

ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH

His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP, Primate

Very Rev. Father Joseph Kimmett, Pastor

Very Rev. Father Nifon Abraham, Pastor Emeritus



9 MARCH
2008

SUNDAY OF
CHEESEFARE
FORGIVENESS
SUNDAY

WELCOME TO OUR VISITORS AND FRIENDS.
IT IS A BLESSING TO HAVE YOU WITH US AT SAINT GEORGE.
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT OUR PARISH,
OR THE ORTHODOX CHURCH, PLEASE SEE THE PRIEST.

ONLY THOSE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS WHO ARE REPENTANT OF THEIR
SINS AND HAVE PREPARED THEMSELVES THROUGH FASTING ARE INVITED
TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION. EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO VENERATE
THE CROSS AND SHARE HOLY BREAD FOLLOWING THE LITURGY.

THIS WEEK AT SAINT GEORGE

Today -	<i>Bible Bowl Study Session, during coffee hour</i> <i>Vote at coffee hour to accept the FY 2007 Treasurer's Report</i> <i>Forgiveness Vespers, 7:00 pm</i> <i>followed by Teen's Ice Cream Gathering</i>
Monday -	<i>Diocesan Great Compline & Reception, 7:00 pm</i>
Wednesday -	<i>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy and Lenten Potluck Supper, 6:00 pm</i>
Friday -	<i>First Salutations on the Akathist, 7:00 pm</i>
Saturday -	<i>Great Vespers, 5:00 pm</i>
Next Sunday -	<i>Sunday of Orthodoxy</i> <i>Matins & Divine Liturgy, 9:00 / 10:00 am</i> <i>(A second tray will be passed for support of seminarians.)</i> <i>Church School, 1:00 pm</i> <i>Pan-Orthodox Vespers, Saint Sava, Cambridge, 5:00 pm</i>

Today is the last day for dairy and fish until Pascha. Tomorrow, Pure Monday, begins the Great Fast.

HOMILY

We are pleased to have our seminarian, Michael Razzouk, deliver the homily today.

HOLY BREAD

The holy bread today is offered by Estelle Mike and her family. A 40-day memorial will be served for Richard Mike at the end of the Liturgy.

COFFEE HOUR

Please stop downstairs for coffee and refreshments after the service, hosted today by Estelle Mike.

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LADIES NEWS

March is *Antiochian Women's Month* throughout our archdiocese. Here in Norwood, the *Coffee Hour Baskets* during March will benefit "The Project".

- Tuesday, March 25th, the Ladies are sponsoring a *Fish Dinner*, which will also benefit "The Project".
- The *next meeting is on the 30th* after coffee hour.

CHURCH SCHOOL

The *next class session is March 16th* at 1:00 pm.

Our young folks are particularly encouraged to attend Liturgy (of course, we encourage that every week,) and to bring an icon for the procession.

Three marks of the Lenten Season

PRAYER - FASTING - ALMS:

In addition to personal prayers, spiritual readings and study of Scripture, the Holy Orthodox Church offers additional services for the edification of souls:

Forgiveness Vespers - Parishioners comment every year, "what a beautiful and moving service this is." Join your brothers and sisters of our community as we begin the period of the Great Fast. Vespers is at 7:00 pm tonight.

Great Compline - The service of Compline is prayed nightly by Orthodox faithful around the world -- monks on Athos as well as teens at Archdiocese Conventions. During Lent, Great Compline is sung in the churches, featuring many Psalms and Old Testament passages. During the first week of Lent, you may also hear portions of the *Canon of Saint Andrew*. In New England there is a long-standing tradition of the clergy singing this service; Norwood is always the first stop; join us tomorrow at 7:00 pm.

Pre-Sanctified Liturgy - "Because the Church, as a loving mother, wishes to feed her children so that they can valiantly fight the good fight, she has ordained that on certain non-liturgical days of the Great Lent the 'heavily bread and cup of life' be offered the faithful.

DIRECTORIES

The 2008 directory of parishioners and friends is here. There is one copy in the parish hall for each household (extras are \$2.00 each.) *We ask that you respect the privacy of your fellow parishioners and not disseminate any of the printed information.*

ORDER AN ORTHODOX STUDY BIBLE

Forms for the newly-released Bible, including the Old Testament, are in the hall; they are due next Sunday.

