

Sunday Bulletin – Mar 8th, 2026
Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas



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 8th, 2026

Sunday of *St. Gregory Palamas*

**In Memory of
Helen Zebel**

- bull 8

**In Memory of
Jenney Yarosh**

- bull 9

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CHANGEABLE PARTS OF THE DIVINE LITURGY

Tone 2 Troparion (Resurrection)

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal,
You slew hell with the splendor of Your Godhead. And when from the depths You raised the dead,
all the powers of heaven cried out:// “O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

Tone 8 Troparion (St. Gregory Palamas)

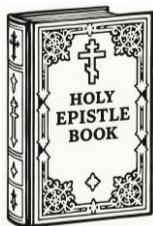
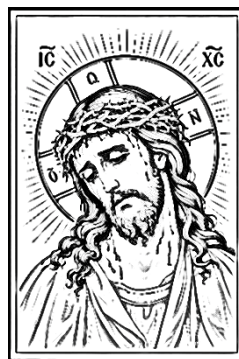
O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation, O ideal of monks and invincible
champion of theologians, O wonderworking Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace,
always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved!

Tone 4 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

Now is the time for action! Judgment is at the doors!
So let us rise and fast, offering alms with tears of compunction and crying:
“Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea; but forgive us,
O Master of all, // so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!”

Tone 5 Prokeimenon

You, O Lord, shall protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever.
V. *Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!*



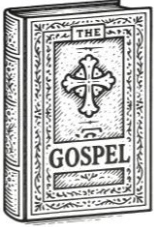
The Reading is from the Letter of St Paul to Hebrews 1:10-2:3

Brethren, and: “You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.” But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.

Alleluia and Verses Tone 5

1. *He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God.*
2. *He will say to the Lord: “My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in Whom I trust.”*
3. *The mouth of the righteous shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak of judgment.*

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia



The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark 2:1-12

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

(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

Robert Rudolph, 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. Victims of the war in Ukraine.



PRAYER LIST

PLEASE PRAY FOR HEALING, COMFORT, AND SPIRITUAL PEACE



Metropolitan Anthony, Archbishop Daniel, Sandy Burlock, 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.

Liturgical Schedule & Feast Days

SERVICE AND FEAST DAY SCHEDULE



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

- Sunday, March 8, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 2nd Sunday of Lent, G. Palamas** (Jn. 10:9-16)
- Sunday March 8, 5:00 PM – **Lenten Vespers** – *at St. Demetrios GOC at 429 High St, Warren*
- 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
- Saturday, April 25 – **Super Bingo to sponsor a prosthetic for a wounded Ukrainian Soldier.**

Pyrohy Schedule (Updated)

ORDER BY DATE:	WORK DAYS	PICK-UP DAY
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



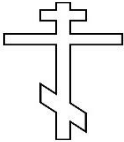
THIS MONTH OUR PARISH CELEBRATES



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	

ANNOUNCEMENTS & GREETINGS:



• **Reposed in the Lord - Robert Rudolph, 83**

Robert Rudolph, 83, a brother of our parishioner Peter Rudolph, passed away peacefully on Sunday, March 1, 2026 in Florida. May his Memory be Eternal.

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 Mar 6)

Date	Register	Server	Server
Mon., Mar. 9	Crystal Walkowiec	Erica Shonn	Bobbi Yarosh
Mon., Mar. 16	Janna Williams	Carla Rogenski	Chris Buccino
Mon., Mar. 23	Crystal Walkowiec	Barb Ross	?
Mon., Mar. 30	Karen Semchee	?	?
Mon., Apr. 6	Crystal Walkowiec	?	?

