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FOR THE *LIFE* OF THE WORLD

The monthly newsletter of
**Saints Constantine and Helen Greek
Orthodox Church**

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March 2023

Great Lent Imitates the Fast of Christ

By Sergei V. Bulgakov

The didactic imitation of the fast of Christ during the time preceding the days in which the sufferings, the death and the glorious resurrection of Christ are remembered, gives to the Holy Forty Day Fast a special meaning and value for us. The suffering of the Savior and His Resurrection grant to all of us hope even for our resurrection to eternal life. But to realize this hope of receiving an eternal blessed life, we need to imitate Christ in purity and holiness of life. We need to go through the same path of life, as also did the Savior: the way of self-renunciation and self-denial and besides this, the way of struggle against the sensuality and sinfulness of our nature.

The Holy Forty Day Fast serves as the most convenient way to follow this way. "If we shall carefully observe them", teaches the Blessed Augustine, "the Forty Days signify the life of the present age, as the days of Pascha also signify the life of eternal blessedness". In the Forty Day Fast we have contrition, and in Pascha we have joy. And in the present life we should be repentant so that in the future life we could reach eternal blessings. So, everyone, during his terrestrial life, should sigh about his sins, pour out his tears, and do works of mercy. But if the obstacles of the world often confuse us in this, then in a larger measure we shall fulfill in our heart the sweetness of

the law of God during the Holy Forty Days.

During the harvest season food for the body is gathered, so that during the season of the spiritual harvest we should gather food for the soul, which could be eaten for eternal life. If we are negligent and have not prepared anything during its season, the whole year endures famine. So the one who neglects fasting, reading the Sacred Scriptures, and prayers during this period fails to gather spiritual wheat and heavenly food for the soul, and will reap eternal thirst and heavy distress.

Even the Holy Church expresses a similar idea when she prays to God for us that He guide us "in these most honorable days" of the Holy Forty Days, "for the cleansing of souls and bodies, for the abstention from passions, for the hope of resurrection", and gave to us the power "through ascetical effort to strive for the good, to complete the course of the fast, to observe the undivided faith, to destroy the heads of the invisible serpents, and to be revealed the conqueror of sin". In such a way the Holy Forty Days, according to the sense and meaning for us, is a paradigm of our life as it should be, i.e. life not for the flesh and this world, but for heaven and eternity.

Mystagogy Resource Center

2023 Parish Calendar

Thurs, Feb. 2nd	Presentation of our Lord
Sat, Feb. 18	First Saturday of Souls
Sun, Feb. 26	Forgiveness Sunday/Meatfare
Mon, Feb. 27	Great Lent Begins
Sun, March 12	St. John Chrysostom Oratorical
Saturday, March 25th	Holy Annunciation
Sun, April 2nd	Spring General Assembly
Sat, April 8th	Lazarus Saturday/Church Clean/Cross making
Sun, April 17th	Palm Sunday
Sun, April 16th	Holy Pascha
Sun, May 21st	Sts. Constantine & Helen
Thurs, May 25	Holy Ascension
Thurs, June 3	Saturday of Souls
Sun, June 4th	Holy Pentecost
Thurs, June 29th	Sts. Peter and Paul
San, Aug. 6th	Holy Transfiguration
Tues, Aug. 15th	Dormition of the Theotokos
Thurs, Sept. 14	Elevation of the Holy Cross
Sun, Oct. 29th	Fall General Assembly
Sun, Nov. 12th	Parish Council Elections
Sun, Nov. 19th	Stewardship Sunday
Mon., Dec. 25th	Holy Nativity of our Lord

The Lenten Prayer of Saint Ephraim Explained

A SPIRITUAL CHECKLIST

By Jason J. Barker

Orthodox Christians recite a prayer during Great Lent that is described by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann as a “check list” for our spiritual lives. This prayer, given by St. Ephraim the Syrian in the fourth century, is commonly called the “Lenten Prayer.”

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, 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 errors and not to judge my brother; For Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.



Fr. Alexander explains that the prayer - along with the spiritual disciplines of Great Lent (as well as the rest of the year) - is “aimed first at our liberation from some fundamental spiritual diseases which shape our life and make it virtually impossible for us even to start turning ourselves to God.” Let’s go through the prayer of St. Ephraim to see how it can help order your spiritual life.

