

Let Us Begin the Fast With Joy



Great Lent and the Fasting of Christ

With His public ministry in the world about to begin, our Lord Jesus Christ retreated to the desert for a period of forty days and undertook what Orthodox Christians would today call a "strict fast," meaning total abstinence from all food of any kind. Although His actions during this period are not spelled out in any of the gospels, it is clear that this was above all things a time of continuous prayer, likely involving both Jewish liturgical prayers and psalmody and also *hesychia*: still and silent prayer in the heart.

But whatever else this time may have been, it was surely a period in Jesus' life of intentional sensory deprivation. All of His senses were deprived of the objects of their natural affections. His palate was denied sweetness and

savor, texture and intricacy, and all the delights of food. His ears were denied all sweet human converse: the bustle of the marketplace, the eloquence of the rabbis in the synagogue, the laughter of children, the beautiful hymns of the Temple. His eyes were denied the majesty of the City and the loving familiarity of the faces of his mother and his kin. His body was denied satiety and even the simple comfort of a bed in which to sleep.

So why would our Lord do this to Himself? Why, for that matter, would any man do this sort of thing to himself? There are, after all, thousands of accounts of ascetics (i.e. those who deprive the body in such ways) in Christian history.

(continued, see LENT, next page)

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Schedules

	COFFEE HOUR	GREETERS	TELLERS	SERVERS
March 6	Cheesefare - potluck	A. Sticksles, D. Swisher	G. Cattell, M. Fiori	All Servers welcome each Sunday. Altar Server Co-Captains: J. Cadman and S. Oleynik
March 13	A. Sticksles & J. Miranda	M. Fedkin, K. Bazilevskaya	K. Cattell, H. Torbic	
March 20	Basic Coffee Hour	K. Oleynik, J. Carrier	M. Fiori, M. Fedkin	
March 27	L. Georgiou & K. Oleynik	J. Houser, B. Haupt	G. Cattell, H. Torbic	
April 3	Basic Coffee Hour	M. Fedkin, K. Bazilevskaya	K. Cattell, M. Fedkin	
April 10	H. Torbic & A.T. Pelikan	A. sticksles, J. Carrier	M. Fiori, H. Torbic	

Lent (con’t)

The answer is at once simple and complex. The goal is to acquire the summit of virtue, true love for God. When Christ teaches in the world, he proclaims love for God to be the “first and greatest commandment” (Mt 22:38). It is the pinnacle of Christian virtue, the end to which we are called to strive. In his First Epistle, St. John teaches us with these radical words: “love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.” And the converse, he says, is also true: “he who does not love does not know God, for God is love” (1 Jn 4:7-8).

The Prayer of St. Ephrem

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk.

But give 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.

To say that we love God with our lips is easy. To actually love God is fantastically difficult. St. John concludes his epistle with the words, “little children, keep yourselves from idols” (1 Jn 5:21). Idolatry is, first and foremost, a twisted love of created things in preference to the Creator. Far before it has anything to do with statues and sacrifices and the worship of demons, idolatry is an act of the heart rooted in a pride-induced and twisted “love” for created things. Thus, St. John again writes, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the

world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 Jn 2:15). While the sin of Eve in the Garden surely begins in unbelief, pride, and lust for power, by the time she carries out the damning deed, her sin is characterized mostly by a carnal submission to basic human appetites: she “saw that the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eyes... and she took the fruit and ate it” (Gen 3:6).

Having fallen from the original grace, the human being is tossed by a perpetual storm of passions. Rather than loving God first and in the light of that love truly loving all of His creation, we find ourselves driven like mad harlots from one fleshly idol to the next, ravening, lustful, greedy, indignant, angry. We seek joy in music, in gossip, in the arts, in the media, in “social media,” in sex, in food, in grand human campaigns and projects. When the universe itself proves inadequate to staunch our lusts, we try to build a “metaverse” in the futile hope that here we might find peace, joy, and fulfillment. But real peace and real joy can only be found in loving God and in knowing Him.

