



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, March 13, 2016

Casting out of Adam and Eve from Paradise

- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Eight:

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One; Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings. O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee.

- KONTAKION OF FORGIVENESS SUNDAY, Tone Six

O Master, Guide to wisdom, Giver of prudent counsel, Instructor of the foolish and Champion of the poor, make firm my heart and grant it understanding. O Word of the Father, give me words, for see, I shall not stop my lips from crying out to Thee: I am fallen, on Thy compassion have mercy on me.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, March 12: 9 AM, Divine Liturgy (Commemoration of the Holy Monastic Saints)
1:30 PM, Baptism of Avalyn Glanville
3:30 PM, Catechism (*On the Holy Eucharist*)
5 PM, Great Vespers & Confessions
6 PM, Young Adult Group
- Sunday, March 13: 8:45 AM, Matins (Confessions 9–10 AM)
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
Noon, Agape Meal
1:15 PM, Vespers of Forgiveness ~ Lent begins
- Mon./Tues./Thurs.: 8 AM, Matins
Noon, Sixth Hour
7 PM, Great Compline with Canon of St. Andrew
- Wed. March 16: 8 AM, Canon of St. Andrew
Noon, Sixth Hour
5–6 PM, Confession
6:15 PM, Liturgy of the Presanctified & Meal
- Friday, March 18: 10:30 AM, Liturgy of the Presanctified with Canon to St. Theodore the Recruit

- SERVING TODAY:

Ushers: Anastasia Alphonse and Ryan Panteleimon Duval; **Altar Servers:** Team Cherubim

- FORGIVENESS SUNDAY:

On Sunday afternoon at 1:15 PM we begin the Great Fast with *Forgiveness Sunday Vespers*, so-called because at the conclusion of the Service, while the choir quietly sings Lenten and Paschal hymns, we ask and give forgiveness—one to another. One would naturally expect that all our parishioners will be present at this unique service of common forgiveness and thus begin the journey of Lent to Pascha. One priest rather strictly told his congregation: “The Church expects you to be at this Vespers, which means that the Lord Himself expects you to be there. About those who do not attend, one can only fear that they are very ill or perhaps have died and gone to their rest.”

“...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” (Mt 6: 14-15).

- LENT AS A TITHE OF THE YEAR, Fr. Thomas Hopko:

In Orthodox Church tradition, the season of Great Lent is called, in the liturgical books, the “tithe of the year.” We know that in the Bible the believers were obliged to give ten percent of their possessions, their time, their crop, their money to the Lord, to the temple. The rule of the tithe wasn’t at all because ninety percent of our possessions are our own and ten percent belong to God. The tithe was to remind the people of God that *they* belonged to God, that He had saved them, He had delivered them from Egypt, that He was their God. And so that they would never forget that God is God and they were to keep his ordinances and commandments and that all things belonged to Him and that they possessed things as gifts from Him, they were obliged to this rule of ten percent....the Lenten Season is that time of the year when believers, Christian believers, try to be what they ought always to be, and to do what they ought always to do, but don’t. It’s not a time for a special pious devotional activity. It’s a time for normal Christian life and normal Christian activity, the way it should be lived all year round, but is not. So the season of repentance, the *Lenten Spring* as it’s often called, this “tithe of the year” is when the believers mobilize themselves individually and together, corporately, to try to be God’s people, to be Christian, to be human, to be persons; ...to know that we were not simply brought out of Egypt into Palestine. We were brought from death to life, Earth to Heaven. We are in the new Passover. We belong to God, not simply because He delivered us from earthly bondage, but we belong to Him because we were bought by the Blood of Christ, redeemed from Hell itself, from death itself, in order to live forever with God. [See the following link to listen to Fr. Tom]: http://ancientfaith.com/podcasts/hopko/lent_the_tithe_of_the_year

- SERVICES OF CLEAN WEEK:

This coming week is known as Clean Week. What does this reference to “clean” indicate for us? The Old Testament reading appointed to be read at the Sixth Hour on Clean Monday (Isaiah 1:1-20) sets the tone:

“Wash yourselves and ye shall be clean; put away the wicked ways from your souls before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well. Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, consider the fatherless, and plead for the widow. Come then, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow; and though they be red like crimson, I will make them white as wool.” (v. 16-18)

We are become “clean” in conscience, mind, soul and body not by our own efforts, but by God’s Grace when we are obedient to Him. We become free of our impulses, compulsions and sin; free even of death, when we follow the life-giving commandments of the Savior. We clean the heart by Confession and Communion, the body by prostrations and fasting. We are strengthened by prayer. Through acts of love and alms we serve the Lord Himself. We even might clean our homes since it is a “little church” and deserves respect too—spring cleaning is Lenten cleaning. During Clean Week we have **Matins at 8 AM** each day (except for Friday), the **Sixth Hour at Noon**, and the **Canon of St. Andrew of Crete at 7 PM**. There are many opportunities for worship.

A few words about this “Canon of St. Andrew” might be helpful to you. This is a long hymn of 250 verses divided up between the four days (a *Canon* is a hymn with nine odes, each ode having many stanzas). Saint Andrew structured his Canon, as all Canons are structured, on the Old Testament Canticles (for example, the Hymn of

the Three Youths is the Eighth Cantic). St. Andrew's Canon has as many verses as do the original Canticles, thus the 250. He begins with these words, words of self-reproach and the prompting towards repentance and confession: "How shall I begin to mourn the deeds of my wretched life..." He goes on to say: "Come, my wretched soul, and confess thy sins of the flesh to the Creator of all. From this moment forsake thy former foolishness and offer to God tears of repentance."

After setting forth repentance and confession as a foundation, he progresses gradually towards the higher steps of the spiritual life. From *action* (namely the life of the divine commandments and the effort to purify the heart of the passions and illumine the *nous*) he proceeds to *contemplation* (namely the vision of God), stressing that the life of *action* and *contemplation* of God is achieved with struggle (fasting, vigil, prayer), self-examination and the desire for God to send His healing grace.

For example, the Canon takes as an image the life of Patriarch Jacob and specifically refers to his two wives, Leah and Rachel. The first had many children, ten specifically, while the second, even though she was only able to give birth to two children, was beautiful and a person of patience and prayer. Saint Andrew gives this image a theological and spiritual meaning. The hymn says that Leah is *action* and Rachel is *contemplation*. "By the two wives, understand action and knowledge in contemplation. Leah is action, for she had many children; and Rachel is knowledge, for she endured great toil. And without toil, O my soul, neither action nor contemplation will succeed."

Another verse: "Thou hast not imitated, O my soul, the repentance of the sinful woman; taking the vase of perfume and mixing it with her tears, she poured it over the feet of the Lord, and with her hair, she wiped away the record of her sins." Someone wrote these words about that stanza: "This verse moved my soul to a breathless ache. When I prostrated myself on the floor, my whole being did not want to rise up, not because my legs were strained and burning from all the prostrations, but because I felt an overwhelming awareness of helplessness and unworthiness. I desired to wash the feet of Jesus with tears of repentance and gratitude. Within the tension of sorrow and joy, I was moved with love and adoration and knew that when I rose, it was the redeeming love of the Bridegroom's strong arms that would gently lift me up. With each prostration, I could fall down before Him and rise again with confidence from the words of the very first verse of the Great Canon, 'A Helper and Protection is He for me unto salvation. He is my God and I will glorify Him, the God of my fathers, and I will exalt Him, for He is greatly glorified.'" Not all have such profound experiences, nevertheless, the cleansing of the heart is taking place. The Great Canon of St. Andrew teaches us the meaning of repentance, and God's mercy. It laments our alienation from God, and shows the way to communion with Him. —*Borrowed*

• LENTEN GUIDELINES:

While circumstances for each person or family may differ to some degree (health requirements, nursing mothers, age of children, work situation, etc.) there are some basic Lenten fasting rules that we all ought to follow as closely as possible: abstain from all meat, dairy and eggs until Pascha; abstain from alcoholic beverages during weekdays. Wine and oil are allowed on Saturdays and Sundays. Shellfish may be eaten on any day. ***Fasting in preparation for receiving Communion at the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts:*** On Wednesday, in preparation for receiving Communion at the evening Liturgy, we fast strictly from all foods and liquids for six hours (obviously, medication and health may dictate otherwise). If you can fast all day, do so. On Friday, when the Presanctified is served early, simply fast from the time of arising in the morning. Fasting will do a person no good at all if it is undertaken without first forgiving all persons who may have offended us. It will do no good at all if it is not joined with prayer. That's just dieting. On the other hand, if we fast from food and pray for strength, we might, with the grace of God, also be able to fast from sin. A great virtue in fasting is that through abjuring food, which is so simple yet necessary—we may show obedience to God and His will, rather than be led by our own will all the time.