The prayer starts by referring to Jesus Christ as “Lord and Master of my

life.” Elder Porphyrios, a twentieth century Greek monk, teaches that Christians should “love Christ and put nothing before His love,” because “Christ is Everything. He is joy, He is life, He is light. He is the true light who makes man joyful, makes him soar with happiness; makes him see everything, everybody; makes him feel for everyone, to want everyone with Him, everyone with Christ.” Do you love Christ like this, or are there things that are more important to you than Him? If Jesus Christ is Lord and Master of your life, you will want to pray to Him, receive Him in Holy Communion, and live your life in a way that pleases Him and enables you to grow in union with Him.

After proclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord and Master, St. Ephraim then asks Him to “take from me the spirit of sloth.” Sloth is laziness and inactivity, and Fr. Alexander Schmemmann explains that “it is the root of all sin because it poisons the spiritual energy at its very source.” Sloth makes Christians ask “what for?” when presented with an opportunity to engage in spiritual growth. Lorenzo Scupoli, a sixteenth century Christian, warns against spiritual sloth:

“Having once tasted the pleasure of inaction, you begin to like and prefer it to action. In satisfying this desire, you will little by little form a habit of inaction and laziness, in which the passions for doing nothing will possess you to such extent that you will cease even to see how incongruous and criminal it is; except perhaps when you weary of this laziness, and are again eager to take up your work. Then you will see with shame how negligent you have been and how many necessary works you have neglected, for the sake of the empty and useless 'doing what you like'.”

Are you spiritually slothful? Do you avoid praying with a half-hearted

THE ORTHODOX STEWARD OUR RESPONSE



Stewardship is our response to God's grace and moves us from grace to gratitude. Just as we love because God first loved us (I John 4:14), we give because God first gave to us. The question of the Psalmist "What shall I give to the Lord in return for all His benefits towards me?" (Ps 116:12), is answered in every liturgy when we pray, "Let us offer ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God."

How many times have you heard people say, "I don't get anything out of liturgy"? The truth is that we don't come to church to get something, but to give ourselves -- our whole being -- to God. We have to give ourselves as an offering to God and what we get in return is the presence of Jesus Christ within us. As we come to know Jesus this way, we are drawn

into the communion of the Church.

The Orthodox Steward -- Orthodox Christian -- realizes that God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, has given life as a gift. He or she also realizes that we respond to that Love, that Gift, in every facet of life.

We also recognize that an essential part of that life is our gathering together in the temple to receive all the Love of God and to be joined in a fellowship and life that includes our response and lasts through all eternity, "to the ages of ages. Amen!"

Lenten Prayer, Continued from p. 2

promise to yourself and God that you'll "do it later?" Do you avoid fasting because it seems too hard and unpleasant? Do you avoid reading the Bible because it seems like a lot of work? If you let sloth control your actions, you are refusing to make Jesus the "Lord and Master" of your life.

St. Ephraim next prays to be freed from "faint-heartedness." Faint-heartedness means despondency: overwhelming depression and a feeling of hopelessness. The Church Fathers warn that despondency is the greatest danger to the soul, because a despondent person is unable or unwilling to see anything positive or good - even in God - and is therefore unwilling to do anything to change his or her life. St. John Climacus, a sixth century monk on Mt. Sinai, describes despondency:

"Despondency is a paralysis of soul, an enervation of the mind, neglect of asceticism, hatred of the vow made. It calls those who are in the world blessed. It accuses God of being merciless and without love for men. It is being languid in singing psalms, weak in prayer, like iron in service, resolute in manual labor, reliable in obedience."

Have you ever thought that there is no point in participating in the spiritual life of the Church because "I'll never be a saint?" Do you believe that you'll never be able to overcome some of the sins with which you struggle? If so, then you are engaging in despondency, and implicitly denying God's ability to reach and transform you.

The "lust of power," next in St. Ephraim's prayer, doesn't necessarily mean the desire to become an all-powerful dictator that rules a company or nation. Instead, it ultimately refers to selfishness and self-centeredness. Fr. Alexander Schmemmann teaches:



Mission Team
St. Louis

The Orthodox Mission Team of St. Louis works to nurture an awareness within our local churches of the need to evangelize, catechize, and support missionary efforts and programs globally.



