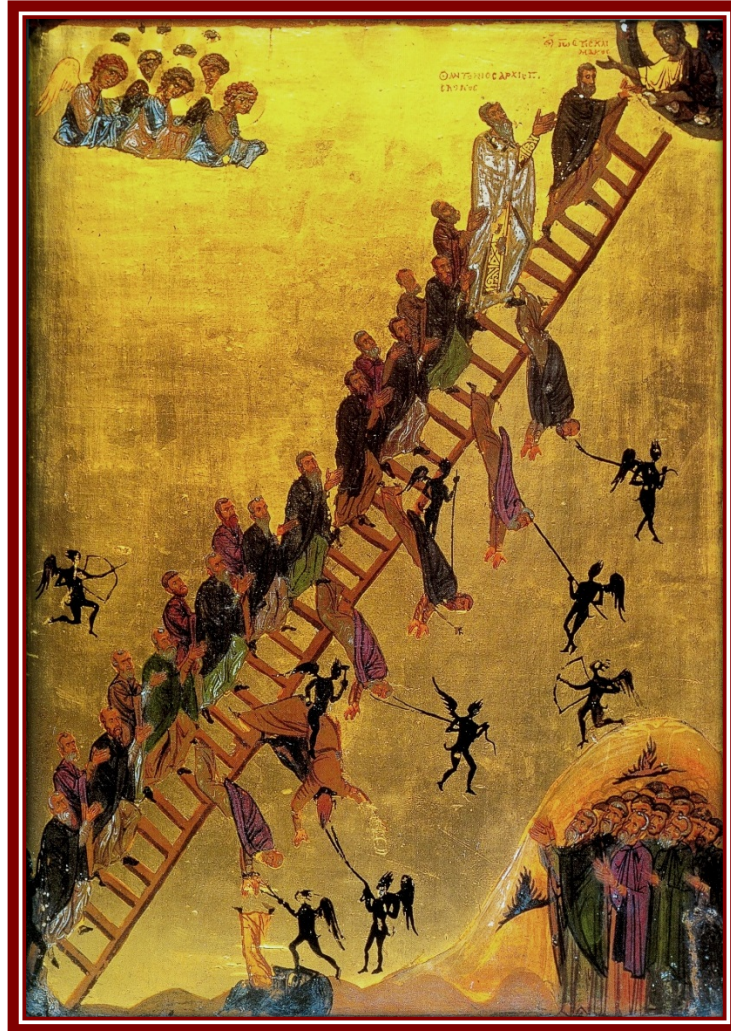


GREAT LENT 2016



"GREAT LENT IS TO BE OBSERVED
AS A MEMORIAL OF OUR LORD'S WAY OF LIFE
AND HIS TEACHINGS."
(THE APOSTOLIC TEACHING – DIDACHE)

GREEK ORTHODOX
CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION



GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

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*"Faith is the most precious gift of life.
It unites the person with God.
It secures all the power of Divine Grace for him."
(St. John of Kronstadt)*

GREAT LENT 2016

Dearly beloved in the Lord:

God is with us!

During the Ecclesiastical Year, the sacred period of Great Lent is distinguished. The first week of Great Lent is called "*Clean Week*," the allotted time when we are to begin abstaining and fasting for our cleansing from harmful distractions. The first day of Great Lent is *Clean Monday* and we realize that true fasting is not only the abstention of certain foods, but is foremost the deliverance from anger, rage, gossip, lies, hate, and slander.

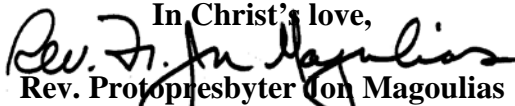
In the Great Compline Service the verse that is heard over and over is well known: "*God is with us*," chanted to remind the faithful that God is our companion in life. From the Hebrew, the word that coincides with this verse is "*Emmanuel*," the name given to our Savior which implies His coming into the world to dwell with mankind. In His three year ministry our Lord offered Himself for the salvation of all people. Our Savior does not cease to be found close to our lives, we live, we move about, and exist in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Standing at the door of our heart, the Lord knocks so that He may enter into our lives to grant us abundant life.