NEW SHIPTMENT OF WATER BOTTLES

See a teen today and get one of those fancy bottles!

This is done in an evening service of Communion following Vespers, which is known as the Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts and which is attributed to our father among the Saints, Gregory the Dialogist, a seventh century pope of Rome."

This service takes place each Wednesday at Saint George; those wishing to receive should follow the usual communion fast; if necessary, one may partake of a light, Lenten meal at noon. After the service, we share a Lenten potluck supper in the hall.

Akathist - The role of Mary is very important during Lent. To honor her, *Saint Romanos the Melodist* composed the Akathist Hymn, one of the most glorious songs of praise in the the Orthodox tradition. The Laudations (or Salutations, or Madayeh) are sung on four Friday evenings in Lent and the full hymn on the fifth. We start at 7:00 pm here in Norwood.

Saint Basil Liturgy - Ten times in the year, including the five Sundays of Lent, the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is replaced with that of Saint Basil the Great. Though a bit longer, the prayers are incredibly rich, listen closely to discover their beauty. In Norwood on the Sundays in Lent, we also pray the Lord's Prayer in the languages of our people, including English, Arabic, Greek, Russian and Romanian.

The Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA)

*Sing to the Lord, bless his name; proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.
 Declare His glory among the nations, His wonder among all people. (Psalm 96:2-3)*

Mission Sunday, the Sunday of Cheesefare

To the Most Reverend Clergy, Venerable Monastics and Devout Faithful of the Holy Orthodox Churches:

We greet all of you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ as we prepare to embark upon the Great and Holy Fast, which is our common sojourn to the glorious Pascha of the Lord. Every year, the Hierarchs of SCOBA designate the Sunday preceding Great Lent, this year March 9th, to be Mission Sunday. It is a day on which we reflect on the commandment of the Lord that enjoins us to "go forth and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (St. Matthew 28:19). It is a day in which we, your spiritual fathers from Churches grounded in the old world where our Faith has flourished, encourage you, who are building up the Faith in the New World of North America, to take stock of how we are spreading the Holy Orthodox Faith throughout a world that so desperately needs the love and mercy of God. Mission Sunday is a day when we ask you to re-commit to proclaiming the Gospel of His salvation, to declaring His glory among the nations and His wonders among all people by answering the call to missions.

As the official international missions agency of SCOBA, and for over twenty years, the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) has been helping Orthodox Christians to answer the call to spread abroad the love of God that is in our hearts by the Holy Spirit throughout the world (cf. Romans 5:2). In third world countries, in post-Communist countries, OCMC has carried forth a holistic expression of sacramental worship and a living witness to the Orthodox Faith. OCMC's supporters, its missionaries and Mission Team members around the globe are catechizing the newly illumined, raising up churches, ministering to the poor, and bringing healthcare to the sick. Yet many have yet to hear the Gospel. There are nations who are waiting to hear good news of His salvation, His glory among the nations, His wonders among all people.

As Orthodox Christians, what can you do? First and foremost, we can and must pray for our brothers and sisters who are bringing the gift of Holy Baptism to those who are far off from the Gospel. Some of you may even consider becoming a witness to the faith as an OCMC missionary or as an Orthodox Mission Team member. All of us, great and small, can support the work of missions by making a gift to the Mission Center.

May this day of Mission awareness, and all the coming holy days of the Great Fast be filled with the fervor to seek the light of Christ in your own hearts, and to share the light of the Resurrection with our brothers and sisters around the world.

With paternal blessings and love in Christ,

+ Archbishop DEMETRIOS, Chairman
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

+ Metropolitan PHILIP, Vice Chairman
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

... and the hierarchs of SCOBA

TOTAL DEPOSITS	PLEDGES	MEMORIALS & DONATIONS	TRAYS	SPECIAL TRAY	COFFEE HOUR OUTREACH
<i>FEBRUARY 2008</i>					
\$13,613.00	\$5898.00	\$2822.00	\$865.00	N.A.	\$25.00



FLOWERS

The bouquets before the Icon of Christ and the Icon of the Theotokos are given by Estelle Mike and her family in memory of Richard Mke.

