetheless, we should strive to worship at the Vigil Service (or part of it, either the Vespers 5:30-6:15 or the Matins 6:15-7:30).

Our Saturday evenings ought to be spent in prayerful preparation at church and at home.

Namesday Greetings

Joseph the Patriarch/Mar. 31st: Joseph Crichton; Many Blessed Years!

The Holy Mysteries for Those Shut-In

Holy Confession and Holy Communion will be brought to the homes of those that are shut-in the 3rd week of Lent (Mar. 31st-Apr.6th) and The 4th week of Lent (Apr. 7th-13th). **Please be sure you are scheduled if you are unable to receive the Sacraments in church.**

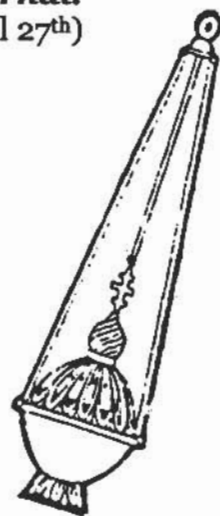
The Mysteries of Confession and Holy Communion

Ought to be received by all the faithful in the period of Great Lent (Mar. 10th-Apr. 19th). Confession is not scheduled during the Great and Holy Week (Apr. 20th-26th).

Parish Synodicon – Memory Eternal!

Metropolitan Laurus (40th Day – April 27th)

Mar. 30, 1959 Julius Kisel
Mar. 30, 1968 Pauline Bulat
Mar. 31, 1931 George Andrejko
Mar. 31, 1985 Alexander Rudzina
Apr. 01, 1966 John Huzinec
Apr. 01, 1974 Thomas Wytovich
Apr. 02, 1917 Ignatius Shevchuk
Apr. 02, 1928 Elias Zhak
Apr. 02, 1972 Eugenia Kiryluk
Apr. 02, 1987 Michael Mahalick
Apr. 02, 2003 Stepahnida Kozura
Apr. 04, 1957 Joseph Yarik
Apr. 04, 1959 Helen Hnatuk



Lenten Almsgiving

- OCMC Boxes – for mission work of the Church in USA and other countries. You may secure a box on the vestibule stand.
- The Poor Basket – in the middle of the church is the venue for the charitable work of our parish through the St. Philaret Society, which provides help for parishioners and others.
- St. Mary Magdalen Church in Jeruslaem an annual offering is made on Palm Sunday (use the envelope in your packet).

Orthodox Study Bible – Now both New & Old Testaments Combined

In March 2008, the *Old Testament* printed as an Orthodox Bible was released. This is the first and only Bible done by, and for Orthodox Christians in the English language. (see the following pages of this bulletin for an explanation of how our Bible differs from the Roman Catholic and Protestant versions.) To order a Bible (\$50) see Fr. James or Robert Smith.

Religious Items for Purchase

Please use an envelope when purchasing any religious item from the vestibule stand. Mark your envelope "religious resale," with amount of purchase on the envelope.

To order items (books, icons, crosses etc.) speak with Robert Smith for catalogue viewing.

A Saving Instruction by St. Innocent of Alaska (+Mar. 31, 1879)

“On the Bearing of the Cross”

Jesus said: “Whoever wishes to follow Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me.”

The first dutyis to deny oneself. To deny oneself means to give up one’s bad habits; to root out of the heart all that ties us to the world; not to cherish bad thoughts and desires; to suppress every evil thought; to avoid occasions of sin; not to desire or to do anything out of self-love, but to do everything out of love for God. To deny oneself, according to St. Paul means to be dead to sin...but alive to God.

A Christian’s second duty is to take up his cross. The word cross means sufferings, sorrows and adversities. To take up one’s cross means to bear without grumbling everything unpleasant, painful, sad, difficult and oppressive that may happen to us in life.

Thus whether anyone offends you, or laughs at you, or causes you grief, sorrow or annoyance; or you have done good to someone and instead of thanking you, he rises up against you and even makes trouble; or you want to do good, but are not given the chance; or some misfortune has happened such as sickness; or with all your activity and untiring labors you are suffering from want and poverty and are so hard pressed that you cannot make ends meet; or besides that you are in some personal difficulty – bear all this without malice, without grumbling, that is, without regarding yourself as offended and without expecting any earthly reward in return, but bear all with love, with joy and with courageous strength.

So far we have spoken of exterior crosses, but there are interior crosses as well.

Interior crosses can be found at all times, and more easily than exterior ones. You have only to direct your attention to yourself and examine yourself with a sense of repentance, and a thousand interior crosses will present themselves to you.