Missions Observation 2023

For so the Lord has commanded us 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.' – Acts 13:47

On Sunday, February 26, just prior to Great Lent, our Orthodox Christian churches throughout our nation observed **Mission Sunday**, a time to recall our own mission as the People of God within this world. As we begin our Lenten preparation for Pascha, throughout these days we will affirm “the Light of Christ illumines all” (at each Presanctified Divine Liturgy), culminating in receiving the Light as we proclaim and glorify the Lord’s Resurrection.

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

- **Sending Missionaries** – Currently, 24 OCMC missionaries and their families – from diverse professional backgrounds – are serving in Albania, Fiji, Guatemala, Mexico, Romania, Southeast Asia, and elsewhere around the world.
- **Supporting Mission Priests** – Almost 500 local priests, mostly in Africa, receive monthly financial assistance to minister – often to multiple parishes.
- **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 share and teach the faith to people in their native language and culture.

Funding Missions Initiatives – In 2022, just over \$1 million was sent to Orthodox missionaries and dioceses around the world so that the church could minister to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of people.

1 Therefore, on behalf of OCMC and our Assembly of Bishops, I hope that each of us will support the Holy Church’s most central 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 Gospel of the Lord’s salvation to all peoples.
2. **Give** a financial gift to OCMC in support of its ministries to make more mission work possible.

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 the Light of Christ.

May your Lenten journey be blessed with good strength and may the call to share Christ’s triumphant Resurrection fill our hearts. The world needs the light of Christ. You are needed to take the Light to the ends of the earth!

With Blessings in Christ,

Bishop Demetrios
Episcopal Liaison to OCMC

*Funds can be donated during Great Lent in support of OCMC’s ministries through the Coin Box Program (boxes were handed out in church), can be sent directly to OCMC, 220 Mason Manatee Way, St. Augustine, FL 32086 or by going to www.ocmc.org/serve-from-home/give (add **Coin Box** in the memo box)*

As always, please feel free to contact Rosie Hartley, 618-447-9688, if you have any questions, would like to be part of the Mission Team St. Louis, or if you would like to help our missionaries.

Thank you for your continued support!

Our Parish will Host

The Pan Orthodox Compunction Vespers

Sunday, April 2, 2023, 5pm

followed by Lenten Supper



Holy Sacraments And Services

Funerals

- ◆ John Demos, Monday,
February 27th

Memorials and Trisagia

- ◆ Sunday, Feb. 5th
 - ◆ One Year, Alexander Delecaris
 - ◆ One Year, John Longos
 - ◆ One Year, Melba Pathenos
- ◆ Sunday, February 19
 - ◆ 3 Days, John Demos
 - ◆ 3 Days, Constantine Sharos

Prayer of St. Ephraim

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, 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 errors and not to judge my brother; For Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

"If my life is not oriented toward God, not aimed at eternal values, it will inevitably become selfish and self-centered and this means that all other beings will become means of my own self-satisfaction. If God is not the Lord and Master of my life, then I become my own lord and master - the absolute center of my own world, and I begin to evaluate everything in terms of my needs, my ideas, my desires, and my judgments."

Abba Isidore, one of the Desert Fathers of the fourth century, simply says, "Of all evil suggestions, the most terrible is that of following one's own heart, that is to say, one's own thought, and not the law of God."

Every sin - every evil act, every refusal to follow God's will - is a demonstration of the lust of power. St. Ephraim also prays to be freed from a desire for "idle talk." St. Anthony the Great, the founder of monasticism in the third and fourth centuries, tells us, "Know that nothing quenches the Spirit more than idle talk." A simple definition of idle talk is "foolish or irrelevant talk."

Our words can be used for good or evil. Unfortunately, we too often engage in idle talk that is more than simply irrelevant: it is hurtful and destructive. Do you gossip about others? Are you frequently critical of others? Do you tell dirty jokes that not only make a mockery of the morality demanded by God, but even demeans the humanity of people of both genders? If so, you are engaging in destructive idle talk.

The Lenten prayer moves from asking God to free us from specific sinful attitudes and behaviors to asking for the

empowerment and inclination to good attitudes and behaviors. As you can see, the first part of the prayer deals with areas in which we harm our relationships with others; the second part deals with building and restoring relationships.

St. Ephraim prays for the "spirit of chastity." Our culture unfortunately understands "chastity" as meaning sexual purity; as important as sexual impurity is, the full meaning, as St. John Climacus says, "is the name which is common to all virtues." Fr.



