

• THE SUNDAY BEFORE LENT — FORGIVENESS SUNDAY:
The last of the preparatory Sundays before the Great Fast has two themes: it commemorates Adam’s expulsion from Paradise as well as the theme of forgiveness—God’s toward us, and ours toward one another. There are obvious reasons why these two themes should be brought to our attention at this moment: One of the primary images in the *Triodion* is that of the return to Paradise. Lent is a time when we weep with Adam and Eve before the closed gate of Eden, repenting with them for the sins that have deprived us of our free communion with God. But Lent is also a time when we are preparing to celebrate the saving event of Christ’s death and rising, which has reopened Paradise to us once more (Luke 23:43). So sorrow for our exile in sin is tempered by hope of our re-entry into Paradise:

O precious Paradise, unsurpassed in beauty, tabernacle built by God, unending gladness and delight, glory of the righteous, joy of the prophets, and dwelling of the saints, with the sound of thy leaves pray to the Maker of all: May He open unto me the gates which I closed by my transgression, and may He count me worthy to partake of the Tree of Life, and of the joy which was mine when I dwelt in thee before.
[Hymn from Vespers].

Note how the *Triodion* speaks here not of “Adam” but of “me,” “May He open unto me the gates which I closed.” Here, as throughout the *Triodion*, the events of sacred history are not treated as happenings in the distant past or future, but as experiences undergone by me here and now within the dimension of sacred time. The second theme, that of forgiveness, is emphasized in the Gospel reading for this Sunday (Matthew 6:14–21) and in the special [Ceremony of Mutual Forgiveness](#) at the end of Vespers on Sunday.... Before we enter the Lenten fast, we are reminded that there can be no true fast, no genuine repentance, no reconciliation with God, unless we are at the same time reconciled with one another. A fast without mutual love is the fast of demons. ...we do not travel the road of Lent as isolated individuals but as members of a family. —From the forward to the *Lenten Triodion*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



March 6, 2022

Sunday of the Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Four:
When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of Thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: “Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen granting the world great mercy!”
- TROPARION of the FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE, Tone Four:
Through the sufferings which Thy holy [Forty Martyrs](#) endured for Thy sake, O Lord, we beseech Thee, O Lover of mankind: “Heal all of our infirmities!”
- KONTAKION of the FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE, Tone Six:
Having left all the army of the world, ye cleaved unto the Master in the Heavens, O Forty Passion bearers of the Lord; for, having passed through fire and water, O blessed ones, as is meet ye received glory from the heavens and a multitude of crowns.

- 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

- Friday, March 4: 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confession (*Protection Church*)
- Saturday, March 5: 3:30 PM, Catechism (*On the Holy Eucharist*)
5 PM, Vigil & Confessions
- Sunday, March 6: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:30 AM, Church School
Noon, Agape Meal
1:15 PM, Vespers of Forgiveness ~ **Lent begins**
- Mon./Tues./Thurs.: 8 AM, Matins
7 PM, Great Compline/Canon of St. Andrew
- Wed. March 9: 8 AM, Canon of St. Andrew
5–6 PM, Confession (continue during the service)
6:15 PM, Liturgy of the Presanctified / Meal
- Friday, March 11: 10:30 AM, Liturgy of the Presanctified with
Canon to St. Theodore the Recruit
6 PM, Small Compline and *Akathist to the Theotokos*

- ANNUAL MEETING LAST WEEK:

Our Annual Meeting was held last Sunday. The 2022 Budget was passed, reports were offered in the Meeting Booklet and new Council Members were elected: We congratulate Brian Rademacher, Karen Werder, Timothy Danford, Debbie Buse, Preston Booker and Michael Dovey. They join those who have one more year left to serve; Serge Anderson, Daphne Russell, Kathleen Rhodes, Peter Tennyson and Martin Thong. During the

meeting we were also reminded by Emma Anderson to plan ahead for both the *St. Seraphim Week for Kids* in June and the Christmas Bazaar in November. We will begin to organize the *St. Seraphim Week* sometime during Great Lent. We will also hold a *Ministries Sunday* event, in which all the parish activities/ministries will have a table and info to share. Date TBD.

- FORGIVENESS VESPERS:

Vespers begins at 1:15 PM, this Sunday. This Service is our entry into the Great Fast. At the [Rite of Forgiveness](#) we approach each other, in an orderly line, quietly and reverently, beginning with the clergy. We bow low, say “forgive me,” and “God forgives,” then move on to the next person, then the next, and so on.

- CLEAN WEEK:

During the first week of Lent, called “Clean Week,” our Holy Church gives us a strenuous course of fasting, prayer and church services, unparalleled in beauty and power, to help us learn true repentance, as opposed to guilt. The Church is calling us to dedicate ourselves to this course. To begin with, we fast as strictly as we can on the first three days of Lent. Then, on Wednesday evening, we will have an opportunity to receive Holy Communion at the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts and be strengthened, and then have a modest meal in the Hall. Those who will receive Holy Communion are asked to prepare themselves by fasting (at least from noon), praying the *Prayers before Communion* and a recent confession.

- FASTING:

While circumstances for each person or family may differ to some degree (health requirements, etc.) there are some [basic Lenten fasting rules](#) that we all ought to follow: 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 will do no good at all if it is not joined with forgiveness for others and prayer. 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 we may show obedience to God and His will, rather than be led by our own will all the time. —*Fr Lawrence*