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

OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD	On February 22	On March 1
General:	\$ 680.00	\$ 1958.00
Renovation:	\$ 00.00	\$ 00.00
Online Donations on Tithe.ly	\$ 35.00	\$ 155.00



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



Bulletin Dedication

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

<u>Sun Mar 1</u>	<u>Sun Mar 8</u>	<u>Sun Mar 15</u>	<u>Sun Mar 22</u>	<u>Sun Mar 29</u>
1. Dedicated 1. Dedicated	1. Dedicated 1. Dedicated	1. Dedicated 2. Available	Not Available	1. Available 2. Available
<u>Sun Apr 5</u> 1. Dedicated 2. Available	<u>Sun Apr 12</u> 1. Available 2. Available	<u>Sun Apr 19</u> 1. Available 2. Available	<u>Sun Apr 26</u> Not Available	

NOTE FROM ST MARY`S SISTERHOOD:

1. 2026 Sisterhood dues - (\$10) must be paid by May 1.
2. Sisterhood Semi-Annual Flower Fund. *The donation will count toward Stewardship*
3. The next Sisterhood meeting will be Saturday, March 28, 11:30, at Denny's.



IN MEMORY OF

**HELEN
ZEBEL**

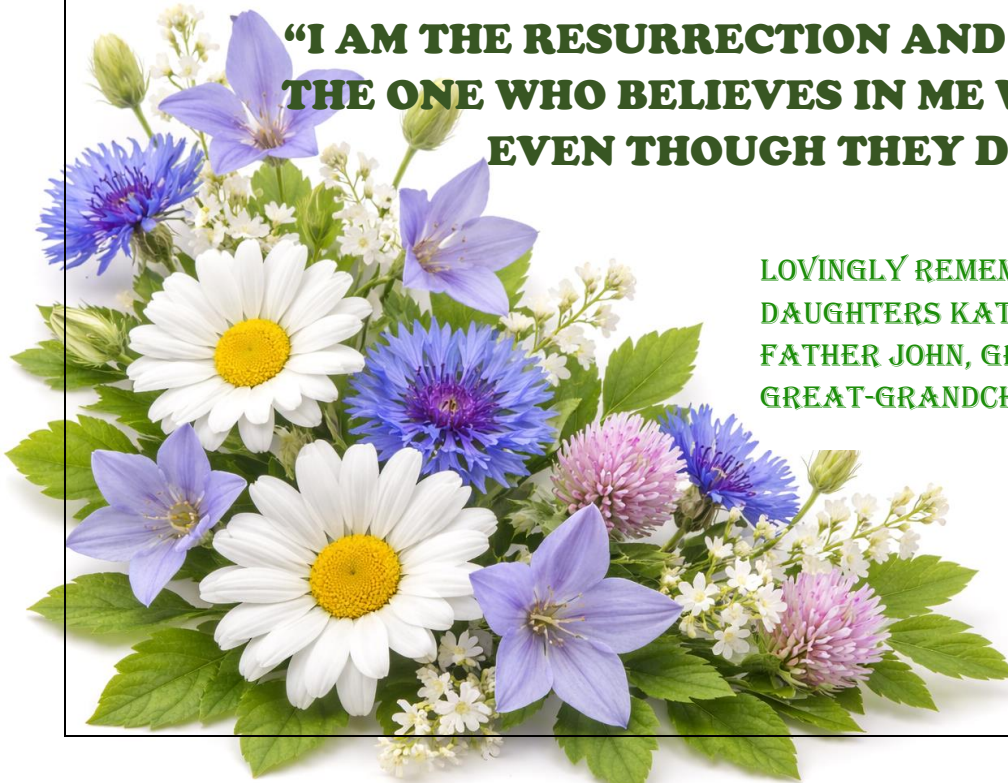
**BIRTHDAY - MAR 8, 1926
ON THE 100TH BIRTHDAY**



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

JOHN 11:25

LOVINGLY REMEMBERED BY
DAUGHTERS KATHY, ANNE, MARY,
FATHER JOHN, GRANDCHILDREN &
GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN





IN MEMORY OF

**JENNEY
YAROSH**

+ SEP 14, 1973 – MAR 8, 2022



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



MISSED BY
FAMILY AND FRIENDS



Reflections:



Truth is not merely a word spoken correctly; it is the light that allows the soul to see clearly.

It is the quiet voice that remains even when the world grows loud with confusion and compromise. Truth does not bend to our desires nor change according to convenience. It stands firm, calling the heart to honesty, humility, and courage.

