



# SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## *O Lord, Save Your People and Bless Your Inheritance!*

<b>March 24, 2013</b>	<b>The Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy</b>	<b>Divine Liturgy</b>	<b>9:30 am</b>
March 25	Monday <b>Annunciation of our Most Holy Lady</b>	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
March 27	Wednesday Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts		6:00 pm
March 29	Friday Akathist to the Mother of God		6:00 pm
March 30	Saturday Soul Saturday	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
	Saturday	Great Vespers	4:00 pm
<b>March 31</b>	<b>Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas</b>	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

**Saints of the Day:** Venerable Zachariah the Recluse of Egypt (4 c.). Saint Artemon, Bishop of Seleucia (1 c.). New Hieromartyr Priest Vladimir (1920). Venerable Zachariah, Ascetic, of the Kiev Caves (13 c.). Martyrs Stephen and Peter of Kazan (1552). Venerable James the Confessor, Bishop of Catania (802-811). Hieromartyr Parthenius, Patriarch of Constantinople (1657). Saint Savvas the New of Kalymnos (1948). Eight Martyrs of Caesarea in Palestine. Venerable Monk Martin of Thebes. Saint Thomas, Abbot of the Monastery of Saint Euthymius (542). Saint Severus of Catania (802-811). Saint Artemius, Bishop of Thessalonica. Saint Dunchad, Abbot of Iona. Saint Caimin of Lough Derg, Abbot (653). Saint Cairlon of Cashel, Bishop (6 c.). Saint Domangard of Maghera, Hermit (500). Saint Hildelid of Barking, Abbess (717).

**Please remember in your prayers:** Archimandrites Alexander, Athanasy, Isidore, Nectarios, Pachomy. Archpriests Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Sergius, Andrij, Vasil, Vasil. Deacon Philip. Mother Raphaela, Sister Deborah. Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Connie, Michael, Ed, Maria, Michael, John, James, Nancy, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Mykola, Helen, Isaiah, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren,

**God Grant Many Years!** Prayers for the health of Hideo Takahashi were offered at Liturgy and Moleben today at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of the souls of newly-departed Joyce (Kushner) Strunk, John Higgins, aunt Anna (Udics) Mayhrich, mother Mary Konet Udics and the Victims of Chernobyl were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

**Memory Eternal.** Prayers for the repose of Ann Sokerka and Stephen Sokol were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of the "Memory Eternal Requiem Service Fund."

### **Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, Great Lent 2013**

To the Very Reverend Clergy, Monastics and Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America:

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In his first Epistle, the Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian writes: "This, then, is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). There is no darkness at all in Christ, Who is "Light of Light, True God of True God;" and there is no darkness in His Bride, the Holy Church, for in her "the light of Christ illumines all."

We are entering the sacred season of Great Lent which, externally, might be perceived as a season of darkness and gloom, reflected in the somber color of the vestments, the physical exertion of fasting and prostrations and the labor of long services. But in reality, though externally dark, this season places us on the path that brings us to the eternal light of the Resurrection and the glory of the Kingdom.

The season of repentance introduces us to the reality of that glory, through our participation in God's divine grace, which is both freely given to us and experienced through our own efforts, small as they may be and daunting as the struggles may seem. This is why Saint Silouan can say, "Glory be to the Lord that He gave us repentance. Through repentance we shall, every one of us, be saved. Only those who refuse to repent will not find salvation, and therein I see their despair, and shed abundant tears of pity for them."

We can only find true peace and lasting joy when we are led out of the despair of our passions and into the light of Christ by His Grace and through our labors of repentance, fasting and prayer. As we enter upon the struggles of the Fast, let us be encouraged as we listen attentively to the sacred hymns of the Church: "Let us joyfully begin the all-hallowed season of abstinence, and let us shine with the bright radiance of the holy commandments of Christ our God, with the brightness of love and the splendor of prayer, with the purity of holiness and the strength of good courage. So, clothed in raiment of light, let us hasten to the Holy Resurrection on the third day, that shines upon the world with the glory of eternal life" (Sessional hymn, Matins on Monday of the First Week).

I humbly ask for your forgiveness and pray that the Lord will bless each of us with a profitable and peaceful Lenten journey.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+TIKHON, Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada

**Orthodox Church in America, Diocese of New York and New Jersey**  
**ARCHPASTORAL LETTER FOR THE GREAT FAST 2013**

*“We have come to know the gift of the fast of Isaiah. That a true fast has been handed down to us. Therefore let us agree, as it has been taught, that we won’t be looking gloomy. Rather, we will look upon the days of the fast cheerfully as is fitting for saints. Don’t make being healed gloomy. It is outrageous that you don’t rejoice over your soul being healed, but you mourn over changing food. You seem to be giving more concern to your stomach than to your spirit” (Saint Basil, “About Fasting” 31:164).*

Beloved Concelebrants at the Holy Altar and Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

Christ is in our midst! – He is and ever shall be!