We can never see the condition of our inner self in all of its nakedness or vividly realize its dangers without special grace and help from God, because the interior of our soul is always hidden from us by our self-love, prejudices, passions, worldly cares, delusions. And if it sometimes happens to us that we see the condition of our inner selves, we can only see it superficially and no more than our reason and conscience can show us.

Interior crosses are sometimes so burdensome that the sufferer can find no consolation whatever in anything.

All this can happen to you too! But in whatever position you may be, and whatever sufferings of the soul you may feel, do not despair and do not think that the lord has abandoned you. No! God will always be with you and will invisibly strengthen you even when it seems that you are on the very brink of perdition.

God will never allow you to be tried and tempted more than he sees fit. Do not despair and do not be afraid. With full submission surrender totally to Him. Have patience and pray. He is our Loving Father.



Offerings for the Week of March 30th

Olive Oil – in memory of Emilia; for the health of Justina; in memory of Michael; in memory of Joan; in memory of Floarea, Gheorghe, Alexandru, Sasinca, Margareta, Aurelia, Ion, Alexandru; for the health of Mindy Lynn (birthday) in memory of Florin and Livia; in memory of Eugenia; for the health of Nicholas (birthday).

Remember in Prayer

Sophie Wassel.

Memory Eternal!

Archpriest Eugene Vansuch, Rector of St. Vladimir’s Church (OCA) in Trenton (+Mar. 23rd).



CONCERNING THE EFFECTS OF RECEIVING THE BODY AND BLOOD OF OUR LORD

There are at least four major benefits which may be expected after partaking of Christ's Body and Blood, namely:

1. Intimate union with Christ through His love.

Through this union we mingle with God and share with Him. As God is love, when we partake of Him through Holy Communion we become partakers of His love. It should be added that these Gifts from God are truly free. He compels no one to accept, just as in true love there is no compulsion, but absolute free to either accept or reject.

2. Strengthening of the body and soul.

Eating ordinary food only nourishes a person's body; but eating Christ's Flesh and Blood strengthens and nourishes both the body and soul. When the soul is nourished, a person is better able to live, grow and develop spiritually. This means that the ability to resist sin is greatly increased, thus enhancing the desire and capacity to be more virtuous, righteous, compassionate and considerate. We can be sure that this is so since Christ said: "I am the bread of life, he who comes to Me shall not hunger and he who believes in Me shall never thirst" (Jn 6:35), and then: "For My Flesh is true food and My Blood is true drink" (Jn 6:55).

With these statements Christ expounded the eternal nourishment value of His Flesh and Blood. Unlike ordinary food which only temporarily strengthens the body, true Divine food strengthens the soul eternally.

The strengthening effect of these Gifts, is another indicator of Christ's great love for us. Christ gave us certain Commandments to follow if we are able to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. Scripture teaches that evil is spread through man by various demonic powers (Eph 6:12). Without Divine intervention man does not have the strength to fight these extremely powerful, fleshless creatures – as Christ said: "...for without Me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5). Man alone does not have the strength to become perfect. Not wishing man to be condemned to hell, Christ nourishes us with His Body

and Blood – giving us a Perfect Food with which to become perfect.

3. Preparation for eternal life with God.

Partaking in Communion prepares us to share with God, an eternally joyful life after the resurrection of the dead. Christ is God and therefore lives forever – by eating His Body and Blood, we are blended with Him and will likewise live forever. This is Christ's promise when He said: "He who eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood has eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day" (Jn 6:54).

This "life" that Christ refers to is not related to the life here on earth, since it is obvious that all men "live" here, even non-Christians. Nor does He refer to "life" of the general resurrection. Rather, Christ refers to the glorious life which some Christians will inherit as a reward for righteous living. How necessary it is for us to partake in Christ's Body and Blood; by being with Him, our souls are washed and transformed – made beautiful – then, after death, we would not expect punishment and hell, but the unspeakable rewards of the Heavenly Kingdom.



4. Unity through love with other Christians.

Christ has only one Body, by partaking of It, each and everyone of us also becomes united into one body – the Body of Christ. Christ's love for us is made perfect in unity, since not only is it reciprocated between ourselves and Christ, but amongst ourselves as well. This is what Christ meant when He established the Church.

The Church is not a building where people pray, it is the Body of Christ – a living organism, in which we all unite in love with Him and amongst ourselves, when we partake of Holy Communion (1 Cor 10:17). Christ is the head of His Body, the Church (Col 1:18), and not some bishop, patriarch, theologian or other mortal man. The Orthodox Church is thus infallible, since Christ being God, is infallible; we can then be sure that our Divine nourishment can never be false or corrupted, even if those who perform this Sacrament are themselves imperfect or unworthy.



