

FCRC NKRA SAINTS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
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Have Mercy on me, O God! Have Mercy on me!

February 22, 2015	Sunday of the Expulsion of Adam – Cheese Fare Sunday	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
February 23	Monday	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete	6:00 pm
February 24	Tuesday	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete	6:00 pm
February 25	Wednesday	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete	6:00 pm
February 26	Thursday	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete	6:00 pm
February 27	Friday	Divine Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts	6:00 pm
February 28	Saturday	Great Vespers	4:00 pm
March 1	Sunday of Orthodoxy	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

Today's Bulletin is offered in memory of Cornelius Mamrosch by Martha Mamrosch.

Saints of the Day: Uncovering of the relics of the Holy Martyrs at the Gate of Eugenius at Constantinople (395-423). New Hieromartyr Priest Michael Lisitsyn of Ust-Labinskaya, Russia (1918). New Martyrs Archpriest Joseph Smirnov, Deacon John Kastorsky, Priest Vladimir Ilinsky. Priest John Perebaskin (1918). New Martyr Theoktista Michailovna, Fool-for-Christ of Voronezh (1936). New Hieromartyrs Priests Michael, John, Victor, John, Sergius, Andrew, New Hieromartyr Sergius and Antipa, Virgin-martyr Parasceva, Martyr Stephen, Virgin-martyrs Elizabeth, Irina and Barbara (1938). Martyr Andrew (1941). New Hieromartyr Philaret (1942). Martyrs Maurice and his son Photinus, and Martyrs Theodore, Philip, and 70 soldiers, at Apamea in Syria (305). Venerable Hermits Thalassius, Limnaeus, and Baradates, of Syria (5 c.). Venerable Athanasius the Confessor of Constantinople (826). Saint Telesphorus, Pope of Rome (127). Saint Papius of Hierapolis (2 c.). Venerable Peter the Stylite of Mount Athos. Saint Abilius, Patriarch of Alexandria (98). Saint Titus, Bishop of Bostra in Arabia (378). Nine Holy Children of Kola: Guarami, Adarnasi, Bakari, Vache, Bardzini, Dachi, Djuansheri, Ramazi, and Parsmani (6 c.). Saint Leontius of Lycia (6th c.). Saints Babylus and his wife Comnita of Nicosia (7 c.). Martyr Anthusa and her 12 servans. Saint Blaise, Bishop. Saint Elwin (Allen) of Cornwall (6 c.). Blessed Monk John the Saxon (895)

Please remember in your prayers: Suffering Christians of Egypt, Syria, the Middle East and Ukraine. Bishop BOULOS, Bishop YOHANNA of Aleppo. Archimandrites Athanasy, Nectarios, Pachomy. Archpriests Alvian, Eugene, Leonid, John, Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Jacobus, Leonid, Thaddaeus. Deacons Mark, Demetrios, Philip. Mothers Raphaela, Michaela, Catherine, Anna. Monk Victor, Valentina, Dimitri, Nina, Daniel, Catherine, Helen, Anna, Peter, Helen, Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Michael, Ed, Nettie, Maria, Michael, John, James, Nancy, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Helen, Isaiah, Jamie, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren.

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Michael Soroka and Archpriest Jason Kappanadze were offered at Liturgy and Moleben today at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Fortieth Day Prayers for the repose of the souls of Mary Demeo and 21 slain Coptic Orthodox Christians were offered at Liturgy and Panichida today at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the soul of Cornelius Mamrosch were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Martha Mamrosch and children.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of Matushka Mildred Soroka and Theodore Bacha were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

Altar Society Baking Schedule: Wednesday 8:30 am. Bread, 3 batches/

Great Lent begins tomorrow, Monday, February 23. His Grace, our Bishop MICHAEL has prepared two video lessons to help you prepare. They can be found at the diocesan website: <http://nynjoca.org/> They're short – only 7 minutes: "Great Lent: Our Spiritual Life" and "Fasting: 7 Questions & 7 Answers" (also available as pdf files)

Homily on "Fasting" – Seven Questions, Seven Answers

His Grace, MICHAEL ~ Bishop of New York and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

Question #1: Why do we fast?

Answer: 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 (I 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?

Answer: 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." (Matthew 6:16-18).

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

Answer: 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?

Answer: 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?

Answer: 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?

Answer: 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?

Answer: 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

THE HOLY MARTYR MAURICE AND THE SEVENTY SOLDIERS WITH HIM. During the reign of Emperor Maximian there was a great persecution of Christians. In the Syrian town of Apamea, Maurice was superior of the local army. The pagans reported him to the emperor as being a Christian and a sower of the Christian Faith among the soldiers. The emperor himself came and conducted an investigation. Along with Maurice seventy Christian soldiers were also brought before the emperor among whom was Photinus, the son of Maurice. Neither the emperor's flattery nor threats could sway these heroes. To the threats of the emperor, they replied: "O Emperor, there is no fear in the sound and powerful souls of those who love the Lord!" When the emperor ordered and removed their military belts and garments, they said to him: "Our God will clothe us with incorruptible garments and belts and eternal glory!" When the emperor rebuked them because they despised the military honor given to them by him, they replied: "Your honor is without honor, for you have forgotten God Who gave you imperial authority!" Then the emperor commanded and the executioner beheaded Maurice's son Photinus before his eyes to instill fear in the father and in the others. But, Maurice said: "You have fulfilled our wish O torturer and have sent Photinus, the soldier of Christ before us." Then the emperor sentenced them to a most inhuman death: they were brought to a muddy place, stripped, bound to trees and rubbed them with honey, in order to be bitten by mosquitoes, wasps and hornets. After ten days under the most painful sufferings, they gave up their souls to God and departed to rejoice eternally with the holy angels in heaven. Christians secretly removed their bodies and honorably buried them. These courageous soldiers of Christ suffered about the year 305 A.D.

FROM LAST SUNDAY'S SERMON ON THE LAST JUDGMENT.

Last Sunday morning's sermon was simple enough – we might do well to not think of the Last Judgment as a trial with lawyers and a jury and a judge. It's called the Last and Final Judgment because it's when God will come and judge the earth. We already have a preliminary judgment when we die. In both cases, we come to stand before God. He knows what's on our hearts and sets us on the side of the sheep (good folks) and goats (bad folk). He bases His judgment simply on the four questions of whether we fed the hungry, gave drink to the thirsty, clothed the naked and visited the sick and imprisoned. Those who did those good deeds, He welcomes, and we stand in His glory. This is called heaven. Those who didn't do those things, He sends to be with the 'goats' and we call that, where He is not, hell. It is not too late for us to begin to try to turn our lives around, turning away from wickedness and living the good, charitable and healthy life.