The entrance of divine grace into the heart of mankind is accomplished through faith and love. This is what our Savior meant when He said: "*And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him*" (John 14:21b). Those who desire to have God dwelling in their heart are obligated to love, for God resides in the hearts of those who love Him.

I want to take this opportunity to encourage your participation in the divine services of Great Lent this year, especially by participating in the Sacramental life of the Church. In this way, Great Lent may truly become the holy season of renewal for all! There is nothing greater than to have God dwell in the lives of His people, for this reason we must preserve ourselves spiritually and physically to be His temple; it is our sacred duty to do good things for others daily as we walk in the grace of God. St. Paul reassures us when he writes: "*If God is with us, who can be against us?*" (Romans 8:31)

May you have a blessed Great Lent!

In Christ's love,


Rev. Protosybarter Jon Magoulia
PARISH PRIEST



L E N T E N P R A Y E R S

During the holy season of Great Lent, we are called to a greater awareness of our faith in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. The following prayers should be included in your morning and evening prayers during Great Lent. May the Lord keep you and bless you during this time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

TRISAGION PRAYERS

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3x)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All-Holy Trinity have mercy on us. Lord, be gracious upon our sins. Master, forgive our transgressions. Holy One, visit us and heal our infirmities, for your name's sake.

Kyrie eleison. (3x)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,
now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in heaven hallowed be Thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God,
have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

Kyrie eleison. (12x)

O Christ our God, Who at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth, are worshipped and glorified, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy and compassion; Who love the just and show mercy to the sinners; Who call all people to salvation through the promise of the blessings to come: Do you, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present time, and direct our lives according to your commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set our minds right; clear up our thoughts, and deliver us from every sorrow, evil and distress. Surround us with your holy Angels so that being guarded and guided by their presence, we may arrive at the unity of the faith and knowledge of your ineffable glory; for blessed are you unto the ages of ages. AMEN.

PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

O Lord and Master of my life, take away from me the spirit of laziness and meddling, the lust for power and idle talk. (Reverence)

Instead, grant me, your servant, the spirit of prudence, humility, patience and love. (Reverence)

Yes, Lord and King, give me the power to see my own faults and not to judge my brother. (Reverence)

For You are blessed to the ages of ages. AMEN.

C O N F E S S I O N

As Orthodox Christians, we as a parish have been taught that regular confession of our sins to the priest/spiritual father should be an important, frequent occurrence throughout the year. However, there are many of us within the church community who have yet to attend a single confession meeting, for a myriad of reasons. It is an all too common misconception that by asking God for forgiveness in the privacy of our own homes, the act of verbally admitting to our wrongdoings with our priest as a witness is pointless or superfluous. Others in our Parish Family are uneasy or even frightened of the idea of revealing their weaknesses and faults to another human being, for fear of being harshly or wrongly judged.

What every individual (regardless of how many times he or she has confessed, if at all) must remember is that true repentance comes with humility and acceptance of the fact that we are all equally sinful in the eyes of the Lord. Participating in the Sacrament of Holy Confession means that we have acknowledged our mistakes and are ready to become fully accountable for them. By confessing our sins through the priest, we make it that much easier to stay on the right path towards a Christ-like lifestyle. It is far too difficult to stay focused on not repeating the same sins over and over again when we keep them to ourselves.

Finally, we all must address the argument that confession is “unnecessary”. This can easily be refuted by a few simple, logical facts:

1. Confession is *the* Sacrament through which our sins are forgiven, and our relationship to God is restored and strengthened. Through this Sacrament, Christ heals those broken in spirit and restores the Father's love to those who repent. The priest is the sacramental witness who represents both Christ and His people. The priest is not viewed as a judge, but as an instrument used to greater improve the spiritual act of cleansing our sins through Christ's love.
2. Confession is not an event in which we are made to feel guilty! Rather, it is a time for us to humbly accept the fact that we need a deeper, more honest relationship with God in order to thrive on a spiritual, emotional, and even physical level.
3. It is practically a sin within itself to look at confession as a needless act. When we feel that this practice is redundant when we can "just confess on our own," it becomes easier to spiral downward spiritually and forget the significance of every church practice. If we "don't need to confess in front of the priest," then do we really even need to attend baptisms, funerals, or even the Liturgy at all? If we begin to feel that our private actions and prayers can take place of the Holy Sacraments administered by the Church, then what else can we begin to do away with in place of personal power and self-conceived values? The point, of course, is that we should never judge the teachings of the Church, or feel that we are above what Christ calls us to do.

