

MEATFARE SUNDAY -- JUDGMENT SUNDAY



Icon of the Last Judgment

February 12, 2012
SUNDAY OF MEATFARE – SUNDAY OF THE FEARFUL JUDGMENT
OUR HOLY FATHER MELETIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF ANTIOCH
Tone 2

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 13 – FEBRUARY 19

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14 – *OUR VENERABLE FATHER AUXENTIUS; THE PASSING OF OUR VENERABLE FATHER CYRIL, TEACHER OF THE SLAVS; OUR VENERABLE FATHER MARON, HERMIT AND WONDERWORKER*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy Health and blessings for Rosalia Tymchiy; Req: Olga Fedunyak

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18 – *OUR HOLY FATHER LEO, POPE OF ROME; SATURDAY OF OUR GOD-BEARING FATHERS. THE ASCETICS.*

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19 – *SUNDAY OF THE CHEESEFARE; FORGIVENESS SUNDAY; THE HOLY APOSTLE ARCHIPPUS*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

The discussion of “Come Follow Me” will continue today after the Divine Liturgy.

Everyone is encouraged to participate.

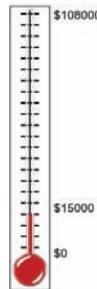
Free “Wills and Trusts Workshop”

Without a will and/or a trust, you can't control what happens to your property if you become incapacitated or die. Learn the proper planning techniques to preserve your assets and provide for your loved ones at a February 26 workshop after the Divine Liturgy.



“However hard I try, I find it impossible to construct anything greater than these three words, ‘Love one another’ — only to the end, and without exceptions: then all is justified and life is illumined, whereas otherwise it is an abomination and a burden.”

– St. Maria of Paris (+1945)



Stewardship Pledges

Pledges received: 6

If you haven't returned a pledge form, please do so.

Sunday offering for January 29

Amount	Number
\$10.00	3
\$15.00	2
\$20.00	3
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	3
\$50.00	5
\$75.00	2
\$100.00	3
\$125.00	1
\$200.00	2
\$250.00	1
\$23.00	1 (loose)
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\$1768.00	27 (1 guest)

Parishioner Total: \$1758.00

Average / parish household (39): \$45.08

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2125.00

Shortfall: **-\$367.00**

Cards for sale

Easter Cards, and various other greeting cards are available for sale in the church hall following each Divine Liturgy. See Mary Kitt to purchase.



Looking Ahead:

- ❖ Feb. 19th – Cheesefare/ Forgiveness Sunday
- ❖ Feb. 20th – The Great Fast Begins
- ❖ March 25th – Annunciation
- ❖ April 1st – Flowery Sunday
- ❖ April 6th – Great and Holy Friday
- ❖ April 8th – The Glorious Feast of Pascha

ON CHRIST THE ARTIST

A Reflection from the Prologue of Ochrid

An artist is one who, from crude and shapeless stone, carves and shapes forms similar to living creatures. An artist is one who weaves a multi-colored blanket from the wool of sheep. An artist is one who builds a magnificent palace out of earthly bricks. But what kind of artist on earth can be compared to Christ the Artist, who from illiterate men creates wise men, who from fishermen creates apostles, who from cowards creates heroes, who from the immoral creates saints? But all must be given over to the hand of the artist, in order to be fashioned into that which the artist knows and is capable of doing. All things, in truth, must be given over to the hand of the artist. Even men must give themselves over to the hand of Christ, in order for Him to carve, to weave or to build that which only He knows and is capable of. Nineteen past centuries witness to us, that all of them who did not protest [against Him] but rather gave themselves over to Christ the Artist and from the boorish and the ignorant became angel-seeing children of God.

Forgiveness Sunday

Next Sunday, February 19th there will be a “Cheesy Potluck” following the Divine Liturgy. This is the last opportunity to enjoy dairy products before the Great Fast begins. Please bring a meatless dish to share with others. (Please note: there are people in our community with severe and life threatening allergies so please no nuts or mushrooms.) Immediately following the potluck we will celebrate Forgiveness Vespers in the church to open the Great Fast. This is a beautiful opportunity to begin the fast with mutual forgiveness.



During the Great Fast which begins on February 20th, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts will be offered on Wednesdays evenings at 6:30 PM and Friday Mornings at 9:30 AM. Each Wednesday following the Presanctified Liturgy there will be a Lenten Meal and a Spiritual Talk. We need volunteers to prepare the soup for the dates of 2/22, 2/29, 3/7, 3/14, 3/21 and 3/28. Please talk to Olena Bankston to volunteer.

If You Are Hospitalized

please be sure to let your priest know. Even if you do not want a visit, prayers (private and/or communal) should be offered on your behalf. Your priest is not clairvoyant and will not know that you are in the hospital unless you tell him. When you check into the hospital, be sure to put yourself in the hands of the Divine Physician as well as an earthly one!

PRAYER BEFORE THE GOSPEL

By Very Rev. Vladimir Berzonsky

“Make the pure light of Your Divine knowledge shine in our hearts, O loving Master. Open the eyes of our minds that we may understand the message of Your gospel. Instill in us the fear of Your blessed commandments that we may subdue all carnal desires and follow a spiritual way of life, thinking and doing all that pleases You.”

The Divine Liturgy from the opening through the sermon is called “Liturgy of the Word.” We mean by Word the living Word who is the Son of God having come into the world as Jesus Christ in order to save sinners, the first among them being me. The readings of epistle and gospel are about the Word of God explained for us, a lesson for our instruction; but we might ask:

A. Why does the instruction happen here, when we assemble for the Holy Eucharist;

B. Why is it important to listen to the readings – more than significant – mandatory, so that the Church will never allow the Holy Sacrifice to be offered unless the readings from the Bible precede the Communion?

Readings from Holy Scripture are read in nearly all of the sacred services both liturgical and private. A vital connection bonds Christ as Word with Christ as Living Sacrifice.

“Every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you.” (John 15:2)

I hope to receive Holy Communion, but my Lord is telling me that I am already in communion with Him. “Every branch that bears fruit He prunes,” so the afflictions that upset me are for my welfare. I came hoping for relief, to somehow leave Church having shed the pain and anguish that I brought with me for the Lord to remove. He is telling me that I’m being pruned. The dead leaves I’ve been clinging onto must be clipped off. The rotted fruit that gives me only heartburn has to be eliminated from my

memory if my soul is to be sweet and I am to be pure again to “taste and see how good the Lord is.” He is telling me: “You are already clean.” Am I really, or is the pollution from my past clogging up the arteries from my mind to my heart? Proleptic phrases are saying that Christ’s point of view is different, since He doesn’t look at me the way I see myself, at this moment in fleeting time when my failings possess me. How can I possibly see what He sees in me, unless I accept the forgiveness that only He can bestow, and then get on beyond this wallowing in my inadequacies and take a seat at His mystical table?

“Because of the Word which I have spoken to you.”

Yes, Lord Jesus, I have heard Your word spoken through Your holy lips two millennia ago, heard and written down by Your chosen apostles to enter my heart by the voice of the deacon, to resonate in my feeble mind and ring a silent sound that stimulated me to take it to heart. That is what You must have meant as remembered and recorded by Your divine apostle John. You entered through my ear to my mind and descended into my heart. Your Word rests there – more than a spoken word, You abide there for my comfort and peace. Your Father in You, You in me and I in You; and wonder of wonders, the heavenly Father, Creator of heaven, earth and of me also in me: All through the power and gift of the Holy Spirit, third Person of the Holy Trinity. Aware of all that, I feel now I am ready to receive You from the sacred chalice.



ESTABLISHING GOOD HABITS

It is heartening when we in the 21st century find that contemporary experts discover, using scientific methods, what the Church has known and practiced all along. One such recent discovery is that it takes about six weeks, or forty days, to make a certain practice into a habit. The period of forty days has since Old Testament times been that amount of time necessary to prepare for something significant or purge oneself of something negative. Today, the Church invites us to a forty day fast twice a year: once before the Nativity of our Lord and the other before our Lord's Passion and Resurrection.

Keep in mind, that when we speak of habits, we may either mean something good or something bad. In the case of the Christian life, we are often speaking of replacing bad habits with good ones.

This process is called repentance, since the bad or sinful habits lead to death and away from God, whereas the good habits or virtues lead to God and eternal life.

We often emphasize changing our ways at the beginning of the New Year or during one of the prolonged fast periods of the Church, but any time is a good time to begin forming a good habit. In fact, the best time to root out the bad and institute the good is always in the present moment. "Behold, now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:2)

STEP 1: REALIZE THE PROBLEM

Motivation is an essential element for a person to be successful at instituting a new and virtuous habit. We must realize that not all is right in our lives; something needs to change. Once we realize what that something is then we become increasingly sensitive to it, until we become motivated enough to want to do something positive about it. This is the moment when we are most ripe for change. For example, the Prodigal Son was wasting away his life in a foreign land with his father's money, thinking everything was great. It wasn't until life got ugly and uncomfortable that this lost son began to realize something was wrong. He looked around him, seeing the mud, the husks and the swine, and he began to remember his former life with his family. His nakedness, hunger and loneliness in contrast to his former life of bliss and fulfillment brought him to his senses. He had a moment of realization that he needed to change, to get up out of the mud and return to his father with a humble, contrite and repentant heart. This is the first step toward developing a good habit.

STEP 2: FIRMLY DESIRE CHANGE

The second step is to realize that change does not happen without struggle and effort. Sometimes that struggle is the adjustment of our schedule or lifestyle to incorporate whatever habit we are trying to establish. We should also realize that there are forces working against our efforts towards the good and virtuous. The holy Fathers of the Church

have typically listed three such negative forces. First, we must contend against our own sinful inclinations and passions, our weaknesses of the flesh and our mortality. Secondly, we must be aware of the Evil One and his demons, who ceaselessly wage spiritual war against us and our noble purposes. Finally, we must remember that we live in a fallen world whose values oppose those of God. To forget any of these aspects of the spiritual war and not be willing and ready to struggle against them with the help of God is to not be serious in our goal of establishing a good habit.

