



ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
Orthodox Church

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An Orthodox Christian community of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA under the protection of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

WELCOME!



WEEKLY BULLETIN

SUNDAY, MARCH 07, 2021

SUNDAY OF MEATFARE * THE LAST JUDGEMENT

TONE V * ICORINTHIANS 8:8-9:2 * GOSPEL: ST. MATTHEW 25:31-46

SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY DIVINE SERVICES

SUNDAY, MARCH 07 - MEATFARE SUNDAY

9:00AM Sunday Divine Liturgy followed by a Panachida in Memory of +Lora Mucisko, offered by Frank and Eileen Ello.

SATURDAY, MARCH 13

3:00PM Saturday Evening Vespers - Come join us!

SUNDAY, MARCH 14 - CHEESEFARE & FORGIVENESS SUNDAY

9:00AM Sunday Divine Liturgy with Rite of Forgiveness Prayers.

12:00PM **Sacraments of Holy Baptism & Chrismation for DESMOND LAWRENCE STALLARD.**

SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY PARISH ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY, MARCH 07

10:30AM Sunday School and Coffee Social Hour.

MONDAY, MARCH 08

4:30PM Weekly Soup Kitchen Service - *We need additional workers!*

SUNDAY, MARCH 14

NO Sunday School and Coffee Social Hour.

PLEASE BRING AN ICON WITH YOU TO CHURCH on Sunday, March 28 for the Sunday of Orthodoxy Celebration.

WE NOW ACCEPT



In order to keep up with an increasingly digital world and to make it easier for our parishioners to contribute to the church, we now have the ability to donations through the secure PayPal platform. Donations can be submitted through our email at sjacrod@gmail.com or by scanning this QR code shown here with your cell phone directly from there. You must setup your own Papyal Account first in order to connect with the church. We do not collect any financial data in this method. When making a donation via this method, please be sure to indicate what it is for (stewardship, envelopes, etc.) or we will simply add it to your general donations. Any questions, please see Kim Kuzma or Fr. Michael.



PLEASE PRAY for the Servants of God: John Popadin, Adele Baluk, Betty Roman, His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew, John & Suzanne DiBiasi, Frank Ello, John Billy, Stephanie Gallant & newborn daughter, Kristy Stallard & newborn son, Beth Mucisko & newborn daughter, Amet Ramnarian, Bill Kobasz, Helen J. Dunham, Dacia Snider, CPL Michael Delcher, Anneta Elrod, Joann Kolator, Irene Tobin, Oleg Alber, Olga Mitko, Lynn Beres, Maryann Dudash, Pat Yurcisin, Eleanor Aleksza, Charlie & Pat Post, Sandy DiLeo, Dorothy Szczecina, Olga Medvigy, Lilly Perry, John & Suzanne DiBiasi, Helen Hrehowsik, Michele Camisa, Abigail Billy, Joseph Santalla, Sussi Howard, Amanda Orender, Helen Deliman, Melanie McHenry, Peggy Patrick, Lillian Kalog, Maryann Della Serra, Victoria Dean, Stephen Skasko, George Kratsashvili, John Paul Hall, Veronica Houser, Joshua Skoog, Joan Winters, Michael Ascher, Elizabeth White, CPL Logan Grguric, PO Daniel Langner, PFC Tomas Beebe, 2ND LT Jonah Strenski, US Armed Forces, the unborn children of this world and more vocations to the Holy Priesthood.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

Please remember, if you are admitted to the hospital in an emergency or for any reason, or are undergoing surgery, please notify Fr. Michael so he can make arrangements to visit and pray with you ASAP. He may be reached on his cell phone, at any hour of the day by calling **(201) 486-2123**. If he cannot be reached: **Fr. Andrew Fetchina** will assist; **(732) 382-8844**.