• WOMEN'S RETREAT:

Mother Melania, the Superior of the Monastery of the Assumption in Calistoga, will lead a Women's Retreat here on April 9, organized by our parish Sisterhood. More info, and a poster, will be available soon.

- CHILDREN'S CHOIR:

The Children's Choir (ages five and up), is led by Reader Nicolas, Jeanie Carl, Genevieve Richardson, Ellen Aylward and Carmen Anderson. Rehearsals (Saturdays from 4–4:40 PM) are going very well, and the children are to be commended for their attention and excellent work. The choir is preparing to sing Liturgy on Lazarus Saturday, April 23.

- TO DO LIST:

At a recent Parish Council meeting one of our members suggested that parish “to do” items should be listed in the announcement page, rather than just mentioned at the Council Meeting at which only a few people hear about things needing to be done. In our continuing and ever-expanding effort to communicate better, below is a ***partial*** list.

- acquire “~~Lost and Found~~” box
- move big “BBQ boat” to designated spot
- pick up “Glendi fencing” by east ditch
- move two Glendi signs leaning against back of Sunday School building
- move Glendi stage leaning against Monks’ Hut
- clean ditch
- mow vineyard and mound
- the Ride Ministry needs volunteers (see Deanna Panages)
- clean up playground and porch of all garbage, plates and cups after Sunday lunch

- LENTEN RETREAT AT GEARY BLVD. CATHEDRAL:

Sunday, April 17, 2016. Speakers: Khouria Krista West on *Envisioning the Kingdom: the Why and How of Beauty in the Church*. Khouria Krista is an accomplished and acclaimed vestment maker, and has a popular podcast on Ancient Faith Radio. Priest Andrew Cuneo, whom you all know, will also be speaking. His talk is entitled *Can We Think About Paradise Too Much? The Beautiful Perils of Modern Life*. Schedule: 7:30 AM, Hours and Divine Liturgy (in English); 9:45, Registration; 10 AM Breakfast; 10:30, Session I: Khouria Krista West; 11:30 AM, Q & A; 12 PM, Lunch; 1 PM Session II: Priest Andrew Cuneo; 2 PM Q & A with Priest Andrew Cuneo; 2:30 PM Informal fellowship; 4 PM, Tour of Holy Virgin Cathedral, 5 PM, Vespers (in English).

- SAYINGS OF THE SAINTS, APROPOS FORGIVENESS SUNDAY:

About Holy Communion Abba Isaiah of Scetis said: “It is called union with God. Therefore, as long as we are conquered by passions—whether by anger, or envy, or popularity, or vainglory, or hatred, or any other passions—we are estranged from God. Where, then, is our union with Him?”

Abba Zosimas said: “If someone perceives that another person has brought affliction or harm or slander or any other evil, and in return the same one weaves thoughts against that other person, then one is actually conspiring against one’s own soul, just as if the demons were doing this...What do I mean by ‘weaving?’ If one does not consider the other person to be like a healer, then one is bringing upon oneself the greatest harm. Why do you say that the other person has caused you suffering? That person has actually brought you cleansing. Moreover you should think of that person as a healer, sent to you by Christ. You ought to suffer for the sake of that person (Acts 9:16), and you should regard that person as your benefactor.”

Abba Mark said: “When you see someone crying over the many insults he has received, you should know that, because he was overcome by vainglory [pride], he is now unknowingly reaping the crop of evils in his heart. He who loves pleasure is grieved by accusations and abuse. On the other hand, he who loves God is grieved by praises and other superfluous remarks. The degree of our humility is measured by slander. Don’t think that you have humility when you cannot forbear even the slightest accusation.”