PRAYERS OF OBLATION AND DONATIONS

Anne Tragakis *in memory of Richard Mike*
 James and Arlene Kimmitt
 Michael & Samera Mike, Bruno & Reggie DiCicco, Joyce Tarabonovic, Sandy & Linda & Bob Thomas, George & Lovee Thomas *in memory of Edward Mahfood*

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Pray for the good health of the servants of God: Archpriest Edward, Priest Robert, Deacon Elias, Khouriyee Joanne, Alice, Hayes, Katrina, Elsa, John, Jeanne, Gregory, Albert, Dimitri, James, Frederick, Anne, Grace, Renee, Robert, Nicole, Mary, Pauline, Helen, Ioana, Nicolae, Kathleen, Lillie, Jennifer, Edward, Carrie, Sam, Camille, Michael, Angela, Mikayla, Christopher, Nancy, Kenneth, Joy, Claudia, Thomas, Sarah, Nicholas, Charles, Catherine, Joyce, Janice, Barbara, Beverly, John, Katherine, Mary, Beverly, Najlae, Irene, Edmond, Helen, Stanley, George, Frances, Marlene, Felecia, Catherine, Lana, Gail, Margaret, Brian, Nicole, Marion, Donna, Linda, Edmond, Emaline, Carrie, Nicholas, George, Lovee, Elizabeth, Sarah, Charles, Jenine, Josephine, George, Sandy, Edward, Michael, Madeline, Rosemary, John, Margaret, Sarah, Nima, Dean, David, Sterling, William, Mary.

Pray for Erik, our catechumen.

Pray for Joseph (Irwin), soon to be deployed in Afghanistan and all those in the armed forces.

Pray for the newly departed servant of God, Edward Gabriel Mahfood, father of Kh. Elizabeth Bethoney.

THE PARISH COUNCIL

Leeann Plouffe - Chairwoman
 Barbara Campbell, Paul Eysie, Camille Florio (Secretary), Andrew Howard (Vice Chairman),
 Marlene Lupaczyk, Marwan Samman (Treasurer), Linda Thomas and Sharon Weiskerger

CHURCH LEADERS

Ladies of Saint George - Katie Birtwell, President	Church School - Rich Plouffe, Superintendent
Parish Chanter - Paul Eysie	Choir Director - David Franciosi
Teen Advisor - Michele Markatos	Teen President - Jenna Weiskerger
Ushers - Andrew Howard & Marwan Samman	Epistle Reader Coordinator - Lovee Thomas
Bible Bowl Team Leader - Emily Shay	Seminarian - Michael Razook
Web-Master - Ekaterina Oleinik	Church custodian - Gerry Mullen

SUNDAY 9 MARCH 2008 • SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS - CHEESEFARE

TONE 8 • EOTHINON 8 • THE EXPULSION OF ADAM FROM PARADISE

Eisodikon

*Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ, O Son of God, who art risen from the dead,
save us who sing unto thee, Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.*

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 8)

*O Compassionate One, thou didst descend from the heights; thou didst submit
to the three-day burial, that thou mightest deliver us from passion.
Thou art our Life and our Resurrection, O Lord, glory to thee.*

Troparion for the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (Tone 1)

*By the reason of the sufferings the saints endured out of love for thee, we implore thee, O Lord and
Lover of Mankind, to deliver us from all our pains.*

Troparion of Saint George, Patron of our Community (Tone 4)

*As deliverer of captives, and defender of the poor, healer of the infirm, champion of kings,
victorious Great-Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God, for our souls' salvation.*

Kontakion of Cheesefare (Tone 6)

*O Thou who guidest to wisdom, and givest understanding and intelligence, the Instructor
of the ignorant, and Helper of the poor, strengthen my heart and grant it understanding, O Master.
Give me word, O Word of the Father; for behold, I shall not refrain my lips from crying to thee,
O merciful One, have mercy upon me who am fallen.*

EPISTLE & GOSPEL

Prokeimenon and Verse:

Make your vows and pay them unto the Lord our God. In Judah is God known, His name is great in Israel.

The Reading is from Apostle Paul's Letter to the Romans

(13:11-14:4; for Cheesefare)

Brethren, besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Master is able to make him stand.