Alexander explains that chastity should be:

"Understood as the positive counterpart of sloth. The exact and full translation of the Greek *sofosini* and the Russian *tselomudryie* ought to be whole-mindedness. Sloth is, first of all, dissipation, the brokenness of our vision and energy, the inability to see the whole. Its opposite then is precisely wholeness."

One of the fruits of chastity is humility. Anthimos, a twentieth century monk on the island of Chios in Greece, proclaims, "Humble-mindedness will bring all the virtues." The fourteenth century saint, Gregory of Sinai, teaches us to cultivate humility:

"True humility does not say humble words, nor does it assume humble

looks, it does not force oneself either to think humbly of oneself, or to abuse oneself in self-belittlement. Although all such things are the beginning, the manifestations and the various aspects of humility, humility itself is grace, given from above. There are two kinds of humility, as the holy fathers teach: to deem oneself the lowest of all beings and to ascribe to God all one's good actions. The first is the beginning, the second the end."

St. John Chrysostom explains that we are to emulate the longsuffering of

God in our interactions with others:

"God, whilst He is treated with as great, and still greater contempt than this, every day; and that not by one, or two, or three persons, but by almost all of us; is still forbearing and longsuffering, not in regard to this alone, but to other things which are far more grievous. For these things are what must be admitted, and what are obvious to all, and by almost all men they are daringly practiced. But there are yet others, which the conscience of those who commit them is

pry to. Surely, if we were to think of all this; if we were to reason with ourselves, supposing even that we were the cruelest and harshest of men, yet upon taking a survey of the multitude of our sins, we should for very fear and agony be unable to remember the injury done by others towards ourselves.

Bear in mind the river of fire; the envenomed worm; the fearful Judgment, where all things shall be naked and open! Reflect, that what are now hidden things, are then to be brought to light! But shouldst thou pardon thy neighbor all these sins which till then await their disclosure are done away with here; and when thou shalt depart this life, thou wilt not drag after thee any of that chain of transgressions; so

that thou receivest greater things than thou givest."

Patience is the opposite of despondency: as Evagrius, one of the Desert Fathers, teaches, "Man's patience gives birth to hope; good hope will glorify him."

St. Ephraim also prays for a spirit of love. St. Paul describes true love:

"Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails" (1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

St. John Chrysostom summarizes the necessity of defeating sin with love:

"Love for one another makes us immaculate. There is not a single sin, which the power of love, like fire, would not destroy. It is easier for feeble brushwood to withstand a powerful fire than for the nature of sin to withstand the power of love. Let us increase this love in our souls, in order to stand with all the saints, for they, too, all pleased God well by love for their neighbors."

It is for this reason that St. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna in the second century, says, "He that has love is far from every sin."

The greatest commandment of God is, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37; Deuteronomy 6:5). St. Tikhon, an eighteenth century bishop of Zadosk in Russia, teaches how you can determine if you love God more than yourself:

1. God Himself indicates this, saying,

"He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me" (John 14:21). For the true lover of God will preserve himself from everything that is repugnant to God, and hastens to fulfill everything that is pleasing to God. Wherefore he keeps His holy commandments.



2. A manifest sign of love for God is a heartfelt gladness in God, for we rejoice in what we love.

3. The true lover of God disdains the world and all that is in the world, and strives toward God, his most beloved. He counts honor, glory, riches, and all the comforts of this world which the sons of this age seek, as nothing. For him only God, the uncreated and most beloved good, suffices. In Him alone he finds perfect honor, glory, riches and comfort.

4. The true lover of God keeps God ever in mind, and His love toward us and His benefactions.

5. One who loves, desires never to be separated from the one he loves... Likewise the true lover of Christ is he who abides with Christ in this world, and cleaves to Him in his heart, and uncomplainingly endures the cross with Him, and desires to be with Him inseparably in the age to come.

6. A sign of the love of God is love for neighbor. He who truly loves God also loves his neighbor.

The second great commandment is, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:38; Leviticus 19:18). St. Maximos the Confessor explains the impact that our love for others has on our relationship with God:

"Let us love one another, and we shall be loved by God. Let us be longsuffering toward one another, and He will be longsuffering toward our sins. Let us not render evil for evil, and He will not render to us according to our sins. We shall find remission of our transgressions in forgiving our brethren; for God's mercy toward us is concealed in our mercifulness toward our neighbor.