The Scriptures and the Holy Fathers tell us that the purpose of our spiritual life, in fact the very purpose of our whole life, is to imitate Christ our Lord, be like God, and become by grace what our Savior is by nature -- sons and daughters of our Heavenly Father, “partakers of the divine nature” (II Peter 1:4). The life-long process of achieving this goal is called “*theosis*” or “*deification*” ... and it is the process of becoming what we were created to be -- saints!

While every day of our life each of us should be working toward this goal, the Fast of Great Lent is, in particular, the sacred season during which we are to focus on our quest for eternal life in the heavenly kingdom. Our beloved mother, the Holy Church, provides us with great means of realizing our God-given potential: prayer, reading the scriptures, attending the divine services, fasting, almsgiving, and partaking of the holy mysteries.

All too often, we see the Great Fast in negative terms: The Church wants me to give up meat and dairy products; to pray more and read the Bible and come to Lenten services instead of watching TV and enjoying other forms of entertainment; to give to the poor and other causes; and to come to confession! That’s seven weeks of heavy burdens on my already overstretched personal life!

There is a story of a monk who was once met by a non-Orthodox man, who looked at his long hair and beard, his flowing black robe and his long prayer rope, and asked the elder why he burdened himself with those external rituals. The monk replied, “If a man were carrying a knapsack full of rocks on his journey, he would surely complain of their burden. But if he were carrying the same weight in diamonds, he would never complain because of their value. I don’t consider these things as burdensome rocks -- to me, they are diamond opportunities to strengthen my faith in the Lord!”

My prayer for all of us is that we will see the time-honored practices of Great Lent not as heavy burdens in our life but as diamond opportunities -- to come closer to the Lord through a richer prayer life, a deeper knowledge of His Gospel, and more frequent participation in the Liturgy and other divine services; to undertake a humbler diet and quieter lifestyle, following Christ’s own example; to use the funds we would otherwise spend on our own leisure to provide instead for “the least of the brethren” in need; and through the Holy Mysteries of Repentance and the Eucharist to purge our soul of the poison of sin and unite our self to the Son of God, Who died on the Cross for our salvation.

And, my sincere hope is that each of us will embark upon our Lenten journey toward the heavenly kingdom with joy -- bearing the knapsack of the precious jewels of our faith that will enable us to become more and more like the One Who loves us more than we love ourselves. To Him be all glory!

With love in His Name,

+ M I C H A E L

Bishop of New York and the

Diocese of New York and New Jersey

**FOR YOUR CALENDAR:**

• **NOTE: Fasting for the Presanctified Liturgy:** It is the discipline of the Orthodox Church to fast the entire day for the evening Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. The Holy Synod of Bishops has decreed that for those unable to fast for the entire day, a complete fast must be observed from the noon day meal hour.

• **March 31, 2013:** Bishop MICHAEL had given permission to administer the **oath of office** to the Council.

• **April 21, 2013: Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt.** In the presence of the Myrrh-Streaming Icon of Saint Ann, Archimandrite Athanasios of Saint Tikhon’s Monastery will lead us in a **Lenten Retreat** after Liturgy.

• **April 24, Wednesday,** Presanctified Divine Liturgy. **His Grace, Bishop MICHAEL** will celebrate.

• **GREAT LENT** is a time to begin to prepare ourselves for the Holy Passover or Pascha of Our Lord. We have time to begin to think about what we will say at Confession. We have time to pay our Parish dues. We have time to visit the sick and those in prisons. We have time to consider where we wish to be buried. We have time to read the Holy Scriptures and to re-establish the good habit of our prayer life. We have time to consider making pilgrimages to Holy Places, to shrines, to monasteries, to visit relics of the saints or to pray before wonder-working icons. We have time to sit silently and embroider or make pysanki (decorated eggs). Because we are concentrating on spiritual things, we must avoid secular entertainments: parties, vacations, movies, fancy dinners and cutting back on wasting time on the television and the computer, except perhaps spiritual or educational programming. We should take the time to learn the prayer of Saint Ephrem the Syrian by heart. Great Lent can be the beautiful Springtime for our souls and hearts, if we take the time to learn.

Please prepare your list of names for **Soul Saturday Liturgies**. Put the list in an envelope with your donation and hand it to Father John at your earliest convenience.

**O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of laziness, despair, lust of power and idle talk. But grant rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to Thy servant.**

**Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother; for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen**