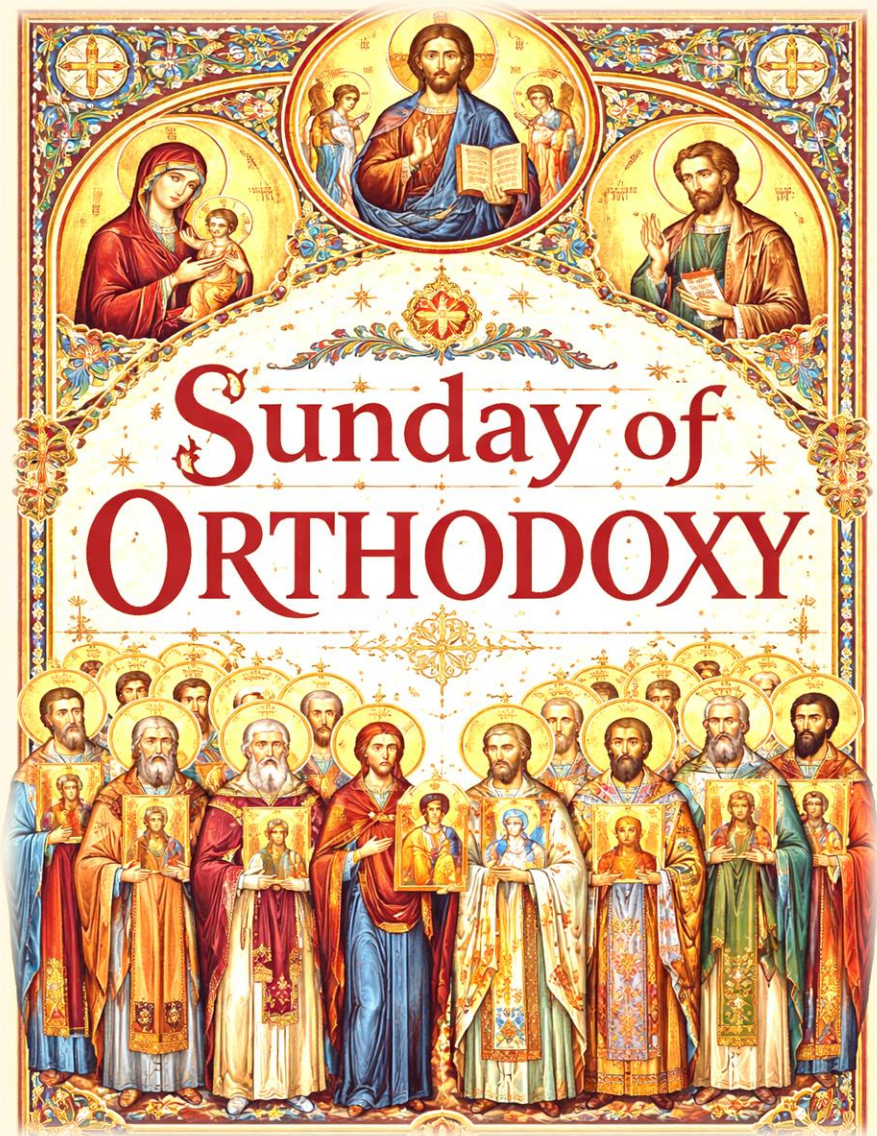


Sunday Bulletin – March 1st, 2026
Sunday of Triumph of Orthodoxy



Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church
1025 N Belle Vista Ave, Youngstown, Ohio 44509



Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian
Orthodox Church

Українська Православна
Церква Св Петра і Павла

1025 N. Belle Vista Ave
Youngstown, OH 44509

Phone: 330-799-3830

Email: stspeterpauluoc@gmail.com

Fr. Mykola Zomchak
Pastor

Anna Anderson
Choir Director

Chuck Woloschak
President of the Parish

Ministries:

Altar Servers

Church Choir

Church School

Adult Education

St. Mary's Sisterhood

Sts. Peter & Paul Brotherhood

Senior UOL Chapter

Junior UOL Chapter

Youth Ministry

Orphanage Mission Ministry

Bingo Team

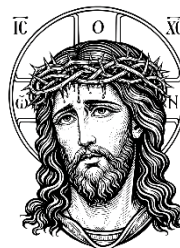
Fr Mykola Zomchak - Editor

Website:

<https://www.stspeterpauluoc.org>

STS Peter & Paul UOC

*Having suffered the Passion for us,
O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us*



Sunday Bulletin – Mar 1st, 2026 - Sunday of Orthodoxy

**In Memory of
Helen Senediak** - bull 8

**In Memory of
Alia Koufos Gilliam** - bull 9

**In Memory of
Rev Theodore Koufos** - bull 9

**In Memory of
Maria Koval-Melnykovich** - bull 10

- **Changeable Parts of the Liturgy** - bull 3
- **March Birthdays** - bull 5
- **Liturgical Schedule & Events** - bull 6
- **Reflections:**
 - Trial** - bull 10
 - Worship** - bull 11
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- **Sunday of Orthodoxy** - bull 12
- **Great Lent: time to begin again** - bull 13
- **Goals for the Lenten Journey** - bull 14
- **Orthodox Christianity 101:**
 - Catholic Church** - bull 15
 - Apostolic Church** - bull 15
 - Sacraments** - bull 16

CHANGEABLE PARTS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

Tone 4 Troparion (Resurrection)

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Your Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: "Death is overturned! Christ God is risen,// granting the world great mercy!"

Tone 2 Troparion (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

We venerate Your most pure image, O Good One; and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God. Of Your own will You were pleased to ascend the Cross in the flesh and deliver Your creatures from bondage to the Enemy. Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to You: "You have filled all with joy, O our Savior,// by coming to save the world."

Tone 4 Kontakion (Resurrection)

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. He has shattered the gates of hell, and as Master,// He has risen on the third day!

Tone 8 Kontakion (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

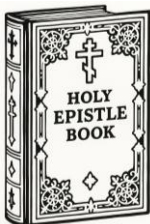
No one could describe the Word of the Father; but when He took flesh from you, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described, and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty.// We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and images.

Tone 4 Prokeimenon

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers,/and praised and glorified is Your Name forever!
V. For You are just in all that You have done for us!

The Reading is from the Letter of the Holy Apostle Paul to of St Paul to Hebrews

11:24-26; 32-12:2



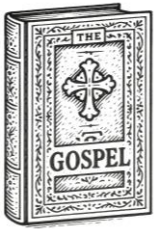
Brethren, by faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and

goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Alleluia and Verses Tone 1

V. God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me. (Ps. 17:48)

V. He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David, His anointed, and his seed forever. (Ps. 17:51)



The reading is from the Gospel according to St. John 1:43-51

The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

(Instead of “It is truly meet...,” we sing the following) Hymn to the Theotokos

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace: the assembly of angels and the race of men.

O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins,

from whom God was incarnate and became a Child – our God before the ages.

He made your body into a throne, and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens. All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace. Glory to you!

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

MEMORY ETERNAL

PLEASE PRAY FOR RESTING OF THE SOULS

Patricia Mogish, Helen Fusco, Maria Koval-Melnykovich, Peter Hucul, Mary Bobersky, Walter Duzzny, Dennis Currie, Julian, Vasyl Zomchak, Heather Rhodes, Joe Zemko, Jeff Ulrich, Judy Cebriak, William Zylka, Serhiy, Pat Mamajack, Arlene Hawryluk, Mary C. Moon, Lidiia Zabrodina, Metro Senedak, Eleanor K. Laise, Julian Naumenko, Patricia Huly, John Senediak, Ann & George Klein. Victims of the war in Ukraine. In Memory of Mr. Darrel Swartz