This is also why the Lord said: Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven. And if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. After this, our salvation is already in our power."

St. Ephraim's final request is the ability to see his own errors, and to refrain from judging others. In the article, "Am I Judgmental?" you can see this quotation from Lorenzo Scupoli:

"Never allow yourself boldly to judge your neighbor; judge and condemn no one...rather have compassion and pity for him, but let his example be a lesson in humility to you; realizing that you too are extremely weak and as easily moved to sin as dust on the road, say to yourself: 'He fell today, but tomorrow I shall fall.'"

The purpose for all this is stated at the very end of the prayer: to participate in a full relationship with Him Who is "blessed unto ages of ages."

Source: *Be Transformed: An Interactive Study of the Epistle to the Romans.*

St. Benedict of Nursia

Commemorated March 14

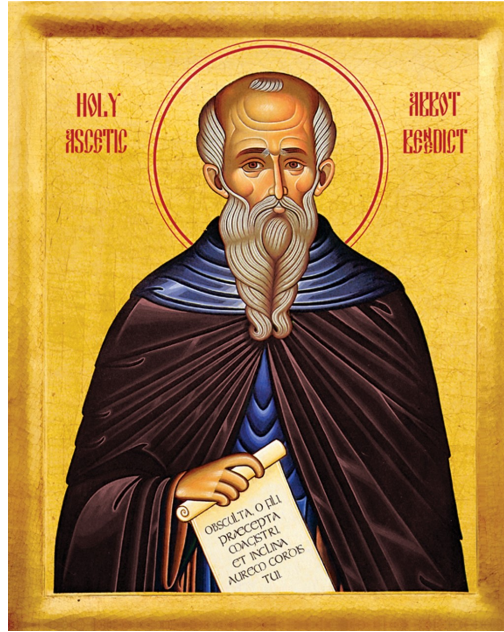
Saint Benedict, founder of Western monasticism, was born in the Italian city of Nursia in the year 480. When he was fourteen years of age, the saint's parents sent him to Rome to study. Unsettled by the immorality around him, he decided to devote himself to a different sort of life.

At first Saint Benedict settled near the church of the holy Apostle Peter in the village of Euffedum, but news of his ascetic life compelled him to go farther into the mountains. There he encountered the hermit Romanus, who tonsured him into monasticism and directed him to live in a remote cave at Subiaco. From time to time, the hermit would bring him food.

For three years the saint waged a harsh struggle with temptations and conquered them. People soon began to gather to him, thirsting to live under his guidance. The number of disciples grew so much, that the saint divided them into twelve communities. Each community was comprised of twelve monks and was a separate skete. The saint gave each skete an igumen from among his experienced disciples, and only the novice monks remained with Saint Benedict for instruction.

The strict monastic Rule Saint Benedict established for the monks was not accepted by everyone, and more than once he was criticized and abused by dissenters.

Finally he settled in Campagna and on Mount Cassino he founded the Monte Cassino monastery, which for a long time was a center of the-



ological education for the Western Church. The monastery possessed a remarkable library. Saint Benedict wrote his Rule, based on the experience of life of the Eastern desert-dwellers and the precepts of Saint John Cassian the Roman (February 29).

The Rule of Saint Benedict dominated Western monasticism for centuries (by the year 1595 it had appeared in more than 100 editions). The Rule prescribed the renunciation of personal possessions, as well as unconditional obedience, and constant work. It was considered the duty of older monks to teach the younger and to copy ancient manuscripts. This helped to preserve many memorable writings from the first centuries of Christianity.

Every new monk was required to live as a novice for a year, to learn the monastic Rule and to become acclimated to monastic life. Every deed required a blessing. The head of this cenobitic monastery is the igumen. He discerns, teaches, and explains. The igumen solicits the

advice of the older, experienced brethren, but he makes the final decisions. Keeping the monastic Rule was strictly binding for everyone and was regarded as an important step on the way to perfection.

Saint Benedict was granted by the Lord the gift of foresight and wonderworking. He healed many by his prayers. The monk foretold the day of his death in 547. The main source for his Life is the second Dialogue of Saint Gregory.

Saint Benedict's sister, Saint Scholastica (February 10), also became famous for her strict ascetic life and was numbered among the saints.

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COME AND SEE WATCH AND PRAY

Recently I heard a report that despair and contemplation of suicide is going up amongst young girls at an alarming rate – as it is also among the “trans” people. It was also reported that social media is at the heart of a lot of things. Add to that the wars and rumors of war. Of course, many “fixes” are put out there, but some of the “fixes” fix nothing at all, adding only to the confusion. And, if you are paying attention, it is clear that a class of people, extremely wealthy and assuming great power, are at work “for your good,” developing an authoritarian state in which your every move will be watched and judged. It occurred to me that this sounds like a remake of the Tower of Babel. Mankind, humanity, is driven to take control of all things and even rule out God. Just seems like that is what we see very often in our world, and increasingly in our day.

And it can be terrifying. Add all these things together and one sees why people might seek to just end their lives. Ironically, there are some that are now saying that euthanasia of older people, of people with various conditions, is the answer. No wonder we are a divided and distraught people!

Jesus tells us: *And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. . . . And they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake. And then many will betray one another, and will hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. And because lawlessness will abound the love of many will grow cold. (Matthew 24:6-12 OSB)*

Look about and see that these words are indeed true and evident in our day! However, also note that the place to turn isn't to the political solutions of governments or to the “new cures” for such things proposed by men. The false prophets of humanistic endeavor are having a field day, only confusing things more as confusion reigns.

Think about it for a minute. Reports of suicidal tendencies and great anguish and despair amongst women and those who are confused offer no solution, because they have turned from the truth. “Male and female He created them.” “A man shall be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh.” That truth is the answer – when we turn from that which has been given and endorse lifestyles driven by endless and misleading and misdirected passions out of control, only chaos, struggle, and death come. Satan is at work deceiving all in his lying work And those who attempt to offer solutions apart from God only aid in confusion and darkness and despair.

Yet, Jesus says, “Do not despair!” All of these events mark the coming of His reign and restoration, of His love and compassion, of eternal joy in His name. He says, over and over again, “I am with you always, to the end of the age.” He conquers death, Hades, by entering Hades and overcoming death. He never leaves or forsakes us! And we experience that victorious life in the worst of circumstances as we physically are joined in His Church, His Body, watching and praying and rejoicing together. It may be best to stop listening to the reports of all that is happening, and to realize again that the Truth that is ours in our Lord and God and Savior is the only source of resurrection and life without end.

Watch, therefore, and pray! Rejoice and in all that you do, say

Glory to God for all things!

Ezekiel

Prayer of St. Benedict

O Lord, I place myself in your hands and dedicate myself to you. I pledge myself to do your will in all things: To love the Lord God with all my heart, all my soul, all my strength. Not to kill. Not to steal. Not to covet. Not to bear false witness. To honor all persons. Not to do to another what I would not wish done to myself. To chastise the body. Not to seek after pleasures. To love fasting. To relieve the poor. To clothe the naked. To visit the sick. To bury the dead. To help in trouble. To console the sorrowing. To hold myself aloof from worldly ways. To prefer nothing to the love of Christ. Not to give way to anger. Not to foster a desire for revenge. Not to entertain deceit in the heart. Not to make a false peace. Not to forsake charity. Not to swear, lest I swear falsely. To speak the truth with heart and tongue. Not to return evil for evil. To do no injury: yea, even to bear patiently any injury done to me. To love my enemies. Not to curse those who curse me, but rather to bless them. To bear persecution for justice' sake. Not to be proud. Not to be given to intoxicating drink. Not to be an over-eater. Not to be lazy. Not to be slothful. Not to be a murmured. Not to be a detractor. To put my trust in God. To refer the good I see in myself to God. To refer any evil in myself to myself. To fear the Day of Judgment. To be in dread of hell. To desire eternal life with spiritual longing. To keep death before my eyes daily. To keep constant watch over my actions. To remember that God sees me everywhere. To call upon Christ for defense against evil thoughts that arises in my heart. To guard my tongue against wicked speech. To avoid much speaking. To avoid idle talk. To read only what is good to read. To look at only what is good to see. To pray often. To ask forgiveness daily for my sins, and to seek ways to amend my life. To obey my superiors in all things rightful. Not to desire to be thought holy, but to seek holiness. To fulfill the commandments of God by good works. To love chastity. To hate no one. Not to be jealous or envious of anyone. Not to love strife. Not to love pride. To honor the aged. To pray for my enemies. To make peace after a quarrel, before the setting of the sun. Never to despair of your mercy, O God of Mercy. Amen.

