

SS. PETER & PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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BULLETIN OF FEBRUARY 23, 2020

SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 23

Meat-Fare Sunday/ Last Judgment

Last Day for Meat Products

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

Church School

WEDNESDAY/FEBRUARY 26

Meat Fast Only – dairy, fish permitted

7:00p.m. Vespers

THURSDAY/FEBRUARY 27

St. Raphael of Brooklyn (+1915)

8:00a.m. Divine Liturgy

7-8:30p.m. Study Class: "John 13:

34-35 – The Commandment of Love"

FRIDAY/FEBRUARY 28

Meat Fast Only – dairy, fish permitted

SATURDAY/FEBRUARY 29

5:30p.m. Vigil; Confessions

SUNDAY/MARCH 1

Cheese-Fare/Forgiveness Sunday

Last Day for Dairy & Fish Products

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

Food Basket Day/Coffee Hour

12:30p.m. Forgiveness Vespers

MONDAY/MARCH 2

Beginning of 40 Day Great & Holy Fast



Notes on Fasting

Fasting from foods is intended as spiritual preparation for an experience of deeper communion with God. Each person is a unity of body and soul. A right spiritual diet and a discipline of fasting go together and strengthen each other. Just as prayer benefits not only the soul but also the body so also fasting from foods benefits not only the body but also the soul. Fasting and prayer make us more sensitive to God's personal presence. At important times of their lives the Prophets fasted and prayed. So did Jesus, the Apostles, Saints and Church Fathers.

Fasting must be undertaken willingly and not by compulsion. God doesn't need our fasting. We don't fast as a kind of personal punishment for our sins. We cannot pay God back for our sins but we can only confess them to Him to receive forgiveness. Fasting with a willing spirit and not just with an attitude of fulfilling a religious obligation means that we keep the purposes of fasting always before us which is to develop self-control and to remember God and His Kingdom. That way we fast not only in what we eat but also in how much we eat. Fasting is simplicity of eating. We leave the table not with loaded stomachs. Being a little hungry during the day becomes a constant reminder of God, of our dependence on Him, and of the fact that the Lord alone can give us "food that lasts for eternal life" (Jn 6:27). In fasting and prayer, He reveals Himself to us as our true food and drink.



Offerings Week of February 23

Relic Candle: in memory of Ivanna; for the health of Alexia; in memory of Michael, Justina, Rosalie, Anastasia, Melania, and Ivanna; for the health of Helen; for the health of Alexia; in memory of Nicholas, Eleanore, John, Ann-Marie and Jerome; for the remission of sins of Vera and Nicholas; in memory of John.

Olive Oil: in memory of Vaschen, Emilia; Virginia and Eugenia; for the health of John and Carol (anniversary); for the health of Mother Maria, Fr. Ilya, Fr. Roman, Fr. Blosaria, Fr. Mikey and Archimandrite Soustinos.

Wine: for the health of Proto-Deacon Paul and Zachary (birthdays).

Flowers: in honor of the Theotokos, our Great Protectress.

Parish Synodicon: Memory Eternal!

Feb. 23, 1942 Louis Potapchuk
Feb. 23, 1946 Joseph Wilhousky Sr.
Feb. 25, 1941 Constantine Yushkevich
Feb. 25, 1960 Helen Wilhousky
Feb. 26, 1969 Stephen Woychid
Feb. 28, 1969 John Semoskovich
Feb. 28, 1983 Anna Cimpko
Feb. 28, 1992 John Lapchuk
Feb. 29, 1944 John Marchisin
Feb. 29, 1960 Fr. Jacob Grigorieff

Coffee Hour Hosting

Feb. 23 Chirnoaga, Moldoveanu, Vajda
& Sue
Mar. 01 *No Meats*
Mar. 01 Peterson, Bakaletz, Mattei &
Stone

Counters Schedule

Feb. 23 Larissa M. & Paulina N.
Mar. 01 Katrina G. & Ekaterina M.

Ushers Schedule

Feb. 23 Edward S. & Kahka K.
Mar. 01 Peter B.

Readers Schedule

Feb. 23 Daniel T. / Mar. 01 John Z.

Enlarging Your Circle of Friendship

Oftentimes when we come to church we find ourselves mingling with the same group of people; people with whom we may have a special affinity or perhaps people with whom we may have formed lasting friendships – and this is a wonderful thing! Yet, at the same time, we ought not to pass up the opportunity to interact with and get to know folks outside our circle of friends. There is nothing better than a unified parish, whose circle of friendship includes everyone. Take a moment each Sunday, especially at Coffee Hour, to get to know someone different – you won't regret it!