PRAYER LIST

PLEASE PRAY FOR HEALING, COMFORT, AND SPIRITUAL PEACE

Metropolitan Anthony, Archbishop Daniel, Dominick Woloschak, Beth Zets, Denny Lightner, Kevin Finnerty, Alice Dobransky, Jamie Maluk, Alexandr, Missouri, Jane, Sam, Lorenzo, Lori, Christine Kline, Larry, Soldier Ivan, Dolly Mehalco, Stephen Shonn, Thelma Zemko, Artur Bohuslav, Lori Hayda, Shirley Duffy, Michele (Senediak) Caulder, Dobrodiyka Lilya, Sandy, Marilyn O'Leary, Harold Owens, Marianne Carmack, Nicholas Yurchyk, Pauline Witkowsky, Eileen Maluk, Peter Anderson, Albert Auden, Boris & Kathleen Vuksanovich, Kathy Zebel. People Suffering from any Illnesses. Ukrainian people suffering from war.

THIS MONTH OUR PARISH CELEBRATES



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 Kathryn Walcowiec	20 Kimberly S. Bobersky
3 Nadiya Lyubuska	23 Nicholas Majetich
7 Marcia Goodge	25 Boris Vuksanovich
7 Samuel Goodge	25 Katherine Zomchak
7 Theresa Semchee	28 Gregory Battisti
10 Luba Medved	28 Alice Mae Gregory
12 Ronald N. Kichton	30 Thomas Lane
12 Michael III Woloschak	30 Laura Zavadil
16 Karen Yuschak	31 Nicholas Inchak
20 Lindsay Anderson	

OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD	On February 15	On February 22
General:	\$ 1781.00	\$ 680.00
Renovation:	\$ 115.00	\$ 00.00
Online Donations on Tithe.ly	\$ 25.00	\$ 35.00

Most recent Pyrohy Sale - \$526.00

Bulletin Dedication

(in memory of a loved one, or in honor for an anniversary)

<u>Sun Feb 1</u> 1. Dedicated 2. Dedicated	<u>Sun Feb 8</u> 1. Dedicated 2. Available	<u>Sun Feb 15</u> 1. Dedicated 2. Available	<u>Sun Feb 22</u> Not Available	
<u>Sun Mar 1</u> 1. Dedicated 1. Dedicated	<u>Sun Mar 8</u> 1. Dedicated 2. Available	<u>Sun Mar 15</u> 1. Available 2. Available	<u>Sun Mar 22</u> Not Available	<u>Sun Mar 29</u> 1. Available 2. Available

Liturgical Schedule & Feast Days

SERVICE AND FEAST DAY SCHEDULE



* (HEARING **CONFESSIONS** ON SUNDAYS BEFORE LITURGY 8:30AM - 9:15AM)

- Sunday, March 1, 9:30AM – Divine Liturgy, **1st Sunday of Lent, of Orthodoxy** (Jn. 1:43-51)
- Sunday March 1, 5:00 PM – **Sunday Lenten Vespers**
– at Archangel Michael Greek Orthodox Church. At 401 - 12th Street, Campbell, OH
- Friday, March 6, 6:30 PM – **Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts. Potluck Dinner**
- Sunday, March 8, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 2nd Sunday of Lent, G. Palamas** (Jn. 10:9-16)
- Sunday March 8, 5:00 PM – **Sunday Lenten Vespers**
– at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church at 429 High St NE, Warren, OH
- Wednesday, March 11, 6:30 PM – **Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts. Potluck Dinner**
- Sunday, March 15, 9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy, 3rd Sunday of Lent, Adoration of Cross** (Mk.8:34-9:1
- Sunday, March 15, 5:00 PM – **Sunday Lenten Vespers**
– at Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Church at 626 Wick Ave, Youngstown OH
- Wednesday, March 18, 6:30 PM – **Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts. Potluck Dinner**
- Sunday, March 22, 9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy, 4th Sunday of Great Lent, Ven John Listvychnyk** Mk.9:17-31
- Sunday, March 22, 5:00 PM – **Sunday Lenten Vespers**
– at Saint John the Baptist Orthodox Church at 2220 Reeves Road Warren, OH
- Thursday, March 26, 6:30 PM – **Penitential Canon of St. Andrew of Crete**
- Friday, March 27, 6:30 PM – **Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts. Potluck Dinner**
- Sunday, March 29, 9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy, 5th Sunday of Great Lent, Ven Mary of Egypt** Mk.10:32-45
- Sunday, March 29, 5:00 PM – **Sunday Lenten Vespers**
– at Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church at 1025 N Belle Vista Ave, Youngstown, OH
- Friday, April 3, 6:30 PM – **Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts. Potluck Dinner**
- Sunday, April 5, 9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy, 6th Sunday of Great Lent**
PALM SUNDAY. THE ENTRY OF THE LORD INTO JERUSALEM.