WELCOME VISITORS

We are happy that you have joined us today. Please join us in the church hall (behind the church) for coffee and a bite to eat. You have just experienced the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom which is the ordinary service of worship celebrated on regular Sunday's in the Orthodox Church. The Liturgy—as experienced at St. John's Church—stems from the 4th century though its practices were inherited from the time of the apostles in the book of Acts. (Acts 1:14) It also represents a time when all Christians worshipped in One Undivided fully Catholic Christian Church. If you have any questions in regards to our worship or the Orthodox Church in general please see Fr. Michael and he will gladly answer any of your questions to the best of his ability. He looks forward to meeting you.

At our best we are known for our welcoming attitude, hospitality, prayerfulness, generosity and compassion. At our worst, we are sinners, but we're working out our salvation together, and could use your help. If you are looking for a church home, we hope you will consider making St. John's Church that place.

PANACHIDA REQUESTS

Please be reminded to submit requests for all Panachidas to Fr. Michael in writing so there is no confusion. Multiple requests on the same day will be combined, with the exception of 40th day and 1 year anniversaries which take precedence.

The New Jersey Deanery presents the 2021 Clergy Rotation...

Sunday of Orthodoxy

Sunday March 21



Saint John the Baptist Perth Amboy	Father Ken Ellis	9am
Saint John the Baptist Rahway	Father Constantine Gavrilkina	9:30am
Saint Mary Bayonne	Father John Pribish	9am
Saint Nicholas Elizabeth	Father John Fencik	9am
Saints Peter and Paul Rockaway	Father Andrew Fetchina, Dean	9:30am
Holy Ghost Manville	Father Michael Chendorain	9:30am
Saint Euphrosynia South River	Father Matthew Stagon	10am

In place of *normal* Lenten Missions this year the clergy of the New Jersey Deanery will be switching parishes on the First Sunday of Great Lent. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, visiting clergy will lead the faithful in reciting the traditional **Proclamation of Orthodoxy** wherein we will prayerfully acknowledge that while we are separated physically on this day and throughout Great Lent we are united in spirit. Faithful are encouraged to bring icons to participate as directed.

A special collection will be taken during Divine Liturgy for the benefit of the New Jersey Deanery Camp Nazareth Bus.

We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and icons.

- THE LAST JUDGMENT -

What Is a Church?

Today is commonly known as Meatfare Sunday, the last day to eat meat before Pascha; it's western equivalent used to be Carnival (from Latin to remove meat) but in the west removing meat doesn't have much meaning anymore. But today's real impact is so much more than just what we eat. Liturgically this is the Sunday devoted to The Last Judgment and it is critical to know that Chapter 25 of St. Matthew's gospel from which Christ's sermon about the sheep and goats takes place after Palm Sunday, His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and was told by Our Lord only to His apostles on the Mount of Olives, away from the crowds of Jerusalem. That's why this gospel is read again on Holy Tuesday, exactly 50 days from Meatfare. Our Lord's private sermon is remarkable in the language that He chose to use to explain things to the apostles, not in a parable, now at the end of His ministry, directly. He makes it clear that His second coming will be with "glory" with "holy angels" as opposed to His first coming, as He was right then and there on earth knowing that later in that week He would suffer the dishonor and indignities of being tried, scourged, and crucified.

(JUDGEMENT ... Continued on page 4)

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2021

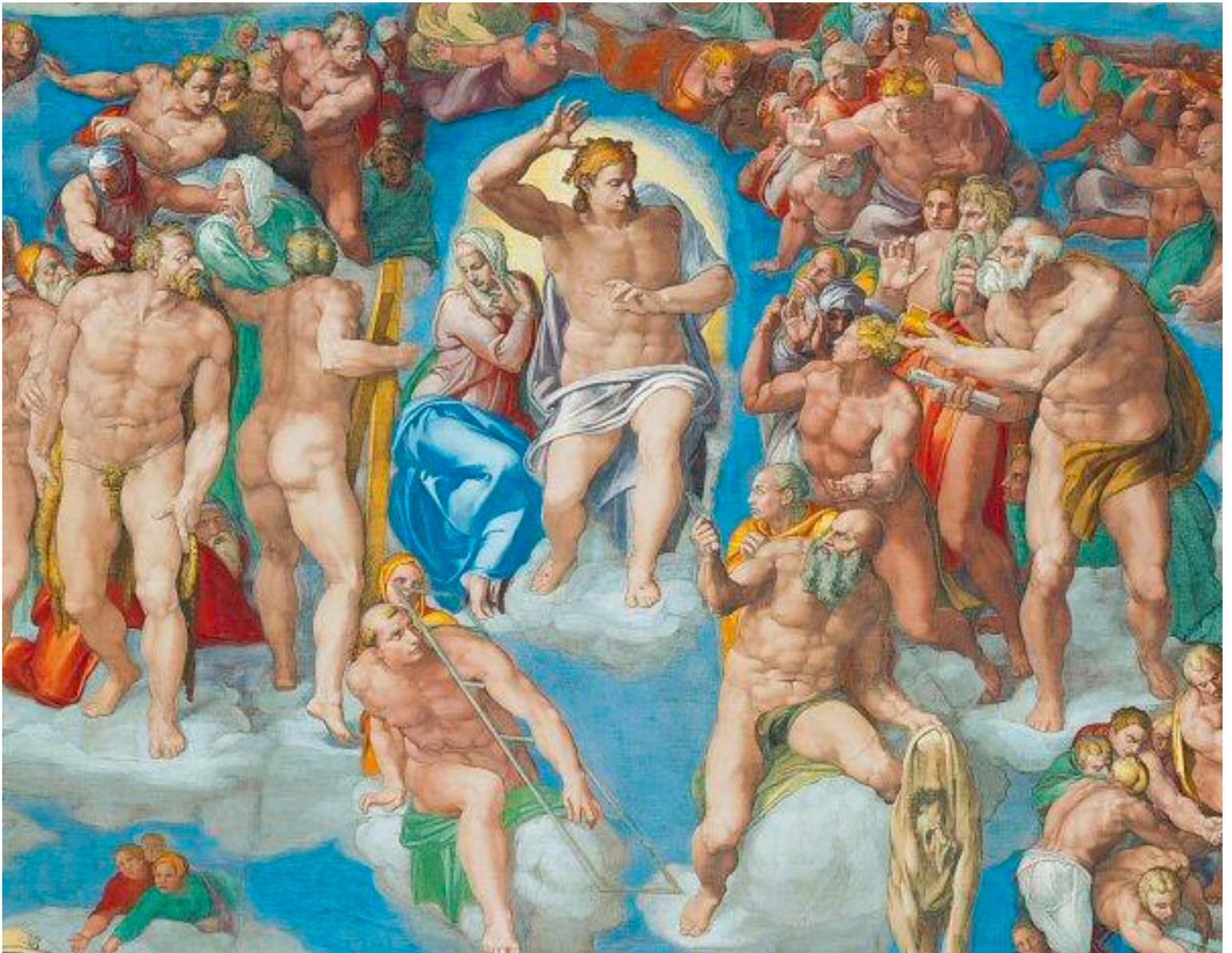
Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 21st	 <i>TRIODION WEEKS</i> Publican and the Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 28th	 The Prodigal Son Returns! Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare MARCH 7th FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	 The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare MARCH 14th FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	 Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent MARCH 21st	 <i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 28th	 ST GREGORY PALAMAS Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent APRIL 4th	 VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4th Sunday of Lent APRIL 11th	 ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent APRIL 18th	 ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! APRIL 25th GREAT WEEK BEGINS	 <i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 30th	 GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! MAY 2nd NO FASTING!	 <i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

Confessions are available at anytime by appointment and after all Divine Services. Please contact Fr. Michael at your schedule your time. Take advantage of the Sacraments.

Christ also uses the phrase “inherit the kingdom” to show that God has made the blessed of His Father, whom he refers to as the sheep on His right hand, to be true sons, not to be GIVEN eternal life, but to INHERIT what is rightly theirs, eternal life that was prepared for all men from the beginning of time. On the other hand, the left hand that is, are the goats. To the goats, He uses the words “depart from Me” signifying what hell really is: Being utterly cut off from God. Remember the words of Psalm 50 (Psalm 51 KJV): “Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.”

In the west, the Last Judgment is a fearful thing. It brings to mind the fire and brimstone sermons that were popularized in Colonial America by preachers such as Jonathon Edwards, grandfather of Aaron Burr who killed Alexander Hamilton in a duel, who is famous for his fiery “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.” An angry God. That motif of an Angry God is manifest in the famous Last Judgment fresco in the Sistine Chapel in which Michaelangelo paints Christ sitting on the Judgment Seat with His right arm upraised in a threatening position and His left arm repelling the condemned goats on His left.



Compare that Sistine fresco with eastern icons of the Last Judgment, such as one by the Victor Vasnetsov that pictures Christ on the Judgment Seat quite differently, holding the emblem of the Life Giving Cross in one hand and the Gospel Book in the other (usually open to the famous “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest”), the Righteous Judge, but certainly not an Angry God.



In many churches in Russia an icon or a fresco of the Last Judgment is strategically placed at the back of the church so that believers leaving the church are reminded of Christ's upcoming Second Coming as they walk out into the world to practice Christianity face to face with their neighbors.

The difference between west and east is not more stark than comparing the words of the Orthodox vespers for Meatfare: "when Thou sittest on Thy throne O Merciful Judge and revealest Thy dread glory..... with my whole heart I cried to the all compassionate God" with the words of Jonathan Edwards: "There is nothing that keeps the wicked men at any one moment out of hell but the mere pleasure of God."

Brothers and Sisters, the difference is highlighted by how one answers question: For what does the Church exist? When posed with that question recently, our Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev, whom many of us were so blessed to meet in person last year, gave this answer: "To save people, to save them from sin, the devil, and all that is associated in our lives with evil, vice, and what as we say leads to the destruction of the human soul." That's it! That is the task of the Orthodox Church: to save each one of us individually from being told "Depart from Me." Fr. Alexander Schmemmann hits the nail right on the head when writing on the theme of the Sunday of the Last Judgment: the theme is not fear of an Angry God, but love, "concrete and personal love for any human person that God makes us encounter in our lives." He is so right when he says that in modern America Christians tend to "identify Christian love with political, economical, and social concerns." With love for "mankind" rather than love for the very man who is standing right there in front of you. The latter, that's the kind of love that God has—a love for each one of us, created in his image and likeness, for each of us AS INDIVIDUALS. One by one. Our jobs on earth, and especially during this fast approaching Great Lent, is to fill the sinful world with this kind of personal love and by doing so become more like God, get closer to God, just as we are all called..... to be saintly. That's the same love exhibited by the compassionate Judge, the just Judge, the merciful Judge in the icon of Christ seated on the Judgment Seat holding the Cross and the Gospel. The Judge with love for each individual person is the Head of our Church, the Head of the Church Who came to save us, to fulfill the mission of His Church to save each one of us. Who yearns that we INHERENT the Kingdom for which we were made. Otherwise, what is referred to as a church is a mere social agency, devoted to the abstract and undefined task of caring for "humanity" rather than helping each one of us to keep from being goats.



why are the dead commemorated on saturdays?

The Saturdays of commemorations of the dead are called ancestral Saturdays (the first universal commemoration on Meat Fare Saturday, the second, third, and fourth Saturdays of Great Lent, Trinity Saturday, and St. Demetrius Saturday). Why do these take place specifically on Saturdays? What are the historical roots of this tradition? They were not all instituted at the same time.

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he ceased from all His works which God began to do (Gen. 2:3). Saturday (Sabbath) for the Jews was a day of festive rest. Christ's resurrection placed the beginning of the new Israel: a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Pet. 2:9). The resurrection day of the Savior of the World became the seventh, festive day that completes the week. Sunday [in Russian, voskresenie, meaning "resurrection"] is a day of prayer in church at Divine Liturgy and pious rest. From a day of earthly rest, Saturday became a symbol of joyous rest in the Kingdom of Heaven: There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his (Heb. 4:9-10). This is where the custom, fixed by the Church typicon, came from of having special services on Saturday for the commemoration of the dead.