Lenten Reflection

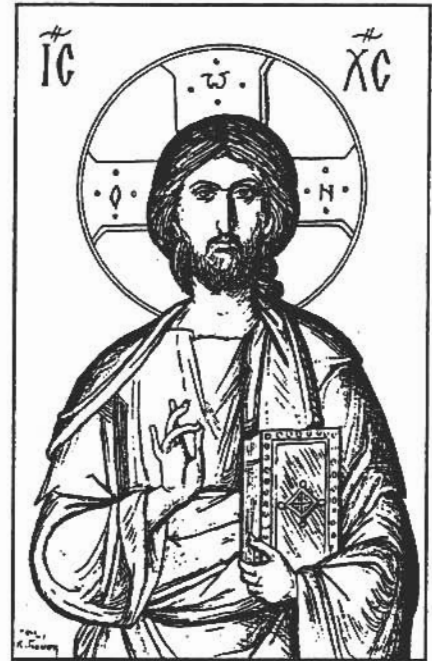
Confession that Leads the Inward Man to Humility



Turning my eyes carefully upon myself and watching the course of my inward state, I have verified by experience that I do not love God, that I have no religious belief, and that I am filled with pride and sensuality. All this I actually find in myself as a result of detailed examination of my feelings and conduct.

And so, I do not love God. For if I loved God I should be continually thinking about Him with heartfelt joy. Every thought of God would give me gladness and delight. On the contrary, I much more often and much more eagerly think about earthly things, and thinking about God is labor and dryness. If I loved God, then talking with Him in prayer would be my nourishment and delight and would draw me to unbroken communion with Him. But, on the contrary, I not only find no delight in prayer, but even find it an effort. I struggle with reluctance, I am enfeebled by sloth, and am ready to occupy myself eagerly with any unimportant trifle, if only it shortens prayer and keeps me from it. My time slips away unnoticed in futile occupations, but when I am occupied with God, when I put myself into His presence every hour seems like a year.

If one person loves another, he thinks of him throughout the day without ceasing, he pictures him to himself, he cares for him, and in all circumstances his beloved friend is never out of his thoughts. But I, throughout the day, scarcely set aside even a single hour in which to sink deep down into meditation upon God, to inflame my heart with love of Him, while I eagerly give up twenty-three hours as fervent offerings to the idols of my passions. I am forward in talk about frivolous matters and things which degrade the spirit; that gives me pleasure. But in the consideration of God I am dry, bored and lazy.



Even if I am unwillingly drawn by others into spiritual conversation, I try to shift the subject quickly to one which pleases my desires. I am tirelessly curious about novelties, about civic affairs and political events; I eagerly seek the satisfaction of my love of knowledge in science and art, and in ways of getting things I want to possess. But the study of the Law of God, the knowledge of God and of religion, make little impression on me, and satisfy no hunger of my soul. I regard these things not only as a nonessential occupation for a Christian, but in a casual way as a sort of side-issue with which I should perhaps occupy my spare time, at odd moments.

To put it briefly, if love for God is recognized by the keeping of His commandments: *If ye love Me, keep My commandments*, says our Lord Jesus Christ. And I not only do not keep them, but even make little attempt to do so, then in absolute truth the conclusion follows that I do not love God. That is what Basil the Great says: *"The proof that a man does not love God and His Christ less is the fact that he does not keep His commandments."*

I do not love my neighbor either. For not only am I unable to make up my mind to lay down my life for his sake (according to the Gospel), but I do not even sacrifice my happiness, well-being and peace for the good of my neighbor. If I did love him as myself, as the Gospel bids, his misfortunes would distress me also, his happiness would bring delight to me too. But, on the contrary, I listen to curious, unhappy stories about my neighbor and I am not distressed; I remain quite undisturbed or what is still worse, I find a sort of pleasure in them. Bad conduct on the part of my brother I do not cover up with love, but proclaim abroad with censure. His well being, honor and happiness do not delight me as my own, and, as if they were something quite alien to me, give me no feeling of gladness. What is more, they subtly arouse in me feelings of envy or contempt.

I have no religious belief. Neither in immortality nor in the Gospel. If I were firmly persuaded and believed without doubt that beyond the grave lies eternal life and recompense for the deeds of this life, I should be continually thinking of this. The very idea of immortality would terrify me and I should lead this life as a foreigner who gets ready to enter his native land. On the contrary, I do not even think about eternity, and I regard the end of this earthly life as the limit of my existence.