STS. CONSTANTINE & HELEN GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH










Wine and Oil

Fish Allowed



March 2023

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 Phone: 618-277-0330 • Fax: 618-277-1930
 E-mail: papachilles@gmail.com
 Fr. Achilles Karathanos, Parish Priest

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5 Sunday of Orthodoxy 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy, Procession of Icons 5pm Pan-Orthodox Vespers at the Assumption GOC			1 9am 9th Hour 9:30am Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts 6pm Great Compline, Great Canon of Repentance III	2 6pm Great Compline, Great Canon of Repentance IV	3 6:30pm Small Compline with Salutations to the Theotokos I	4 Saturday of the Miracle of the Kolliva 9am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy, Memorial Service 5pm Great Vespers Holy Confession
6  5 Sunday of Orthodoxy 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy, Procession of Icons 5pm Pan-Orthodox Vespers at the Assumption GOC			8 6pm 9th Hour 6:30pm Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts (Holy 40 Martyrs)	9 Holy 40 Martyrs of Sebaste 	10 6:30pm Small Compline with Salutations to the Theotokos II	11 5pm Great Vespers Holy Confession 
13  12 Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy 5pm Pan-Orthodox Vespers at Nativity of the Virgin, Madison IL		14 St. Benedict of Nursia 5:30 pm Great Compline	15 9am 9th Hour 9:30am Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts	16	17 St. Alexis, Man of God, St. Patrick of Ireland 6:30pm Small Compline with Salutations to the Theotokos III	18 5pm Great Vespers Holy Confession 
20  19 Sunday of the Holy Cross 8:45am Matins; Procession of the Cross, 10am Divine Liturgy 5pm Pan-Orthodox Vespers at St. Thomas Romanian Orthodox, St. Louis		2	22 6pm 9th Hour 6:30pm Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts	23	24 Forefeast of the Annunciation 6pm Great Vespers	25 Annunciation of the Theotokos 9am Matins and Divine Liturgy  5pm Great Vespers Holy Confession
27  26 Sunday of St. John of the Ladder 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy 5pm Pan-Orthodox Vespers at St. Michael Orthodox Church, St. Louis		28 5:30 pm Great Compline	29 9am 9th Hour 9:30am Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts	30 	31 6:30pm Small Compline with Akathist Hymn/ Salutations to the Theotokos	Note: Shaded days are Fasting Days

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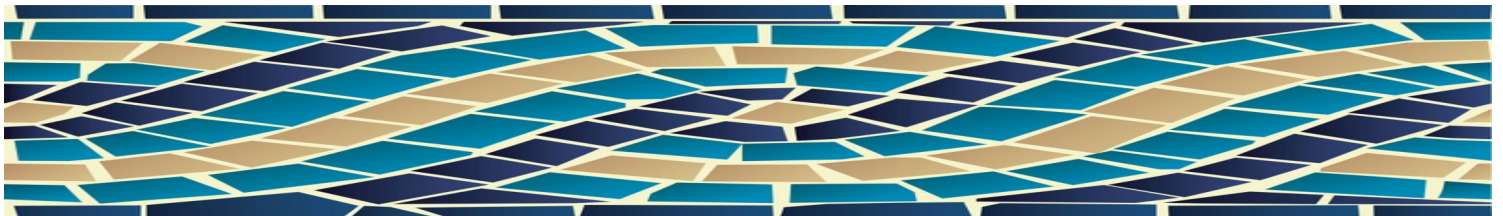
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Thank you!



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OUR MISSION

AS AN EXPRESSION OF CHRIST'S LOVE,

FOCUS exists to serve the poor by bringing together Orthodox Christian churches and community partners to provide Food, Occupation, Clothing, Understanding, and Shelter and other assistance to address the needs of local communities.

For the Month of **MARCH** Our Parish will continue to collect:

- Canned tuna 5 oz (**Moderate Need**)
- Canned beef stew 15 oz (**VERY High Need**)
- Chili with beans 15 oz (**VERY High Need**)
- Chef Boyardee products 15 oz (**VERY High Need**)
- Spam 12 oz (**VERY High Need**)
- Canned Ham 16 oz (**VERY High Need**)