Often the truth is not the easiest path. It may expose our weakness, challenge our comfort, or place us at odds with others. Yet it is the only path that leads to freedom. For falsehood may promise peace for a moment, but it always leaves the soul restless. Truth, even when difficult, gives peace that no deception can offer.

To live in truth is to live before God with an open heart. It means allowing His light to enter every hidden corner of our lives. The truth does not condemn the one who seeks it sincerely; rather, it heals and restores. Like a physician, it may first reveal the wound, but only so that it can be cleansed.

Therefore do not fear the truth. Welcome it, even when it challenges you. For the soul that loves truth walks in the light, and the light will always lead it closer to God.

Integrity is the quiet strength of a soul that chooses what is right even when no one is watching. It is the harmony between what we believe, what we say, and how we live. A person of integrity does not change their values according to circumstances, because their foundation is rooted in something deeper than the approval of others.



In a world where many things can be hidden, integrity is the unseen character of the heart. It is revealed in small decisions, in faithful actions, and in the willingness to remain honest when it would be easier to compromise. Integrity does not seek recognition; it seeks faithfulness.

A life built on integrity may not always appear successful in the eyes of the world, but it carries a peace that cannot be taken away. For the soul knows it stands before God without deception. And that quiet certainty becomes a source of strength in every trial.

Guard your integrity carefully. It is more valuable than reputation and more lasting than praise. For when integrity guides the heart, a person walks steadily, and their life becomes a testimony of faithfulness and truth.

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

The Light of the Church

On the Second Sunday of Great Lent, the Church honors **St. Gregory Palamas**, the great defender of the Orthodox understanding of God's grace and the living experience of His divine presence. If the first Sunday proclaims the victory of holy icons, the second Sunday proclaims the victory of the living encounter with God — the truth that God is not distant from His creation but truly shares His life with those who seek Him.

St. Gregory Palamas, a fourteenth-century monk and Archbishop of Thessalonica, defended the ancient teaching of the Church that the faithful may truly experience God through His **uncreated energies**, His living grace. God in His essence remains beyond human comprehension, yet through His energies He reveals Himself, illumines the heart, and draws humanity into communion with Him.

This teaching was not an abstract philosophy. It was born from prayer — from the quiet life of the monks who sought God with their whole being. Through stillness, humility, and the continual prayer of the heart, they experienced the same divine light that shone on Mount Tabor at the Transfiguration of Christ. This light was not symbolic or imagined; it was the **uncreated light of God's glory**.

St. Gregory defended this truth against those who claimed that God could only be known intellectually. He reminded the Church that Christianity is not merely a system of ideas but a **living participation in the life of God**. Faith is not only something we think about; it is something we encounter, something that transforms us.

This is why the Church places the memory of St. Gregory Palamas in the heart of Great Lent. Lent is not simply a time of discipline; it is a path toward illumination. Through fasting, prayer, repentance, and humility, the heart becomes purified and capable of receiving God's light.

The teaching of St. Gregory reminds us that the goal of the Christian life is **theosis** — union with God. We are not called merely to obey commandments externally but to be transformed inwardly, to become by grace what God is by nature. The divine light that shone on the apostles at Tabor is the same light that God desires to shine within every human soul.

In a world often distracted by noise and outward activity, the witness of St. Gregory Palamas calls us back to the inner life — to silence, to prayer, and to the deep awareness that God is present. The Kingdom of God begins not in distant places but in the purified heart.

As we continue our Lenten journey, the Church invites us to seek this light. Through repentance, humility, and prayer, the darkness within us slowly gives way to the radiance of Christ. And when the heart is illumined, we discover that the light of Tabor is not only a memory of the past, but a living reality offered to us even now.

May the prayers of **St. Gregory Palamas** guide us on this path of purification and illumination, so that the light of Christ may shine within us and lead us to the joy of the Resurrection.



Repentance

The Way Back to God

Repentance is not simply the feeling of regret for what we have done wrong. It is something deeper and more beautiful: it is the turning of the heart back toward God. It is the moment when the soul awakens and realizes that the path it has followed does not lead to life, and it chooses once again the road that leads home. Often we misunderstand repentance. We imagine it as something heavy, full of shame and sorrow. Yet in the Christian life repentance is not despair—it is hope. It is the door through which God's mercy enters our lives. Every time we repent, we begin again.