Our Lord Jesus Christ knows this, and this is why he goes into the deprivation of the desert. He goes to the desert to face and to master His instincts and appetites. As God, He has no need of growth or learning or mastery, but as one who has truly become a man, it is necessary for Him to "increase" in "wisdom and stature" (Lk 2:52). As God, He is perfect already; as man, He is laboring toward a perfect love. Christ does not go to the desert to condemn good food or fine raiment, beautiful art or grand architecture. He does not go to the desert to condemn human friendship or conversation, to condemn song or religious festival. He does not go to the desert to condemn the natural world and all of its spectacular beauty, nor does he go to the desert to condemn human science or ingenuity. No, He goes to the desert ultimately to love these things and to love all the world. But He goes to the desert in order to suffer the deprivation of these things, so that He might love them in an ordered and appropriate way, with the love of God guiding the love of all other things. And He

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March Adult Ed: The Theology and Symbolism of Icons

Our monthly Adult Ed series continues on Saturday March 19 at 10 am with a presentation by Fr. Mark Meholick on the theology and symbolism of icons. Fr. Mark is an accomplished iconographer and most notably is the artist behind the majority of the large icons in the nave at Holy Trinity. Therefore, if anyone has ever wondered why (for instance) St. Olga is depicted as touching a large cross or why Christ wears blue and red or what is going on in the so-called "Trinity" icon, now is the time to have your questions answered! For those who are unable to attend in person, the talk will be recorded and uploaded to our parish YouTube page.

St. Nektarios, “Man of God” Movie

At 7pm on Monday, March 21st, a new movie entitled “Man of God,” a biography of the life of St. Nektarios of Aegina will be showing at AMC Williamsport 11 in Williamsport. A group from Holy Trinity and PSU’s OCF will be travelling up to see it. If you are interested in purchasing tickets and attending, please contact Anna Stickles in person or at anna@grtbooks.com. To watch the trailer, please visit <https://youtu.be/KcgnbVIQ7Tc>



Site Survey Process Back on Track

Following the parish council's January meeting with representatives of K&W Engineers and Consultants, a tentative timeline for our parish's site survey has been established. In July, the clergy and parish council will meet with K&W to "discuss program needs and identify goals to improve building and site function." In August, K&W will begin their analysis of our physical plant. In September, we will hold one or two "charettes" in which all parishioners will be encouraged to weigh in on our parish's "program needs" and what our goals for our facility ought to be. In October, K&W will develop and present multiple "concept sketches" to the congregation and we will have the opportunity to weigh the pros and cons of various paths forward. At this meeting, we will select a concept that K&W will thoroughly explore in a final "feasibility study," which they will present to the congregation in November. Please pray to God that we develop a plan for a path forward that is wise, prudent, and in line with His will for us and for our region. Firm dates for each congregational meeting will be announced closer to the time when the study will begin.

SOUPer Sunday Returns!

On Sunday, March 20th the Sunday School students will be hosting a Lenten luncheon for the benefit of *Common Food*. The luncheon will consist of soups, salads, and bread prepared and served by our students. There will be a free-will offering. Please plan to stay and enjoy the hospitality of our children and support their efforts for our beneficiary.

- O pure and virgin Lady, O spotless Theotokos
Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!
- O Virgin Queen and Mother, O dewy fleece most sacred
Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!
- O height transcending heaven above, O beam of light most radiant
Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!
- O joy of chaste and virgin maids, surpassing all the angels
Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!
- O brilliant light of heaven above, most clear and most radiant
Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!
- Commanding chief of heaven above, O holiest of holies
Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!

- Hymn to the Theotokos, “Agni Parthene” by St. Nektarios of

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

Instructions (con’t)

- peace with your brother more quickly, to not deprive yourself of the grace of God, which sanctifies our hearts.
- He who is at peace with himself and at peace with his neighbor is at peace with God. Such a person is filled with holiness, because God Himself abides in him.
 - Don’t impose upon yourself more than you can bear. Remember that God does not bestow His gifts under duress, but when He Himself wants to. Everything He gives you, you receive undeservedly, according to His mercy.
 - Those who seek Divine gifts and insights, while being immersed in passion, dwell in stupid and proud delusion. Above all it is necessary to work upon cleansing ourselves.
 - Grace is sent as a gift to those who have been cleansed from the passions. And they receive it quietly and in an hour they don’t know. ■

■ FROM THE RECTOR’S DESK

Lent (con’t)

achieves His end, having “learned obedience by what He suffered,” even at this stage of His earthly sojourn (Heb 5:8). Thus, He is shown to be a perfect victor over sin, and when at the end of His fasting the devil tempts Him, whether it be by "the lust of the flesh" through bread, by "the lust of the eyes" in the vision of the glory of the world’s kingdoms, or by "the pride of life" in the temptation to jump from the Temple parapet, He has matured and He is prepared to combat and defeat the devil at every point (1 Jn 2:16).