The most essential fact to comprehend is that change takes effort! By making ourselves constantly accountable for our thoughts and actions, we can begin to live a cleaner, more hopeful life in which we constantly put God first. The psychological benefits of releasing all our guilt and admitting that we want to become stronger Orthodox Christians are numerous and powerful. When we are able to have a clean slate, we can take new opportunities towards a more beautiful relationship with God!

Use the information on the following page to help you prepare for Holy Confession.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

**I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD.
YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.**

Do you put God first in your life? Do you love anyone more than God? Do you fear anyone more than Him? Do you put God and the services and activities at your Church before social club activities, sports practices, or parties with friends?

Do you make time for prayers every day?

Do you show respect for the sacraments, and prepare for and partake in Holy Communion often?

YOU SHALL NOT MAKE UNTO YOURSELF ANY GRAVEN IMAGE.

Do you trust a teacher or coach more than you trust God?

Do you idolize television stars or musicians?

Do you wear expensive designer-label clothes to gain status with your peers?

Do you love yourself, being a member of a certain club or clique, or the status of being a school leader (class officer, sports star, honor role) more than you love God?

**YOU SHALL NOT
TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN:
FOR THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD HIM GUILTYLESS THAT TAKE HIS NAME IN VAIN.**

Do you wish that bad or evil things might happen to another person?

Do you swear or curse at others, or use profane language when you speak?

Do you attend séances, visit fortune tellers, or read horoscopes?

Do you play with a Ouija board? Do you read occult books or horror novels which glorify Satan and evil?

REMEMBER TO KEEP HOLY THE LORD'S DAY...

Do you make the best effort you can to attend Vespers and Liturgy each weekend? Do you attend weekday services for feast days when you are able?

Do you say negative things about the Church, your priest, the deacons or Church School teachers? Do you pray for them?

Do you prepare for Church School and Liturgy by reading the Epistles and Gospels at home?

**HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER.
THAT YOUR DAYS MAY BE LONG UPON THE LAND
WHICH THE LORD YOUR GOD GIVES YOU.**

Do you resent your parents or teachers? Do you grumble when they ask you to do something?

Do you say negative things about your parents or teachers to others, to make them angry?

Do you disobey your parents or teachers, or show them disrespect?

Do you pray for your parents and teachers, and help them without being asked?

YOU SHALL NOT MURDER.

- Do you wish that bad or evil things might happen to another person?
- Do you hate or despise anyone secretly? Do you think about hurting them or seeing them hurt?
- Do you provoke others to hatred with your words or actions?
- Do you quarrel with others, or tease them?
- Do you injure others physically? Do you intentionally hurt others' feelings?
- Do you abuse you body with drugs, diet, or physical activity (too much or too little)?

YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

- Do you daydream lustfully about movie stars or other celebrities?
- Do you hang up suggestive posters and magazine clippings, or look at pornography?
- Do you listen to or tell dirty jokes or obscene stories?
- Do you "experiment" with your girlfriend or boyfriend? Do you make love with *any* person who isn't your husband/wife, as blessed by the Church?

YOU SHALL NOT STEAL.

- Do you copy others' homework and say it is your own? Do you take more than your fair share of the credit for group projects?
- Do you waste time that should be spent doing your job, chores, or homework?
- Do you take things from others' bedrooms or lockers, or from stores without paying?
- Do you try to return things you find to their owners?
- Do you give part of your allowance or after-school earnings to the Church?

YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR.

