

○ God, be attentive
unto helping me!
○ Lord, make haste
to help me!



HOW CAN WE KEEP GREAT LENT?

by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann

from his booklet,
Great Lent: A School of Repentance

We are approaching again the Great Lent, the time of repentance, the time of our reconciliation with God. Repentance is the **beginning** and also the **condition** of a truly Christian life. "Repent!" was the first word of Christ when He began to preach (*Matt. 4:17*).

Great Lent is indeed a school of **repentance**, to which each Christian must go every year in order to refresh the understanding of his faith. It is a wonderful **pilgrimage** to the very sources of Orthodoxy, a rediscovery of a truly **Orthodox way of life**. Let us try to make these forty days as meaningful, as deep, and as rich, as possible.

"Fasting appears gloomy until one steps into its arena. But begin and you will see what light it brings after darkness, what freedom from bonds, what release after a burdensome life."

+ Bishop Theophan the Recluse (19th c.)

Worship

The meaning and the spirit of Great Lent find their first and most important expression in worship. Not only individuals but the **whole Church** acquires a penitential spirit, and the **beautiful Lenten services more than anything else** help us to deepen our spiritual vision, to reconsider our life in the light of the Orthodox teaching about man.

Fasting

The Orthodox idea of fasting is first of all that of an **ascetical effort**. It is the effort to subdue the physical, the fleshly man to the spiritual one, the "natural" to the "supernatural." Limitations in food are **instrumental**; they are not ends in themselves. Fasting thus is but a **means of reaching a spiritual goal** and, therefore, **an integral part of a wide spiritual effort**. Fasting, in the Orthodox understanding, includes more than abstinence from certain types of food. It implies prayer, silence, an internal disposition of mind, an attempt to be charitable, kind, and—in one word—**spiritual**. "*Brethren, while fasting bodily, let us also fast spiritually...*"

The Typicon and the canons of the Church give the description of an ideal fast: no meat or dairy products, total abstinence on certain days. "*He that is able to receive it, let him receive it*" (*Matt. 19:12*). But, whatever is our measure—our fasting must be a total effort of our total being.

Prayer

We must always pray. But **Lent is the time of an increase of prayer and also of its deepening**. The simplest way is, first, to add the Lenten prayer of St. Ephrem the Syrian to our private morning and evening prayers. Then, it is good and profitable to set certain hours of the day for a short prayer: this



can be done "internally"—at the office, in the car, everywhere. The important thing here is to remember constantly that we are in Lent, to be spiritually "referred" to its final goal: renewal, penitence, closer contact with God.

Spiritual Reading

We cannot be in church daily, but it is still possible for us to follow the Church's progress in Lent by reading those lessons and books which the Church reads in her worship. A chapter of the Book of **Genesis**, some passages from **Proverbs** and **Isaiah** do not take much time, and yet they help us in understanding the spirit of Lent and its various dimensions. It is also good to read a few **Psalms**—in connection with prayer or separately. Nowhere else can we find such concentration of true repentance, of thirst for communion with God, of desire to permeate the whole of life with religion. Finally, a **religious book**: Lives of the Saints, History of the Church, Orthodox Spirituality, etc. is a "must" while we are in Lent. It takes us from our daily life to a higher level of interests, it feeds us with ideas which are usually absent from our "practical" and "efficient" world.

Change of Life

And, last but not least: there must be an effort and a decision to **slow down** our life, to put in as much quiet, silence, contemplation, meditation as possible. TV, [web browsing, Facebook, movies], social gatherings—all these things, however excellent and profitable in themselves, must be cut down to a real minimum. Not because they are bad, but because we have something **more important** to do, and it is impossible to do without a change of life, without some degree of **concentration and discipline**. Lent is the time when we **re-evaluate** our life in the light of our faith, and this requires a very real effort and discipline. Christ says that a **narrow path** leads to the

"Do not neglect the Forty Days; it constitutes an imitation of Christ's way of life."

+ St Ignatius the Godbearer (late 1st c.)

kingdom of God and we must make our life as narrow as possible. At first the natural and selfish man in us revolts against these limitations. He wants his usual "easy life" with all its pleasures and relaxations. But once we have tasted of such spiritual effort, once we have made by it one step towards God, *the reward is great!* We discover a **joy** that cannot be compared to any other joy. We discover the **reality of the spiritual world in us**. We begin to understand what St. Paul meant by "the joy and peace in the Holy Spirit." **God Himself enters our soul**: and it is this wonderful coming that constitutes the ultimate end of Lent:

"If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." (*John 14:23*)

Let us make **this** Lent a **real** Lent! ~ Amen!

For more *lenten* resources visit our parish website.

GREAT LENT 2019

The school of Repentance

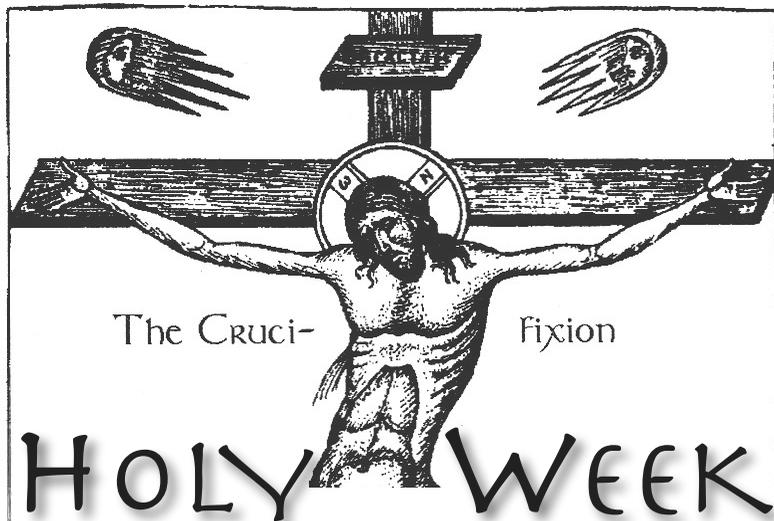


The desert

CHRIST THE SAVIOR - HOLY SPIRIT
ORTHODOX CHURCH

Fr. Steven C. Kostoff, Rector

4285 Ashland Ave • Norwood OH 45212
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HOLY WEEK

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 21 (Fish, Wine, Oil)