Upcoming dates & events

- Sunday, March 15 – Sr UOL Meeting
- Saturday, March 21 – **UOL Lenten Retreat** at Community Resource Center at 320 Shenango Street Pulaski, PA 16143 (724) 652-6184. For registration call Shirley Duffy at (412) 518-0912

Dear Parishioners and Friends, WE NEED HELP!

Please offer your time to help at the Bingo kitchen on available dates (?)

BINGO KITCHEN WORK SCHEDULE 2026 (Updated Feb 26)

Date	Register	Server	Server
Mon, Mar. 2,	Karen Semchee	Nadiya Lybushka	Barb Ross
Weds., Mar. 4	?	Bobbi Yarosh	Chris Buccino
Mon., Mar. 9	Crystal Walkowiec	?	?

Please call or text Annie Woloschak if you would like to help – 330-766-0182

Pyrohy Schedule (Updated)



ORDER BY DATE:	WORK DAYS	PICK-UP DAY
March 2	March 3 & 5	March 6
March 16	March 17 & 19	March 20
March 30	March 31 & Apr 2	April 3
April 20	April 21 & 23	April 24
May 4	May 5 & 7	May 8
May 18	May 19 & 20 (Wed)	May 22
June 8	June 9 & 11	June 12

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.
— (ROMANS 12:12) —



Guest Speakers

Rev. Fr Timothy Paproski
St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Warren, Oh

Rev. Fr. Yuri Bobko
SS. Peter & Paul UOC, Lyndora, PA

Youth Program

Rev. Fr. John Charest
SS. Peter & Paul UOC, Carnegie, PA

Host Pastors

Rev. Fr. John Charest (Western, PA)
Rev. Fr. Mykola Zomchak (Ohio)

Saturday, March 21, 2026

Schedule:

8:15 AM Registration & Continental Breakfast
9:15 AM Morning Prayers/Morning Session
12:30 PM Lunch
1:15 PM Afternoon Session,
followed at 3:30 PM with Vespers & Confessions

Children & Youth Program

(Preschool & Elementary and Middle School & High School Students)

**River Valley
Community Resource Center**

320 Shenango Street
Pulaski, Pennsylvania 16143 (724) 652-6184

Registration

Adults \$30.00 ■ College Students \$20.00
Registration by March 16
Youth (Ages 10 to 18) Free

For more information or request a registration form, call Shirley Duffy at (412) 518-0912 or send an email to shirleykduffyesq@gmail.com