In this season of Lent that we are now entering, the Church calls us to remember and imitate the actions of the Lord in what amount ultimately to small ways. It is

certainly not possible for most of us to totally leave the life of the world - as Jesus does - even for a short time. For many of us, this would be irresponsible and even potentially ungodly. But the Church calls us to imitate the Lord's self-denial in small ways in the hopes that we may also attain unto His maturity, dispassion, virtue, and total love for God. Thus, we are called to fast in this season to the extent that we are able. For basically all of us, this means a minimum of “religious veganism” through these forty days and the Great and Holy Week that follows. For some, it may mean somewhat more than that. For all of us, it means a call to more frequently remove ourselves from the affairs of the world and to devote ourselves to prayer. In the context of the services of the Church, we will offer at least two additional liturgies each week on Wednesdays and Fridays, and various other services as well. In private prayer, we are called to greater length, fervor, and determination. We are called to pray St. Ephraim’s prayer, “O Lord and Master of my life,” and to make prostrations at our times of prayer. By the reading of the Scripture privately, we are called to refresh our knowledge of the words and commandments of God. By non-possessiveness and charity, we are to cut off avarice and to love our neighbor as a means to loving God. By forgiveness and Confession, we are called to let go of our anger at events, people, and ultimately at God. Only by doing these things will we ever learn to love Him.

To the extent that we engage with the disciplines of Great Lent, we will have victory over the devil, just as Christ does. So let us deprive ourselves in this time, yet with joy and hope for growth. Let us cut off our passions and the things that inflame our passions. Let us seek to love God from the depths of our hearts. “Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us” (Heb 12:1). A good Lent to all, and an utterly joy-filled Pascha! ■

— Fr. Ignatius

■ ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY

“Instructions” of St. Nektarios

Later this month, a movie will be shown in Williamsport on the life of St. Nektarios of Aegina (See “News and Notes for details”), a modern saint who faced significant persecution and slander. Despite all he faced, this “Man of God” remained steadfast in his love and humility, and becoming an example to his flock. This is a collection of his sayings.

The Instructions of St. Nektarios

- Any sorrow, patiently endured, becomes a step towards perfection.
- How mistaken are those people who search for happiness outside of themselves: in foreign countries and travels, in riches and glory, in great possessions and enjoyments, in pleasures and excess, and in empty things, which in the end are bitterness!
- To build a tower of happiness outside our own heart is like building a house on a spot that continually suffers earthquakes.
- A good conscience is the greatest of all the blessings. It is the price of a peaceful soul and tranquil heart.
- Whoever has a pure heart, who does not experience accusations from his own heart, who does good and that which is pleasing and perfect in the eyes of God, who carefully observes the commandments of God, the same has boldness to stand before God. Everything that he asks he receives from God.
- He who has a pure heart is a beloved child of God. The Spirit of the Son lives in his heart, and he receives everything he asks for, finds all that he seeks, and doors are opened to him when he knocks.
- Fasting, vigil, and prayer by themselves do not bring the desired fruit, because they are not the purpose of our life, but constitute the means for achieving our goal.
- Be attentive to your minor falls. If some sin befalls you from inattentiveness, don’t despair, but pull yourself together and kneel before God Who has the power to raise you up.

- Within ourselves we have deeply rooted weaknesses, passions and flaws, many of which are hereditary. All of this cannot be broken with one sharp movement, or a worrisome and difficult experience, but by patience and perseverance.
- Remember that after temptation follows spiritual joy and that the Lord watches over those who endure temptations and sufferings for the sake of His love. So, don’t lose heart and don’t be afraid.



A photograph of St. Nektarios

- Entrust all your cares to the Lord: He will take care of you.
- Entreat God and don’t lose courage. Don’t think that because your desire is holy, you have the right to complain when your prayers go unheard. God will fulfill your desires in some way you don’t know about. So, calm down and invoke God.
- Ask God for love every day. Along with love comes all the many blessings and virtues.
- Sanctification abandons the confused and angry heart, darkened by hatred for one’s neighbor. Make

(continued, see INSTRUCTIONS, next page)

Holy Trinity Calendar









































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to join remotely, visit holytrinity-oca.org/zoom.

LIVE

this service will be livestreamed on YouTube (visit holytrinity-oca.org/YouTube).