The secret thought nestles within me: Who knows what happens at death? If I say I believe in immortality, then I am speaking about my mind only, and my heart is far removed from a firm conviction about it. That is openly witnessed to by my conduct and my constant care to satisfy the life of the senses. Were the Holy Gospel taken into my heart in faith, as the Word of God, I should be continually occupied with it, I should study it, find delight in it and with deep devotion fix my attention upon it. Wisdom, mercy, love, are hidden in it; it would lead me to happiness, I should find gladness in the study of the Law of God day and night. In it I should find nourishment like my daily bread and my heart would be drawn to the keeping of its laws. Nothing on earth would be strong enough to turn me away from it.

On the contrary, if now and again I read or hear the Word of God, yet even so it is only from necessity or from a general love of knowledge, and approaching it without any very close attention, I find it dull and uninteresting. I usually come to the end of the reading without any profit, only too ready to change over to secular reading in which I take more pleasure and find new and interesting subjects.

I am full of pride and sensual self-love. All my actions confirm this. Seeing something good in myself, I want to bring it into view, or to pride myself upon it before other people or inwardly to admire myself for it. Although I display an outward humility, yet I ascribe it all to my own strength and regard myself as superior to others, or at least no worse than they. If I notice a fault in myself, I try to excuse it, I cover it up by saying, "I am made like that" or "I am not to blame." I get angry with those who do not treat me with respect and consider them unable to appreciate the value of people. I brag about my gifts: my failures in any undertaking I regard as a personal insult. I murmur, and I find pleasure in the unhappiness of my enemies. If I strive after anything good it is for the purpose of winning praise, or spiritual self-indulgence, or earthly consolation. In a word, I continually make an idol of myself and render uninterrupted service, seeking in all things the pleasures of the senses, and nourishment for my sensual passions and lusts.

Going over all this I see myself as proud, adulterous, unbelieving, without love to God and hating my neighbor. What state could be more sinful? The condition of the spirits of darkness is better than mine. They, although they do not love God, hate men, and live upon pride, yet at least believe and tremble. But I? Can there be a doom more terrible than that which faces me, and what sentence of punishment will be more severe than that upon the careless and foolish life that I recognize in myself?



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Through the forgiveness of sins in confession, the past is no longer an intolerable burden but rather an encouragement for what lies ahead. Life acquires an attitude of expectation, not of despondency; and confession becomes the way out of the impasse caused by sin. In this respect, repentance is also an eschatological act, realizing in our very midst, here and now, the promises of the age to come. Looking backwards would seem to imply the fate of Lot's wife (Genesis 19.26); "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9.62). God Himself is revealed *before* us and walks *in front* of us. "One thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead" (Philippians 3.13).

Question?

NEWLY PUBLISHED!

March 2008 – the LXX

(Septuagint) with Orthodox

Footnotes. The Orthodox

Study Bible Old & New

Testaments (\$50)

What are the differences between the Old Testaments of the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Protestant Churches?

Answer:

THERE ARE SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES:

- 1) Books within the Bible, 2) Source and content of the books themselves, 3) Titles of books, and 4) Order in which books are placed.

The Orthodox Church has always used the Septuagint (LXX) as its Old Testament. The name *Septuagint* was given to honor the seventy (or seventy-two) Jewish elders who began the translation of the Old Testament from Hebrew into Greek. The Septuagint was used by Christ and His disciples. Most of the New Testament quotations of the Old Testament are from the Septuagint which remained the Old Testament of the Church everywhere until the time of Jerome (d. 420).

After that, the Catholic Church, and those churches under its authority, began to accept Jerome's Latin translation of a more recent Hebrew Old Testament and use his edition for their Old Testament. The Catholic Church labeled some books as "deuterocanonical," to distinguish them from those books they considered canonical. Later, the Protestant reformers of the 16th century, and their heirs, separated these books from the rest of the Old Testament, calling them *The Apocrypha*. Many Protestant leaders consider the Apocrypha books unworthy of being bound with the Bible and by the early 19th century, Protestant Bibles were being published without the Apocrypha. Today, many Protestants have never even heard of these books and those who have, consider them untrustworthy and likely heretical.

THERE ARE FOUR CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE SEPTUAGINT AND THE OSB-OT-STUDY BIBLE:

- FIRST:** The Septuagint is the Old Testament used in the historic Church.
- SECOND:** The Church used the Septuagint from the beginning.
- THIRD:** The Old Testament of the Catholics and Protestants represent changes based upon false and inaccurate assumptions about the "true Bible".
- FOURTH:** Those desiring the right Bible, need the Septuagint in readable English.