<https://www.uolofusa.org/>

TO REGISTER, SCAN THE QR CODE



IN MEMORY OF



**HELEN
SENEDIK**

**BIRTHDAY - MAR 2, 1926
ON THE 100TH BIRTHDAY**



**“I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.
THE ONE WHO BELIEVES IN ME WILL LIVE,
EVEN THOUGH THEY DIE”**

JOHN 11:25

**LOVINGLY REMEMBERED
DAUGHTER, MARY ANN SENEDIK**





IN MEMORY OF

**ALIA KOUFOS
GILLIAM**

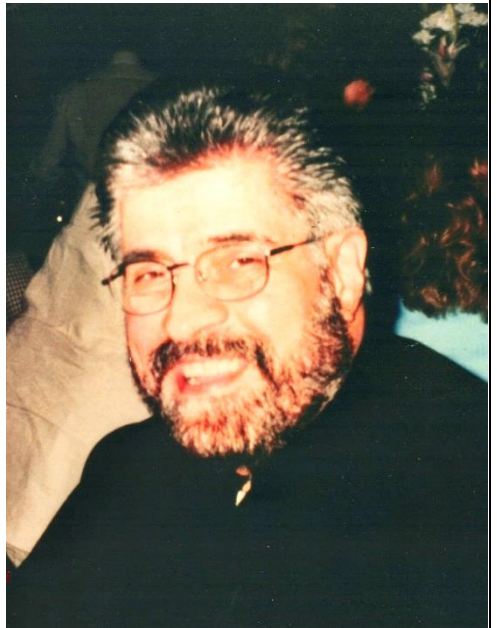
+ DEC 27, 2011



**REV THEODORE
KOUFOS**

+ MAR 2, 2021

**“MAY THEIR
MEMORY BE FROM
GENERATION TO
GENERATION”**



HONORING OUR
MOTHER & BROTHER.
MISSED BY
REV PHILIP KOUFOS
CHERYL & PETER RUDOLPH



IN MEMORY OF

**MARIA
KOVAL
MELNYKOVICH**

+ JAN 20, 2026

ON THE 40TH DAY
OF HER PASSING AWAY



«ПАМ`ЯТЬ ПРО НЕЇ З

ПОКОЛІННЯ В ПОКОЛІННЯ»

Reflections:



No trial comes by accident. In every pain, in every loss, in every hardship, there is a deep meaning, even if we do not see it right away. God does not punish — He teaches, strengthens, and purifies. He has not broken you with this burden but entrusted it to you, because He knows your heart, your strength, and your ability to endure.

What seems unbearable today will tomorrow become your testimony. Every tear that has fallen will one day turn into a pearl of wisdom, and every pain into a source of compassion for others. God does not remove difficulties to make life easy for us — He gives us the strength to go through them so that we may become better.

So when it is hard, do not ask, “Why me?” but say, “Lord, give me the strength to go through this with dignity.” For if He has given it, it means He knows you can bear it. And after the storm, you will surely see the light that will show: nothing was in vain.

Worship is the soul's deepest movement toward God — a turning of the heart that recognizes its Source, its Life, its End. It is more than words spoken or hymns sung; it is the offering of one's whole being in reverence and love.

We often think of worship as something bound to time and place — the church, the service, the appointed hour. Yet true worship begins long before the lips speak. It is born in humility, in gratitude, in the quiet awareness that every breath is sustained by God's mercy.

In worship, the soul stands rightly ordered. God is not brought down to our level; we are lifted toward His holiness. We do not worship because He needs praise, but because we need transformation. For in beholding Him, we begin to reflect what we behold.

Even the simplest prayer, offered sincerely, becomes incense rising before His throne. Even silent tears, shed in faith, are received as worship.

Do not wait to feel worthy before you worship. Come as you are — with your burdens, your doubts, your longing. For worship is not the reward of the perfect, but the refuge of the seeking. And the soul that learns to worship in spirit and in truth will find that heaven has already begun within it.



Veneration is love expressed through honor — the heart recognizing holiness in the works of God and responding with reverence. It does not replace worship, which belongs to God alone, but flows from it like light from a flame.

When we venerate the saints, we honor the grace that dwelt within them. When we kiss an icon, we do not bow to wood and paint, but to the divine reality it reveals. Veneration passes

through the image to its holy prototype, just as love passes through a photograph to the one remembered.

The Church teaches us this not to multiply devotions, but to deepen vision — to see that God's glory truly takes root in human lives, in sanctified matter, in the communion of heaven and earth. Veneration trains the soul in humility. It reminds us that holiness is possible, that grace can transfigure weakness, that God is wondrous in His saints.

We live in a world that honors power, wealth, and fame. Veneration redirects our honor toward what is eternal — faithfulness, purity, sacrifice, love.

Do not fear that reverence given in veneration diminishes God. True veneration always leads the heart back to Him, the Giver of all holiness.

And the soul that learns to honor what is sacred will itself become a dwelling place of sacred light.

Sunday of Orthodoxy

The Sunday of Orthodoxy, the first Sunday of Great Lent, stands as a radiant proclamation of the Church's victory — not a victory of politics or power, but of truth, faith, and the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. On this sacred day we commemorate the restoration of the holy icons in 843, when the Church affirmed what she had always believed: that because God truly became man, He may be depicted, venerated, and proclaimed through holy images.