Hours ~ 9:10am
Divine Liturgy ~ 9:30am
Bridegroom Matins ~ 7:00pm

HOLY MONDAY, APRIL 22

Bridegroom Matins ~ 7:00pm

HOLY TUESDAY, APRIL 23

Bridegroom Matins ~ 7:00pm

HOLY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24

Matins & Anointing w/Oil ~ 7:00pm

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 25 (Wine, Oil)

Vesperal Divine Liturgy (*Institution of the Eucharist*) ~ 9:30am
Matins (*12 Passion Gospels*) ~ 7:00pm

GREAT & HOLY FRIDAY, APRIL 26 (STRICT FAST)

Royal Hours: 9am, 10am, 11am, Noon
Vespers (*Descent from the Cross*) ~ 3:00pm
Matins (*Lamentations at the Tomb, w/Procession*) ~ 7:30pm

GREAT & HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 27 (Wine)

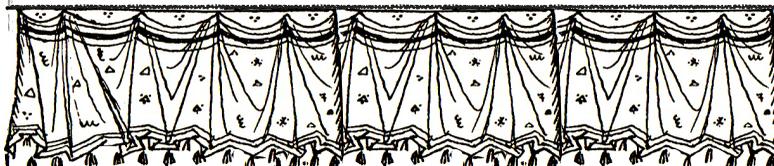
Vesperal Divine Liturgy ~ 10:00am (*15 OT Prophecies*)
Nocturns ~ 11:30pm
Paschal Procession, Matins, Divine Liturgy ~ Midnight

GREAT & HOLY PASCHA, SUNDAY, APRIL 28

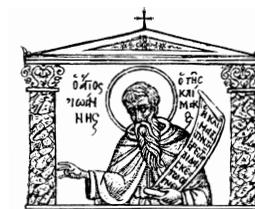
Agape Vespers ~ 2:00pm (*Gospel read in many languages*)

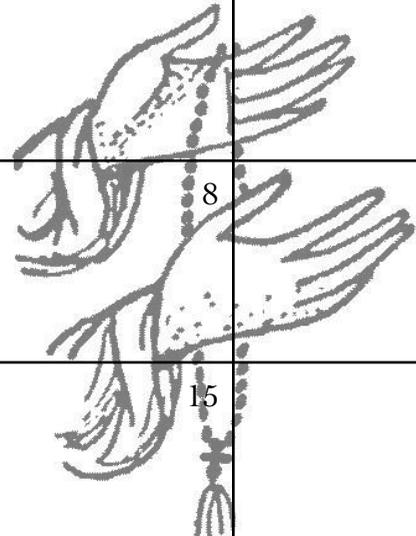
BRIGHT MONDAY, APRIL 29

Paschal Divine Liturgy ~ 9:30am



GREAT LENT 2019



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
MARCH 10 Cheesefare 9:10 Hours 9:30 Divine Liturgy Forgiveness Vespers (after Liturgy)	11 CLEAN WEEK Great Lent Begins 7pm Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete	12 7pm Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete	13 7pm Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete	14 7pm Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete	15 6pm Presanctified Liturgy	16 W/O 6pm Great Vespers & Confessions
17 W/O Sunday of Orthodoxy 9:30 Divine Liturgy 6:00pm Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers , at Holy Trinity-St Nicholas	18	19	20 6pm Presanctified Liturgy	21	22 7pm Akathist Hymn	23 W/O 6pm Great Vespers & Confessions
24 W/O St Gregory Palamas 9:10 Hours 9:30 Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great	25 F/W/O ANNUNCIATION 9:30 Divine Liturgy	26 W/O	27 6pm Presanctified Liturgy	28	29 W/O 7pm Akathist Hymn	30 W/O 6pm Great Vespers w/Procession of Cross
31 W/O Veneration of the Cross 9:10 Hours 9:30 Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great	1 APRIL 	2	3 6pm Presanctified Liturgy	4	5 MONASTERY PILGRIMAGE 7pm Akathist Hymn	6 W/O MONASTERY PILGRIMAGE 6pm Great Vespers & Confessions
7 W/O St John Climacus 9:10 Hours 9:30 Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great	8	9	10 W/O 6pm Presanctified Liturgy	11 W/O 7pm Great Canon w/Life of St Mary of Egypt	12 W/O 7pm Akathist Hymn	13 W/O 6pm Great Vespers w/Litiya
14 W/O St Mary of Egypt 9:10 Hours 9:30 Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great	15	16	17 6pm Presanctified Liturgy	18	19 7pm Vespers of Lazarus Saturday	20 W/O/Caviar Lazarus Saturday 9:30 Divine Liturgy 6:00pm Vigil for Palm Sunday

LENTEN SERVICES IN BOLD + MEMORIAL SATURDAY LITURGY TBA + SYNC TO OUR ONLINE CALENDAR
F = FISH ALLOWED + W = WINE + O = OIL