Alleluia

The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew

(6:14-21, for Cheesefare / Forgiveness Sunday)

Glory to Thee O Lord, Glory to Thee

Jesus said, if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. "And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Glory to Thee O Lord, Glory to Thee

Readings for Lent from Saint George Church

Forgiveness Sunday

In the Orthodox Church, the last Sunday before Great Lent – the day on which, at Vespers, Lent is liturgically announced and inaugurated – is called Forgiveness Sunday. On the morning of that Sunday, at the Divine Liturgy, we hear the words of Christ:

"If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses..." (*Mark 6:14-15*)

Then after Vespers – after hearing the announcement of Lent in the Great Prokeimenon: "Turn not away Thy face from Thy child for I am afflicted! Hear me speedily! Draw near unto my soul and deliver it!", after making our entrance into Lenten worship, with its special memories, with the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian, with its prostrations – we ask forgiveness from each other, we perform the rite of forgiveness and reconciliation. And as we approach each other with words of reconciliation, the choir intones the Paschal hymns, filling the church with the anticipation of Paschal joy.

What is the meaning of this rite? Why is it that the Church wants us to begin Lenten season with forgiveness and reconciliation? These questions are in order because for too many people Lent means primarily, and almost exclusively, a change of diet, the compliance with ecclesiastical regulations concerning fasting. They understand fasting as an end in itself, as a "good deed" required by God and carrying in itself its merit and its reward. But, the Church spares no effort in revealing to us that fasting is but a means, one among many, towards a higher goal: the spiritual renewal of man, his return to God, true repentance and, therefore, true reconciliation. The Church spares no effort in warning us against a hypocritical and pharisaic fasting, against the reduction of religion to mere external obligations. As a Lenten hymn says:

***In vain do you rejoice in no eating, O soul!
For you abstain from food,
But from passions you are not purified.
If you persevere in sin, you will perform a useless fast.***

Now, forgiveness stands at the very center of Christian faith and of Christian life because Christianity itself is, above all, the religion of forgiveness. God forgives us, and His forgiveness is in Christ, His Son, Whom He sends to us, so that by

sharing in His humanity we may share in His love and be truly reconciled with God. Indeed, Christianity has no other content but love. And it is primarily the renewal of that love, a return to it, a growth in it, that we seek in Great Lent, in fasting and prayer, in the entire spirit and the entire effort of that season. Thus, truly forgiveness is both the beginning of, and the proper condition for the Lenten season.

One may ask, however: Why should I perform this rite when I have no "enemies"? Why should I ask forgiveness from people who have done nothing to me, and whom I hardly know? To ask these questions, is to misunderstand the Orthodox teaching concerning forgiveness. It is true, that open enmity, personal hatred, real animosity may be absent from our life, though if we experience them, it may be easier for us to repent, for these feelings openly contradict Divine commandments. But, the Church reveals to us that there are much subtler ways of offending Divine Love. These are indifference, selfishness, lack of interest in other people, of any real concern for them -- in short, that wall which we usually erect around ourselves, thinking that by being "polite" and "friendly" we fulfill God's commandments. The rite of forgiveness is so important precisely because it makes us realize – be it only for one minute – that our entire relationship to other men is wrong, makes us experience that encounter of one child of God with another, of one person created by God with another, makes us feel that mutual "recognition" which is so terribly lacking in our cold and dehumanized world.

On that unique evening, listening to the joyful Paschal hymns we are called to make a spiritual discovery: to taste of another mode of life and relationship with people, of life whose essence is love. We can discover that always and everywhere Christ, the Divine Love Himself, stands in the midst of us, transforming our mutual alienation into brotherhood. As I advance towards the other, as the other comes to me – we begin to realize that it is Christ Who brings us together by His love for both of us.

And because we make this discovery – and because this discovery is that of the Kingdom of God itself: the Kingdom of Peace and Love, of reconciliation with God and, in Him, with all that exists – we hear the hymns of that Feast, which once a year, "opens to us the doors of Paradise." We know why we shall fast and pray, what we shall seek during the long Lenten pilgrimage. Forgiveness Sunday: the day on which we acquire the power to make our fasting – true fasting; our effort – true effort; our reconciliation with God – true reconciliation.

-- *Father Alexander Schmemmann*
Introduction to the DRE/OCA 1975-1982