At the heart of this feast is the mystery of the Incarnation. The defense of icons was never about wood and paint alone. It was about Christ Himself. If God remained invisible and distant, icons would indeed be impossible. But “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” The invisible became visible. The uncircumscribable accepted circumscription. Therefore, when we gaze upon the icon of Christ, we do not worship matter — we honor the One who took on matter to save us.

The Sunday of Orthodoxy reminds us that right belief — *orthodoxy* — is inseparable from right worship and right living — *orthopraxy*. The restoration of icons was not merely the end of a historical controversy; it was the reaffirmation that truth matters, that doctrine shapes the soul, and that what we believe about Christ determines how we encounter Him.

Icons teach us silently. They preach without words. In their stillness they call us to prayer, repentance, and contemplation. The elongated figures, the inverted perspective, the light that seems to come from within — all proclaim that the Kingdom of God is not of this world. When we stand before an icon, we stand at a window into heaven.

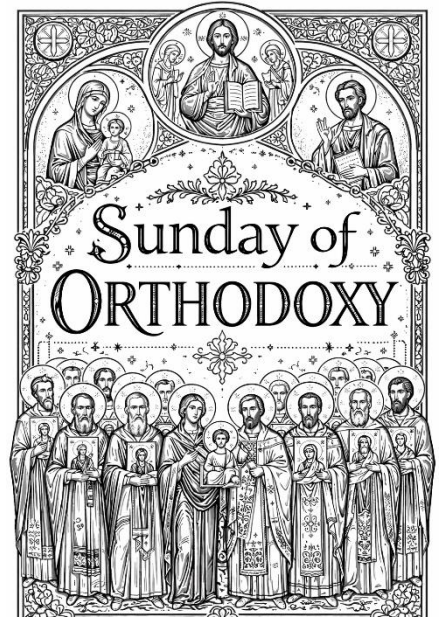
Yet this Sunday is not only about defending icons on walls — it is about restoring the icon within. Every human person is created in the image and likeness of God. Sin darkens that image; repentance restores it. Lent is the season in which we cleanse the dust from the icon of our soul through prayer, fasting, confession, and acts of mercy.

The procession with icons on this day is especially powerful. As we carry them, we proclaim visibly what we believe inwardly: Christ is victorious; the faith is alive; the truth endures. We join the confessors, martyrs, monks, and faithful who preserved this treasure at great cost. Their courage asks something of us today — not necessarily persecution, but fidelity.

In our modern world, icons can still be “attacked,” not by imperial edicts, but by indifference, secularism, and forgetfulness. The temptation is to reduce faith to culture, tradition to decoration, and theology to opinion. The Sunday of Orthodoxy calls us back: to confess Christ fully God and fully man, to honor His saints, to cherish His Church, and to live the faith without compromise.

As we begin our Lenten journey, this feast sets the direction. We fast not as an empty rule, but to restore the divine image. We pray not as obligation, but as communion. We venerate icons not as art, but as encounter.

May this Sunday strengthen our confession, renew our reverence, and purify the icon of Christ within us — so that by Pascha we may behold Him not only on wood and walls, but shining in our hearts.



Great Lent

Time to Begin Again

Having begun the Great Lent, we entered a season that invites us into holy stillness and deeper awareness of God's presence in our lives. The beginning of Lent is marked by a gentle but powerful reminder: we are human, we are fragile, and we are deeply loved by God. The ashes placed upon our foreheads call us to humility—not in a way that diminishes us, but in a way that grounds us in truth. They remind us that life is precious, time is sacred, and every day is an opportunity to return our hearts to the Lord.

Lent is often understood through the practices of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. Yet these are not simply religious obligations or seasonal traditions. They are spiritual tools meant to open space within us. When we fast, we are not only giving up food or comforts—we are learning discipline, gratitude, and dependence on God. When we pray, we step away from the noise of life to listen for the quiet voice of the Spirit. When we give to others, we allow our hearts to soften, to notice suffering, and to respond with compassion.