"Super Bowl Sunday" Charity Collection

A check for \$1,200 was sent to "Great Expectations" in Somerset, our designated local charity. The Lord bless your offering!

Kolyvia – Boiled Wheat

Is sought for the following services:

Mar. 6th, Pre-sanctified Liturgy 6:30p.m.

Mar. 14, 21 and 28th, Memorial Saturdays 9:30a.m.

If you wish to subscribe for any of these dates please let Katherine Mantzafos know.

Easter Candy Sale Is Now Underway

Order forms may be picked up in church. Please return your orders as soon as possible. Thanks.

Pussy willows – A Mild Winter

The expectation is that pussy willows will be blooming rather early this year. You may bring them to the hall, where we will store them. Thanks.

Forgiveness Vespers – March 1, 12:30p.m.

This very important service is the first of Great Lent. We gather as a parish family to pray for one another and ask for mutual forgiveness. Be with us in our common Lenten Journey and participate in this service.

Orthodox Christian Cemetery of Ss. Peter & Paul

A digital map of the cemetery plots and listing of names of those buried in the cemetery has been created and may be viewed on the parish website: www.ssppco.org/cemetery as well as the website of the cemetery: www.orthodoxchristiancemetery.org



GENERAL RULES OF FASTING FOR THE GREAT AND HOLY LENT

Let us set out with joy upon the season of the Fast and prepare ourselves for spiritual combat.

Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh; and as we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion.

The Orthodox idea of fasting is first of all that of an ascetical effort. It is the effort to subdue the physical, the fleshly man to the spiritual one, the "natural" to the "supernatural." Limitations in food are instrumental; they are not ends in themselves. Fasting thus is but a means of reaching a spiritual goal and, therefore, an integral part of a wide spiritual effort. Fasting, in the Orthodox understanding, includes more than abstinence from certain types of food. It implies prayer, silence, an internal disposition of mind, an attempt to be charitable, kind, and - in one word - spiritual. "Brethren, while fasting bodily, let us also fast spiritually..."

And because of this the Orthodox doctrine of fasting excludes the evaluation of fasting in terms of a "maximum" or "minimum." Everyone must find his or her maximum, weigh his or her conscience and find in it his or her "pattern of fasting." But this pattern must necessarily include the spiritual as well as the "bodily" elements. The Typikon and the canons of the Church give the description of an ideal fast: no meat, no dairy products, total abstinence on certain days. "He that is able to receive it, let him receive it" (Matthew 19:12). But whatever is our measure - our fasting must be a total effort of our total being.

Keeping this in mind we should fast in order to achieve the goal of prayer, repentance, and forgiveness. To fast means abstaining not only from certain foods, but most importantly from passions, bad habits, overindulgence, rudeness and selfishness. It means also that we should abstain from everything that might take the focus of our life away from the spiritual effort. Among these things are every kind of entertainment, such as going to the movies, watching TV or going on spring vacations. For married couples it will also imply abstaining from intimacy.

The fundamental meaning of the fasting effort is to discover the true values of our life, to discover that we live not for our own sake but in the context of our relationship with each other and with the living God. So we fast not in terms of our individual piety but by linking our life with that of the Church. In essence, fasting is an exercise in being faithful: to each other in observing the same rules and sharing in the same hardship, and to our Lord Himself Who has given us fasting as a school of love.

By Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann



Meat is not permitted on any day.



Dairy is not permitted on any day.



Wine and oil are permitted on weekends, and on a few other days (see your wall calendar)



Fish is permitted only on the Annunciation (March 25th) and on Palm Sunday.

HOMILY ON "FASTING" -- SEVEN QUESTIONS, SEVEN ANSWERS

His Eminence, Michael ~ Archbishop of New York & the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

Question #1: Why do we fast?

Just as the children of Israel ate the "bread of affliction" (Deuteronomy 16:3) in preparation for the Passover, so Christians prepare themselves for the celebration of Pascha by observing the fast of Great Lent. Moses fasted on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:28), and Elijah on Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:8-12). But most importantly Our Lord fasted in the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights (Matthew 4:1-2) and we imitate His example.

Question #2: But, did Jesus really teach fasting?