- Do you listen to or spread gossip about others?
- Do you judge other people? Do you assume things about others based on their appearance or group of friends?
- Do you assume people have motives for their actions without knowing for sure?
- Do you "hold a grudge" against someone who has hurt you in the past?
- Do you make up excuses for not doing something?
- Do you make up stories or exaggerate the facts to make a real story more interesting or entertaining?
- Do you lie to avoid punishment or to provoke or to mislead others?

YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE. YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S WIFE, NOR HIS MANSERVANT, NOR HIS MAIDSERVANT, NOR HIS CATTLE, NOR ANYTHING THAT IS YOUR NEIGHBOR'S.

- Do you envy the appearance, clothes, computer equipment, or stereo system of another person?
- Do you manipulate friends or peers to get something they have?
- Do you resent the respect, admiration, or approval shown to your friends by parents, teachers, or peers?
- Do you feel content with the gifts God has given you, or do you always want more?
- Do you give of your time, talent, and treasure to help others in your family, parish, and community, or do you hoard God's gifts?

SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Fasting from foods and, more importantly, from sins is observed in preparation for Holy Communion and during Great Lent. In fasting we have the example of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ, along with the saints of our Church, among other things, as a means for furthering their own spiritual growth in the service of the Church. In the New Testament fasting is linked with prayer. Jesus Christ, in reference to the banishment of the evil spirit, assured His disciples that even the devil is rebuked by prayer and fasting: *"This kind (of the devil) can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting"* (Mark 9:29; cf. Matt. 17:20-21).



St. John Chrysostom said that the purpose of fasting is to prepare for partaking of the Holy Eucharist and for the Christian solemn celebrations. Chrysostom taught many times that fasting is not merely the abstention from certain foods, but mainly an abstention from evil doings.

Chrysostom also warns against hypocritical fasting: *"It is possible for one who fasts not to be rewarded for his fasting. How? When indeed we abstain from foods, but do not abstain from iniquities; when we do not eat meat, but gnaw to pieces the homes of the poor; when we do not become drunkards with wine, but we become drunkards with evil pleasures; when we abstain all the day, but all the night we spend in unchastened shows. Then what is the benefit of abstention from foods, when on the one hand you deprive your body of a selected food, but on the other offer yourself unlawful food?"*

"Let us fast an acceptable and very pleasing fast to the Lord. True fast is the estrangement from evil, temperance of tongue, abstinence from anger, separation from desires, slander, falsehood perjury. Privation of these is true fasting." A Hymn of First Monday of Lent By St. Basil the Great.

For further information on fasting, contact Father Jon.

TRIED AND TRUE LENTEN RECIPES

Below are tried and true Lenten Recipes that are our favorites. If a recipe calls for oil, it can be cooked without the oil (except the dessert recipes). Have a blessed Lenten Fast!

LENTIL SOUP

- 1 cup lentils
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 4 tbs. vegetable oil
- 1 onion chopped fine
- 1/4 tsp. pepper
- 1 stalk celery, chopped (optional)
- 1 clove garlic
- 5 cups water
- 1 tsp. salt

Pinch sugar – optional but good in anything w/tomato sauce

Sort and wash lentils. Place in a deep saucepan and add all ingredients. Cover and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook slowly for about 1 1/2 hrs. Add a dash of red wine vinegar. Sometimes add 1/2 cup water and 1/4 cup rice to thicken it up - or add 2 potatoes cut into cubes. Can be made in the crock pot too

CROCK POT MARINARA SAUCE

**1 cup packed fresh Italian or flat-leafed parsley
3 ribs of celery, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic
1/2 tsp. dried rosemary
1/2 tsp. dried sage
16 oz. can seasoned tomato sauce (like Del Monte Italian seasoned)
16 oz. can regular tomato sauce
16 oz. can seasoned diced tomatoes
16 oz. can regular diced tomatoes
1/4 lb. fresh mushrooms
1 1/2 tsp. salt
Pinch of chili peppers to taste and 1 teaspoon sugar if desired.**

Add all ingredients to crockpot. Cook 5-6 hours on high or 12-18 hours on low.