The beginning of Lent is like standing at the entrance of a long spiritual journey. We do not arrive at Easter overnight. We walk there slowly—step by step—through reflection, repentance, forgiveness, and renewal. We are invited to look honestly at our lives: our habits, our words, our relationships, our wounds, and our hopes. Not with judgment or shame, but with courage and trust that God's mercy is greater than our weaknesses.

This season also teaches us the sacred value of slowing down. In a world that constantly pushes us to hurry, achieve, and produce, Lent whispers a different rhythm: be still, be watchful, be prayerful. It reminds us that spiritual growth often happens quietly—through small sacrifices, hidden kindnesses, and faithful daily choices. A gentle word, a listening ear, patience in difficulty, forgiveness offered—these become Lenten offerings just as meaningful as any fast.

At the beginning of Lent, we do not yet see the joy of Easter morning, but we walk toward it in hope. The season holds both solemnity and promise. We carry the cross, but we do so knowing that resurrection awaits. Every sacrifice, every prayer, every act of mercy prepares the soil of our hearts for new life.

So as Lent begins, we are invited not to approach it with fear or heaviness, but with openness. This is a season of grace—a time given to us to begin again, to heal what is wounded, to strengthen what is weak, and to return to what matters most. May this Lenten journey renew our spirits, deepen our faith, and draw us closer to God and to one another, so that when Easter dawns, we may rejoice with hearts made new.



Goals for the Lenten Journey

Spiritual Goals

- Deepen prayer life - set aside daily time for personal prayer and Scripture.
- Attend additional services.
- Practice silence and stillness to listen for God's voice.
- Meditate on Christ's Passion and His sacrifice.

Goals of Repentance & Inner Healing

- Examine your conscience honestly.
- Seek forgiveness through Confession or reconciliation.
- Forgive those who have hurt you.
- Let go of grudges, resentment, and anger.
- Work on one personal weakness (impatience, gossip, pride, etc.).

Fasting & Self-Discipline Goals

- Fast according to your tradition/ability.
- Practice moderation in food, media, spending, and comforts.
- Give up something that distracts you from God (social media, excess TV, sweets, etc.).
- Replace a habit with a holy practice (prayer instead of scrolling).
- Learn gratitude for what you have.

Charity & Compassion Goals

- Give alms or donate to those in need.
- Volunteer your time in church or community.
- Visit the sick, elderly, or lonely.
- Offer acts of hidden kindness.
- Be more attentive to people's emotional and spiritual needs.

Relationship Goals

- Reconcile with family or friends.
- Strengthen your marriage or family life.
- Spend intentional time with loved ones.
- Practice patience and gentleness in conversations.
- Encourage and uplift others daily.

Personal Growth Goals

- Simplify your life—declutter physically and spiritually.
- Manage stress in healthier ways.
- Cultivate humility and gratitude.
- Focus on eternal values over temporary worries.

Service & Vocation Goals

- Serve Christ through your work.
- Be more compassionate in caregiving roles.
- Pray for those entrusted to your care.
- Offer your daily duties as a Lenten sacrifice.
- Lead by example in faith and kindness.

Orthodox Christianity 101

Church

Catholic Church

The Church is also catholic because of its relation to God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The word catholic means full, complete, whole, with nothing lacking. God alone is full and total reality; in God alone is there nothing lacking.

Sometimes the catholicity of the Church is understood in terms of the Church's universality throughout time and space. While it is true that the Church is universal-for all men at all times and in all places-this universality is not the real meaning of the term "catholic" when it is used to define the Church. The term "catholic" as originally used to define the Church (as early as the first decades of the second century) was a definition of quality rather than quantity. Calling the Church catholic means to define how it is, namely, full and complete, all-embracing, and with nothing lacking.

Even before the Church was spread over the world, it was defined as catholic. The original Jerusalem Church of the apostles, or the early city-churches of Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, or Rome, were catholic. These churches were catholic-as is each and every Orthodox church today-because nothing essential was lacking for them to be the genuine Church of Christ. God Himself is fully revealed and present in each church through Christ and the Holy Spirit, acting in the local community of believers with its apostolic doctrine, ministry (hierarchy), and sacraments, thus requiring nothing to be added to it in order for it to participate fully in the Kingdom of God.