Yes, He instructs us, "When the Bridegroom is taken away, My disciples will fast" (Matthew 9:15). And He presumes His followers will fast, in His Sermon on the Mount when He teaches, "When you fast ..." not if you fast. He goes on to say, "Anoint your head and wash your face so that you do not appear to be fasting before men ... your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly." (Matt. 6:16-18).

Question #3: When did fasting on certain days originate?

As early as the first century, in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, we read: "He (Christ) commanded us to fast on Wednesday and Friday." The Saints explain, we fast "on Wednesday because on this day Our Lord was betrayed; and on Friday because on this day He suffered death for our salvation."

Question #4: What is the purpose of fasting?

Although fasting has many health benefits, the primary aim of fasting is to make us conscious of our dependence on God. We voluntarily experience physical hunger in order to become aware of our true spiritual hunger. Another reason we fast is to subdue our passions and self-will. The Saints tell us there is no way we can control our urges for pleasure, money or power, if we cannot control our stomach. Fasting is the first step toward self-control. And our self-will is cut off by being obedient to the Church and her rules.

Question #5: Is fasting only a matter of diet?

No, it is moral as well as physical. True fasting is to be converted in heart and will; it is to return to God, to

come home like the Prodigal Son to our Father's house. In the words of Saint John Chrysostom it means "abstinence not only from food but from sins." He says, "The fast should be kept not only by the mouth but also by the eye, the ear, the feet, the hands and the other members of the body." The eye must abstain from impure sights; the ear, from malicious gossip; the hands, from acts of injustice. Saint Basil says "it is useless to fast from food and yet indulge in cruel criticism and slander: You do not eat meat but devour your brother." And although we may return to eating meat and cheese after Pascha comes, we should of course strive NOT to return to the sins from which we struggled to abstain during the course of the Fast. We give up rich foods for Lent ... We should give up gossip and laziness and greed, forever.



Question #6: What is the inner significance of fasting?

The deepest meaning of fasting is best summed up in the triad: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Fasting is valueless if not combined with prayer. In the Gospel, Our Lord tells us that the devil is cast out by "prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:21); and Acts of the

Apostles records the early Christians "fasted and prayed" (Acts 13: 3). The Great Fast is certainly a time to improve our prayer life, both personally at home, and by our participation in Lenten services at church.

Question #7: And what about almsgiving?

Prayer and fasting should be accompanied by almsgiving – by love for others expressed in practical form. The second century Shepherd of Hermas insists that the money saved from abstaining from rich foods during the fast should be given to the widow, the orphan, and the poor. Lent is certainly the time to increase our works of mercy for "the least of His brethren," for those who are in need.

So, as we begin Great Lent, let our hearts sing out this hymn of the Church:

Let us set out with joy upon the season of the Fast, and prepare ourselves for spiritual combat. Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh; and as we fast from food, let us abstain also from every passion. Rejoicing in the virtues of the Spirit, may we persevere with love.

LENTEN PRAYER PARTNERS

“A MINISTRY OF PRAYER”

The Great and Holy Lent begins March 2nd. This year we will again express our support for one another in the ministry of daily prayer, in this sacred season. In our Lenten Journey we need to encourage, support and express love for each other. One essential way is offering prayer for members of our “church family.” This ministry is open to all, adults and children. You are invited to pray for one another. If you would like to participate:

1. Sign your name on the sheet of paper in the vestibule and fill out a prayer card with your first and last name and place it in the box.
2. On Forgiveness Sunday, March 1st you will draw a name from the box. If you will not be here on March 1, indicate this on the sign-up sheet. A name will be drawn for you and placed in a sealed envelope and left in the back of the church for you to pick up.
3. Every day from March 2 thru April 18, each participant will pray for the person whose name they have received.
4. On New Sunday, April 26, at the Coffee hour we will reveal ourselves to our “Prayer Partner.” On this day, take time to talk with your “Prayer Partner” and get to know that person in a special.

A Prayer for Another Person

O Lord Thou hast gifted us with this season of Great Lent as a time for fasting, prayer, good works and repentance. Enable us by spiritual struggle to grow in our lives to the measure of the stature of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be mindful especially in this time of Thy servant (*name*), grant unto (*him/her*) strength, grace and salvation. Bless us all as we fervently pray so that in purity of heart we may behold Thy Holy Resurrection.

A Prayer for Another Person

O Lord, save and have mercy on Thy servant (*name*) grant (*him/her*) health, strength, salvation and every grace in this Great and Holy Lent.