SALAD DRESSING

**1 ripe avocado
1 rib celery
1 small tomato
1 small cucumber
1 tsp. distilled water**

Blend all ingredients in blender, adding just enough water to make a puree.

BLACK BEANS & RICE SOUP

**1 medium onion, chopped
3 carrots, thinly sliced
2 stalks celery, thinly sliced
4 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. ground cumin
1 1/2 tsp. dried basil
1/2 tsp. chili powder
1/2 tsp. dried oregano**

½ tsp. Tabasco sauce
2 16 oz. cans black beans, drained and rinsed
1 14½ oz. can crushed tomatoes
2 14½ oz. cans broth
1½ cups cooked rice

Combine all ingredients except rice in crock pot. Cover and cook on low 8 to 10 hours (high 3 to 4 hours). Add cooked rice before serving. 6 to 8 servings.

STRING BEANS AND POTATOES IN TOMATO SAUCE

2 lbs string beans
2 onions, chopped
¾ c oil
1 can tomato sauce
2 tsp salt
1 tsp sugar
pepper to taste
chopped parsley & mint –about 2 Tablespoons each – fresh
2 potatoes cut in quarters
1 c water

Mix everything in a 4 quart pot and simmer until potatoes are tender.

NINA'S LENTEN MEXICAN ENCHILADAS

1 30 oz. can of non-fat refried beans
1 15 oz. can of black beans
1 15 oz. can of whole kernel sweet corn
½ C uncooked white rice
2 Cups of water or vegetable broth
¼ C or less of lemon juice
1 packet of Lawry's Fajita seasoning
1 white onion, chopped
2 or 3 cans of 10 oz. Ortega Enchilada sauce
2 to 3 cans of sliced olives
2 large tomatoes, diced
1 bunch of green onions, chopped
King-sized soft flour tortillas
OPTIONAL- 2 cups of Kraft Mexican style grated cheese

Step 1: Prepare Rice- 1 cup of rice to 2 cups water or broth and ¼ C lemon juice. Set rice aside.

Step 2: Sauté white onion in butter or cooking spray. Add black beans, cooked rice, corn and packet of fajita mix. Mix these ingredients; do not "cook."

Step 3: Pour one can of enchilada sauce on the bottom of a 9x13 pan.

Step 4: Lay one flour tortilla out and spread ¼ cup of refried beans on it. Spread 1 cup of the rice mixture on top of the beans, and a little cheese if desired. Roll the tortilla up like a burrito and place in pan. Repeat with remaining tortillas until pan is full. Pour additional 2-3 cans of enchilada

sauce on top of filled tortillas. Top with cheese (optional), chopped tomatoes, sliced olives, and green onions. Bake at 350 degrees for ½ hour or until cheese bubbles.

LENTEN CHOCOLATE CAKE

3 cups flour
2 tsps. Soda
6 tbsps. Cocoa
1 tsp. salt
2 cups sugar
3 tbsps. Vinegar
3/4 cup vegetable oil
2 cups cold water
powdered sugar (optional)

Measure flour, soda, cocoa, salt, and sugar into a large mixing bowl. Add vinegar, vanilla, oil, and water and mix well. Pour batter into greased 9 x 13 inch pan. Bake at 350 for 45 minutes. Let cake cool for 1 hour and then sprinkle powdered sugar on the top. Or- make the following chocolate icing- Mix powdered sugar, cocoa, and a little margarine, adding enough warm water to make a smooth, creamy icing.

PEANUT BUTTER BALLS

1 c. peanut butter
1 c. Quaker oats
1/4 c. rice Krispies
1/4 c. raisins
1 tsp. vanilla
2 Tb. chopped walnuts (or other nuts)
1/4 tsp. salt
For coating: shredded coconut or chopped nuts

- 1. Blend all ingredients (except for coating) in a bowl.**
- 2. Form mixture into 1/2" to 1" balls.**
- 3. Roll balls in any of above coatings (coconut, etc.) or dip chilled balls (chill in freezer for 1 hour) in melted dairy free chocolate.**