God never turns away the one who returns to Him. Like the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son, He waits patiently for our return. Even when we wander far, even when we fall many times, His love remains unchanged. Repentance is simply our response to that love.

True repentance begins with honesty. It asks us to look within ourselves without excuses or blame. We see our weaknesses, our pride, our anger, our indifference. Yet we do not remain trapped in guilt. Instead, we place everything before God and ask Him to heal what we cannot heal ourselves.

Repentance also requires courage. To change our hearts, to ask forgiveness, to let go of habits that hold us captive—these things are not easy. But every step toward God brings freedom. What once felt like chains slowly loosens, and the soul begins to breathe again. The Church places repentance at the heart of Great Lent because it is the beginning of spiritual renewal. Through prayer, fasting, confession, and acts of mercy, we cleanse the dust from the soul and rediscover the image of God within us.

Repentance is not a single moment but a lifelong journey. Each day gives us another opportunity to turn toward God, to choose humility over pride, love over resentment, and faith over fear.

And when we walk the path of repentance sincerely, we discover something unexpected: the God we feared to approach is the very One who runs to meet us with mercy, forgiveness, and peace.



**BE ASHAMED
WHEN YOU SIN**



**DON'T BE ASHAMED
WHEN YOU REPENT**



Orthodox Christianity 101

Lenten Fasting

A special word must be said about fasting during lent. Generally speaking, fasting is an essential element of the Christian life. Christ fasted and taught men to fast. Blessed fasting is done in secret, without ostentation or accusation of others ([Mt 6.16](#); [Rom 14](#)). It has as its goal the purification of our lives, the liberation of our souls and bodies from sin, the strengthening of our human powers of love for God and man, the enlightening of our entire being for communion with the Blessed Trinity.

The Orthodox rules for lenten fasting are the monastic rules. No meat is allowed after Meatfare Sunday, and no eggs or dairy products after Cheesefare Sunday. These rules exist not as a Pharisaic “burden too hard to bear” ([Lk 11.46](#)), but as an ideal to be striven for; not as an end in themselves, but as a means to spiritual perfection crowned in love. The lenten services themselves continually remind us of this.

Let us fast with a fast pleasing to the Lord. This is the true fast: the casting off of evil, the bridling of the tongue, the cutting off of anger, the cessation of lusts, evil talking, lies and cursing. The stopping of these is the fast true and acceptable (Monday Vespers of the First Week).

The lenten services also make the undeniable point that we should not pride ourselves with external fasting since the devil also never eats!

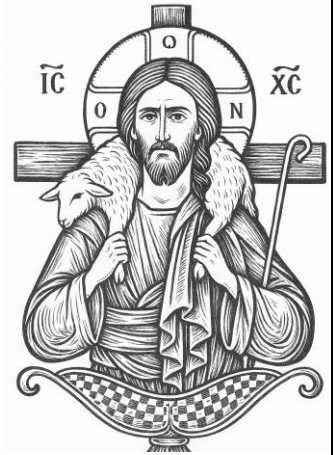
The ascetic fast of Great Lent continues from Meatfare Sunday to Easter Sunday, and is broken only after the Paschal Divine Liturgy. Knowing the great effort to which they are called, Christians should make every effort to fast as well as they can, in secret, so that God would see and bless them openly with a holy life. Each person must do his best in the light of the given ideal.

In addition to the ascetic fasting of the lenten season, the Orthodox alone among Christians also practice what is known as eucharistic or liturgical fasting. This fasting does not refer to the normal abstinence in preparation for receiving the holy eucharist; it means fasting from the holy eucharist itself.

During the week days of Great Lent the regular eucharistic Divine Liturgy is not celebrated in Orthodox churches since the Divine Liturgy is always a paschal celebration of communion with the Risen Lord. Because the lenten season is one of preparation for the Lord's Resurrection through the remembrance of sin and separation from God, the liturgical order of the Church eliminates the eucharistic service on the weekdays of lent. Instead the non-eucharistic services are extended with additional scripture readings and hymnology of a lenten character. In order that the faithful would not be entirely deprived of Holy Communion on the lenten days, however, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is celebrated on Wednesday and Friday evenings.