All events take place at 119 South Sparks Street in State College, unless where noted.
Events listed at **Trinity House** take place at 123 South Sparks Street, in State College.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<div>27</div> <div>Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare) Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <div>LIVE</div> (Hours, 9:40am)</div>	<div>28</div> <div></div>	<div>March 1</div> <div></div> <div>Vespers of Cheesefare Wednesday, 6pm</div>	<div>2</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Vespers, 6pm Confessions, following</div>	<div>3</div> <div></div> <div>Vespers of Cheesefare Friday, 6pm OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126</div>	<div>4</div> <div></div> <div>Vespers, 6pm</div>	<div>5</div> <div></div> <div>Memorial Divine Liturgy, 9am Great Vespers, 6pm <div>LIVE</div> Confessions, following</div>
<div>6</div> <div>Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare) Divine Liturgy, 10am <div>LIVE</div> (Hours, 9:40am) Forgiveness Vespers, 6pm</div>	<div>7</div> <div></div> <div>Great Canon, 6pm</div>	<div>8</div> <div></div> <div>Great Canon, 6pm</div>	<div>9</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm</div>	<div>10</div> <div></div> <div>Great Canon, 6pm</div>	<div>11</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 5pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm</div>	<div>12</div> <div> Men's Fellowship Breakfast, 9am Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <div>LIVE</div> Confessions, following</div>
<div>13</div> <div>Sunday of Orthodoxy Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <div>LIVE</div> (Hours, 9:40am) Icon Procession, 11:30am</div>	<div>14</div> <div></div>	<div>15</div> <div></div> <div>Parish Council Meeting, 7pm</div>	<div>16</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm</div>	<div>17</div> <div></div> <div>OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126</div>	<div>18</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 5pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm</div>	<div>19</div> <div> 10am Adult Education, "Theology and Symbolism of Icons" Souper Sunday Prep, 4:30 Great Vespers, 6pm <div>LIVE</div> Confessions, following</div>
<div>20</div> <div>Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas Divine Liturgy, 10am <div>LIVE</div> (Hours, 9:40am) Souper Sunday, 12pm</div>	<div>21</div> <div></div> <div>"Man of God" movie, 7pm AMC Williamsport 11</div>	<div>22</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm</div>	<div>23</div> <div></div> <div>Great Vespers, 6pm OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126</div>	<div>24</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 5pm Vespersal Liturgy for Annunciation, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm</div>	<div>25</div> <div></div> <div>Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <div>LIVE</div> Confessions, following</div>	<div>26</div> <div></div>
<div>27</div> <div>Sunday of the Cross Sunday School, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <div>LIVE</div> (Hours, 9:40am) CommonFood Presentation, 12pm</div>	<div>28</div> <div></div>	<div>29</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm</div>	<div>30</div> <div></div> <div>OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126</div>	<div>31</div> <div></div> <div>April 1</div>	<div>2</div> <div></div> <div>Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <div>LIVE</div> Confessions, following</div>	
<div>3</div> <div>Sunday of St. John Climacus Baptism of Genevieve Swisher, 9am Divine Liturgy, 10am <div>LIVE</div> (Hours, 9:40am)</div>	<div>4</div> <div></div>	<div>5</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 4pm-6pm Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm Lenten Potluck, 7:30pm</div>	<div>6</div> <div></div> <div>Deanery Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm OCF @ Penn State, 7pm, Pasquerilla 126 Lenten Meal, 7:30pm</div>	<div>7</div> <div></div> <div>Confessions, 5pm Akathist to the Theotokos, 6pm</div>	<div>8</div> <div></div> <div>Choir Rehearsal, 4pm Great Vespers, 6pm <div>LIVE</div> Confessions, following</div>	<div>9</div> <div></div>

Chapel Calendar

All events take place at 145 North Kern Street in Beavertown, unless where noted.

March 1	Tuesday 22
Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Saturday 5	Wednesday 23
Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm; Akathist for the Repose of the Departed Monastic Righteous served at 5:15pm	Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm; Lenten soup/bread following
Sunday 6	Thursday 24
Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm	Annunciation Vespersal Divine Liturgy, 6pm
Sunday 6	Saturday 26
Forgiveness Vespers, 6pm	Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm; Akathist for the Repose of the Departed Monastic Righteous served at 5:15pm
Tuesday 8	Sunday 27
Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
Wednesday 9	Monday 28
Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm; Lenten soup/bread following	"Hats and Blankets for Babies" Knitting/Crocheting, 6pm
Saturday 12	Tuesday 29
Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm	Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Sunday 13	Wednesday 30
Sunday of Orthodoxy; Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm; Akathist to St. Nectarios following Liturgy	Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm; Lenten soup/bread following
Tuesday 15	Saturday, April 2
Choir rehearsal, 6pm	Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm; Akathist for the Repose of the Departed served at 5:15pm
Wednesday 16	Sunday 3
Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm; Lenten soup/bread following	St. John Climacus; Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm
Saturday 19	Tuesday 5
Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm; Akathist for the Repose of the Departed served at 5:15pm	Choir rehearsal, 6pm
Sunday 20	Wednesday 6
St. Gregory Palamas; Divine Liturgy 10am; Hours 9:40 a.m.; fellowship immediately thereafter, catechesis at 1:30pm; Akathist to St. Nectarios following Liturgy	Presanctified Liturgy, 6pm; Lenten soup/bread following
	Saturday, 9
	Great Vespers; Confessions following, 6pm; Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos served at 5:15pm

March 2022