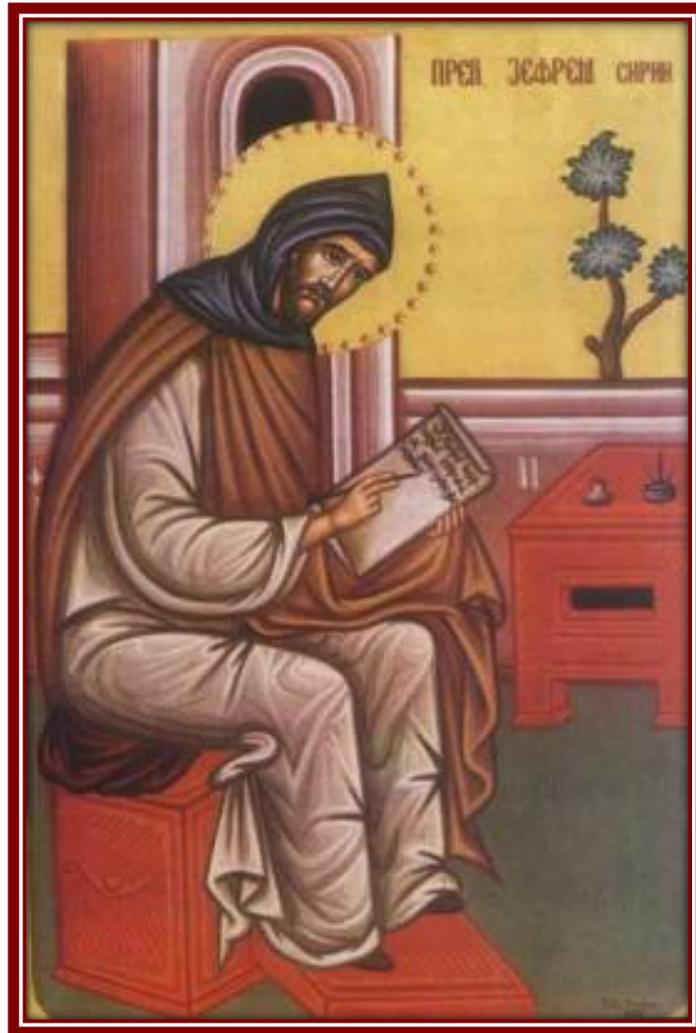


# GREAT LENT 2019



"O LORD AND MASTER  
OF MY LIFE..."  
(PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN)

GREEK ORTHODOX  
CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION



# GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

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## GREAT LENT 2019

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

*Instead, grant me, your servant, the spirit of prudence, humility, patience and love.*

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

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

**(Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian)**

**Dearly beloved in the Lord:**

**Our pilgrimage into Great Lent has begun. During Great Lent, we hear the Prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian in many of our services. It is a prayer that should be prayed every day of Great Lent (excluding Saturday and Sunday) because it captures the essence of how we must relate to our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ.**

**When we understand this, we also realize that the weeks of Great Lent are vital towards our understanding and ability to develop our ministry of Christian Orthodox Stewardship. Stewardship is something we do as a family. Worship is something we also do as a family. Prayer is something we do as a family. Fasting is something we do as a family. Christian acts of kindness, taught in the home and supported by the Church are things we do as a family.**

**In today's society the family unit is being attacked! The Church, however, is the shield that can protect us from the things that would seek to divide and destroy the family! This protection comes, however, by our faithful acts of Christian Orthodox Stewardship expressed in living our precious Faith.**

**Each week of Great Lent brings a new message to strengthen and transform us in our journey. By actively participating in this expression of our Faith you will be guided by the directions offered during the various Lenten services. Faithfully adhering to these directions will enable you to experience the Resurrection of our Lord in a more meaningful manner.**

**I encourage you to remain steadfast in your commitment to live our precious Christian Orthodox Faith so that your life may be spiritually enriched and renewed. Praying that the Lord strengthen and keep you in His Grace, I remain,**

Faithfully yours,

*Rev. Fr. Jon Magoulias*

**Rev. Protopresbyter Jon Magoulias  
PARISH PRIEST**



**METROPOLIS OF  
SAN FRANCISCO**

# 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 your 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?