Even during Great Lent, Saturday (the Sabbath Day) and Sunday (the Lord's Day) remain eucharistic days, and the Divine Liturgy is celebrated. On Saturdays it is the normal Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, usually with prayers for the dead. On Sundays it is the longer Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great.

The well-known teaching that Saturdays and Sundays are never days of fasting in the Orthodox Church, an issue emphasized centuries ago when controversy arose with the Latin Church, refers only to this eucharistic-liturgical fast. During Great Lent, even though the eucharistic fast is broken on Saturdays



and Sundays, the ascetical fast continues through the weekends since this fasting is an extended effort made from Meatfare Sunday right to Easter itself.

Lenten Services

The weekday services of Great Lent are characterized by special lenten melodies of a penitential character. The royal gates to the altar area remain closed to signify man's separation through sin from the Kingdom of God. The church vesting is of a somber color, usually purple. The daily troparia are also of an intercessory character, entreating God through his saints to have mercy on us sinners.

At the Matins the long Alleluia replaces the psalm: God is the Lord .??. the Psalmody is increased. The hymnology refers to the lenten effort. Scripture readings from Genesis and Proverbs are added to Vespers, and the Prophecy of Isaiah to the Sixth Hour. Each of these books is read nearly in its entirety during the lenten period. Epistle and gospel readings are absent because there are no Divine Liturgies.

At all of the lenten services the Prayer of Saint Ephraim of Syria is read. It supplicates God for those virtues especially necessary to the Christian life.

O Lord and Master of my life:

take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, 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 errors and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Vespers service which begins the lenten season is called the Vespers of Forgiveness. It is customary at this service for the faithful to ask forgiveness and to forgive each other. At the Compline services of the first week of lent the Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete is read. This is a long series of penitential verses based on Biblical themes, to each of which the people respond: Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me. This canon is repeated at Matins on Thursday of the fifth week.

On Friday evening of this same fifth week, the Akathistos Hymn to the Mother of God is sung; and the Saturday Divine Liturgy also honors the Theotokos.

The first Saturday of Great Lent is dedicated to the memory of Saint Theodore of Tyre. The second, third, and fourth Saturdays are called Memorial Saturdays since they are dedicated to the remembrance of the dead.

On Memorial Saturdays the liturgical hymns pray universally for all of the departed, and the Matins for the dead, popularly called the parastasis or panikhida, is served with specific mention of the deceased by name. Litanies and prayers are also added to the Divine Liturgy at which the scripture readings refer to the dead and their salvation by Christ.

Saturday, even during the non-lenten season, is the Church's day for remembering the dead. This is so because Saturday, the Sabbath Day, stands as the day which God blessed for life in this world. Because of sin, however, this day now symbolizes all of earthly life as naturally fulfilled in death. Even Christ the Lord lay dead on the Sabbath Day, "resting from all of his works" and "trampling down death by death." Thus, in the New Testament Church of Christ, Saturday becomes the proper day for remembering the dead and for offering prayers for their eternal salvation.

Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

As we already have seen, the eucharistic Divine Liturgy is not celebrated in the Orthodox Church on lenten weekdays. In order for the faithful to sustain their lenten effort by participation in Holy Communion, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served. The service is an ancient one in the Orthodox Church. We officially hear about it in the canons of the seventh century, which obviously indicates its development at a much earlier date.

On all days of the holy fast of Lent, except on the Sabbath, the Lord's Day, and the holy day of the Annunciation, the Liturgy of the Presanctified is to be served (Canon 52, Quinisext, 692).

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is an evening service. It is the solemn lenten Vespers with the administration of Holy Communion added to it. There is no consecration of the eucharistic gifts at the presanctified liturgy. Holy Communion is given from the eucharistic gifts sanctified on the previous Sunday at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, unless, of course, the feast of the Annunciation should intervene; hence its name of "presanctified."