To believe in the Church as catholic, therefore, is to express the conviction that the fullness of God is present in the Church and that nothing of the "abundant life" that Christ gives to the world in the Spirit is lacking to it ([Jn 10.10](#)). It is to confess exactly that the Church is indeed "the fullness of him who fills all in all" ([Eph 1.23](#); also [Col 2.10](#)).

Apostolic Church

The word apostolic describes that which has a mission, that which has "been sent" to accomplish a task.

Christ and the Holy Spirit are both "apostolic" because both have been sent by the Father to the World. It is not only repeated in the Scripture on numerous occasions how Christ has been sent by the Father, and the Spirit sent through Christ from the Father, but it also has been recorded explicitly that Christ is "the apostle . of our confession" (Heb 3.1).

As Christ was sent from God, so Christ Himself chose and sent His apostles. "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you receive ye the Holy Spirit," the risen Christ says to His disciples. Thus, the apostles go out to the world, becoming the first foundation of the Christian Church.

In this sense, then, the Church is called apostolic: first, as it is built upon Christ and the Holy Spirit sent from God and upon those apostles who were sent by Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit; and secondly, as the Church in its earthly members is itself sent by God to bear witness to His Kingdom, to keep His word and to do His will and His works in this world.



Orthodox Christians believe in the Church as they believe in God and Christ and the Holy Spirit. Faith in the Church is part of the credal statement of Christian believers. The Church is herself an object of faith as the divine reality of the Kingdom of God given to men by Christ and the Holy Spirit; the divine community founded by Christ against which “the gates of hell shall not prevail” ([Mt 16.18](#)).

The Church, and faith in the Church, is an essential element of Christian doctrine and life. Without the Church as a divine, mystical, sacramental, and spiritual reality, in the midst of the fallen and sinful world there can be no full and perfect communion with God. The Church is God’s gift to the world. It is the gift of salvation, of knowledge and enlightenment, of the forgiveness of sins, of the victory over darkness and death. It is the gift of communion with God through Christ and the Holy Spirit. This gift is given totally, once and for all, with no reservations on God’s part. It remains forever, until the close of the ages: invincible and indestructible. Men may sin and fight against the Church, believers may fall away and be separated from the Church, but the Church itself, the “pillar and bulwark of the truth” ([1Tim 3.15](#)) remains forever.

[God] has put all things under His [Christ’s] feet and has made Him the head over all things for the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

for through Him we have access in one Spirit, to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow-citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her, that he might sanctify her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the Church to Himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish . This is a Great Mystery . Christ and the Church . ([Eph 1.21–23; 2.19–22; 5.25–32](#))

Great Lent

The season of Great Lent is the time of preparation for the feast of the Resurrection of Christ. It is the living symbol of man’s entire life which is to be fulfilled in his own resurrection from the dead with Christ. It is a time of renewed devotion: of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. It is a time of repentance, a real renewal of our minds, hearts and deeds in conformity with Christ and his teachings. It is the time, most of all, of our return to the great commandments of loving God and our neighbors.

In the Orthodox Church, Great Lent is not a season of morbidity and gloominess. On the contrary, it is a time of joyfulness and purification. We are called to “anoint our faces” and to “cleanse our bodies as we cleanse our souls.” The very first hymns of the very first service of Great Lent set the proper tone of the season:

Let us begin the lenten time with delight let us fast from passions as we fast from food, taking pleasure in the good words of the Spirit, that we may be granted to see the holy passion of Christ our God and his holy Pascha, spiritually rejoicing.

Thy grace has arisen upon us, O Lord, the illumination of our souls has shown forth; behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the time of repentance (Vespers Hymns).

It is our repentance that God desires, not our remorse. We sorrow for our sins, but we do so in the joy of God’s mercy. We mortify our flesh, but we do so in the joy of our resurrection into life everlasting. We make ready for the resurrection during Great Lent, both Christ’s Resurrection and our own.