Continually keeping our motivation fresh in our minds can help us overcome the forces against us. For example, if the habit we are trying to form is to be more diligent in saying our daily prayers, perhaps a helpful thought is to remember how beneficial these prayers are in keeping us in communication with God. As Elder Paisios of the Holy Mountain put it, it is vital for the spiritual soldier to remain in communication with his “base.” If we firmly keep our goal before us, it will help us to remain committed to our purpose.

A third principle to keep in mind in establishing a good and virtuous habit is that much force of will and effort will be necessary, especially at the beginning. This good beginning is vital to sustain our effort. St. John of Sinai, the author of *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, taught: To lag in the fight at the very outset of the struggle and thereby to furnish a token of our coming slaughter is a very hateful and dangerous thing. A firm beginning will certainly be useful for us when we later grow slack. A soul that is strong at first, but then relaxes, is spurred on by the memory of its former zeal. And in this way new wings are often obtained.

It is important to remember that we may be either fighting against momentum in the wrong direction or are faced with no momentum at all, but inertia. Either way, physics provides the principle that teaches us that much force and energy are required to move our hearts, minds and bodies in the right direction.

STEP 3: ACT WITH RESOLVE

Finally, the last step is to put our good intentions into action. This should go without saying, but unfortunately it is where we most often fall short. We need to actually begin the process of repentance and establish whatever virtue or good practice we are trying to make into a habit. Most people have good intentions, but not all have active prayer lives, healthy bodies, organized finances or clean homes. The first three steps are important to understand and keep in mind during the struggle, but ultimately all is naught if we do not move from contemplation to action. Furthermore, it is vitally important to remember that an action not sustained profits us nothing. How many health clubs grow rich on people who take initial action and join their clubs, but do not sustain their use of their membership for longer than a couple of weeks.

REMEMBER: HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS AND SEEK GOD’S HELP

There is no substitute for self-discipline when it comes to forming good habits. Having a realistic expectation of the resistance that we will face, will help us to set up the correct routine and stick with it. If we run with patience the race that is set before us, God will give us the strength and grace to continue.

From an anonymous source

THE SOCIAL VIRTUES TO BE PRACTICED

By St. Nikolai Velimirovich (+1956)

Almsgiving: “When you give alms, do not sound a trumpet as do the hypocrites, that they might receive praise from men. Let not your right hand know what your left hand is doing. And your Father who sees in heaven shall reward you openly.”

Giving without hesitation: “Give to him that asks, and do not turn away the one who desires to borrow from you.” (Matthew 5:42) Give all in the name of Christ and for the brotherhood’s sake.

Loving your enemies: “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44). There is no other way to cooperate with Christ, or to establish peace and brotherhood.

Forgiving your brother: “If your brother trespass against you, rebuke him, and if he repents, then forgive him. And if he trespasses against you seven times a day, and seven times a day turns to you and says, “I repent”, then you shall forgive him (Luke 17:3-4). Try to experience the joy of forgiving.

Humbleness: Christ was born in a stable. Why should we then strive after the highest honors and the first places? “Go down and sit in the lowest seat.” “For whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and he that humbles himself shall be exalted” (Luke 14:10-11).

Show pity to sinners: That is the way to help and reform them. Ridiculing and condemning them is of no avail. Christ considered them sick. He visited them (Zacchaeus), ate with them (Matthew), spoke kindly to them (women sinners), and thereby restored their spiritual health and human dignity.

Reconciliation: Before going to church, and also before being drawn before a court of law, a Christian should try to reconcile himself with his adversary (Matthew 5:23-25). However, “If your brother shall trespass against you,” take action gradually, as was clearly prescribed by the Lord (Matthew 18:15-17).

Hopefulness, or Christian optimism: In all afflictions, calamities, persecutions, and even tortures and death, a Christian is hopeful. For he remembers Christ’s words: “Great is your reward in heaven.” “Fear not them who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul.” “I have overcome the world.” “All power is given unto Me in heaven and on earth.”



**LORD JESUS CHRIST,
SON OF GOD,
SAVIOR**



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He Will Separate Them

“And he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.” So then, people on earth are intermingled, and not only intermingled in that the righteous live side by side with the wicked, but they are also indistinguishable. Between the righteous and the wicked there is no apparent difference. Even as in wintertime you cannot tell the healthy trees apart from the withered trees but in beautiful springtime you can tell the difference, so too each person according to his faith and his works will be exposed.

The wicked will not have any leaves or show any fruit, but the righteous will be clothed

with the leaves of eternal life and adorned with the fruit of glory. In this way they will be separated by the heavenly shepherd and Lord. The earthly shepherd separates animals by their type of body, whereas Christ separates people by their type of soul. The sheep signify righteous people by reason of their gentleness, because they harm no one, and by reason of their patience, because when they are harmed by others, they bear it without resistance. He refers to sinners as goats, however, because these vices characterize goats: capriciousness toward other animals, pride and belligerence.

*From a Homily,
Incomplete Work on Matthew*