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served on Wednesday and Friday evenings, although some churches may celebrate it only on one of these days. It comes in the evening after a day of spiritual preparation and total abstinence. The faithful who are unable to make the effort of total fasting because of weakness or work, however, normally eat a light lenten meal in the early morning.

During the psalms of Vespers, the presanctified gifts are prepared for communion. They are transferred from the altar table where they have been reserved since the Divine Liturgy, and are placed on the table of oblation. After the evening hymn, the Old Testament scriptures of Genesis and Proverbs are read, between which the celebrant blesses the kneeling congregation with a lighted candle and the words: "The Light of Christ illumines all," indicating that all wisdom is given by Christ in the Church through the scriptures and sacraments. This blessing was originally directed primarily to the catechumens—those preparing to be baptized on Easter—who attended the service only to the time of the communion of the faithful.

After the readings, the evening [Psalm 141](#) is solemnly sung once again with the offering of incense. Then, after the litanies of intercession and those at which the catechumens were dismissed in former days, the presanctified eucharistic gifts are brought to the altar in a solemn, silent procession. The song of the entrance calls the faithful to communion.

Now the heavenly powers [i.e., the angels] do minister invisibly with us. For behold the King of Glory enters. Behold the mystical sacrifice, all fulfilled, is ushered in.

Let us with faith and love draw near that we may be partakers of everlasting life. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

After the litany and prayers, the Our Father is sung and the faithful receive Holy Communion to the chanting of the verse from [Psalm 34](#): "O taste and see how good is the Lord. Alleluia." The post-communion hymns are sung and the faithful depart with a prayer to God who "has brought us to these all-holy days for the cleansing of carnal passions," that he will bless us "to fight the good fight, to accomplish the course of the fast, and to attain unto and to adore the holy resurrection" of Christ.

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is traditionally considered to be the work of the sixth-century pope, Saint Gregory of Rome. The present service, however, is obviously the inspired liturgical creation of Christian Byzantium.

The Dog and the Nail

Have you ever met people who constantly complain about their problems or the difficulties in their lives—but never do anything to change them? Not only have we met them—perhaps it is even us! Not wanting to do anything while we can.

There is a story I really like that speaks about this.

One day a man was walking past a house and noticed an old woman sitting in a rocking chair on the porch. Next to her sat an old man, also rocking in his chair while reading a newspaper. Between them lay a dog on the porch, whining as if it were in pain.

As the man walked by, he wondered to himself why the dog was whining.

The next day he passed the same house again. The old couple were sitting in their rocking chairs just as before, and the dog was lying between them making the same sad sound.

The man became curious. He told himself that if the dog was still whining the next day, he would ask the elderly couple about it.

On the third day he passed by again and saw the same scene: the old woman rocking gently, the old man reading his newspaper, and the dog lying in the same place whining pitifully.

Finally, he could not stand it any longer.

"Excuse me," he said to the old woman, "what is wrong with your dog?"

"With him?" she replied calmly. "He's lying on a nail."

The man looked surprised.

"If he's lying on a nail and it hurts, why doesn't he just get up?"

The old woman smiled kindly and said in a gentle voice,

"Well, dear, it hurts enough for him to whine... but not enough for him to move."

Many times we are like that dog. We complain about our problems, our habits, our weaknesses, or our struggles—but we do not take the step needed to change them. True change often requires effort, courage, and sometimes discomfort. It means getting up from the place that hurts us. But until the pain of staying the same becomes greater than the fear of change, many people remain where they are—complaining, yet unmoved. Growth begins when we finally decide to rise.

Sometimes the hardest step is simply admitting that we are the ones responsible for getting up. It is easy to speak about what is wrong, to point at circumstances, people, or fate. Yet real transformation begins when we stop waiting for everything around us to change and instead begin with ourselves. Even a small step in the right direction can lead us away from the nail that keeps hurting us. That nail - is our sin.

Life will always bring difficulties, but we are not meant to remain trapped in them. God gives us the freedom, the strength, and the wisdom to rise, to learn, and to grow. When we choose to move—even slowly—we discover that the pain that once held us in place can become the very reason we begin a new and better path. Growth begins when we finally decide to rise.