The establishment of the universal ancestral Meat Fare Saturday dates back to the first century of Christianity. In the Synaxarion for this day (*The Lenten Triodion*) it says that the holy fathers established, *having received it from the holy Apostles*, that on this day should be commemorated *all people from the ages who have reposed in faith and piety*. This day was chosen because Meat Fare week reminds us of the future Last Judgment. On the eve of this day, Saturday, as if preceding the Last Judgment, the Church prays especially for all of its reposed children, begging the Lord to have mercy on them and make them partakers of blessed eternal life.

Just like Meat Fare Saturday, ancestral Saturday before Holy Trinity Day (Pentecost) is called *universal*. The custom of commemorating the dead on that day also dates from Apostolic times. On that Saturday, prayers are raised for all people from the ages who have died with the hope of resurrection and eternal life, because on the day of Pentecost, the Kingdom of Christ appeared by the descent of the Life-creating Most Holy Spirit. Therefore, on the eve of this feast, the Church prays for all of its children who have reposed up to then, that they would be gathered into the Heavenly Kingdom and vouchsafed eternal blessed life.

During Great Lent, the Church does not serve the usual daily commemorations of the dead (pannikhidas, litias). As a supplement to this, so that the dead are not deprived of the Church's saving intercessions, the commemorations were established for the Saturdays of the second, third, and fourth weeks of Lent.

St. Demetrius Saturday is celebrated on the nearest Saturday before the commemoration day of Great Martyr Demetrius of Thessalonka (October 26/November 8). This Saturday commemoration was established in the Russian Church after the battle of Kulikovo^[1] (September 8, 1380), with the blessing of St. Sergius of Radonezh. At first, commemorations were served for all soldiers who fell in that battle. Eventually, St. Demetrius Saturday came to be a day when all reposed Orthodox Christians are commemorated.

March 2021

Lenten Challenge Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	1	2	3	4	5	6 ALL SOULS SATURDAY 9AM - Liturgy with a reading of the diptychs. 3PM - Vespers
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 FORGIVENESS SUNDAY 9AM - Liturgy. Send a card to someone you have missed a while, wish them a good lent and tell them you will be praying for them each day.	15 12PM - Hours (Live) Abstain from Social Media for the entire day. (Wake up to sleep)	16 12PM - Hours (Live) Put aside some food for your local food pantry.	17 12PM - Hours (Live) Skip the TV for the entire day. Listen to the radio or church music. 6PM - Paraklesis.	18 12PM - Hours (Live) Donate (or set aside) money to a local charity.	19 12PM - Hours (Live) Read Psalms 1, 2, 3 6PM - PreSanctified Liturgy (3PM Fast)	20 Meditate in quiet for 5 minutes. Take a break! (do something you love to do)
21 SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY 9AM - Liturgy. Send a get well card to someone you know is sick.	22 Abstain from Social Media for the entire day. (Wake up to sleep)	23 Put aside some food for your local food pantry.	24 Skip the TV for the entire day. Listen to the radio or church music. 6PM - Cross Moleben	25 Donate (or set aside) money to a local charity.	26 Read Psalms 4, 5, 6 6PM - PreSanctified Liturgy (3PM Fast)	27 ALL SOULS SATURDAY 9AM - Liturgy with a reading of the diptychs. Meditate in quiet for 5 minutes. 3PM - Vespers
28 GREGORY PALAMAS 9AM - Liturgy. Invite a friend to church with you.	29 Abstain from Social Media for the entire day. (Wake up to sleep)	30 Put aside some food for your local food pantry.	31 Skip the TV for the entire day. Listen to the radio or church music. 6PM - Paraklesis.	1	2	3

A PASCHA TO REMEMBER - Let's try something new this year, to challenge ourselves in the Lenten Season. After a difficult last year and restrictions on the celebration of Pascha, let us use this year to look forward to celebrating the Feast of Feasts **in person, together, in God's House!** The services are listed here for you to plan your attendance and the daily challenges are provided to push us beyond our normal routines to make this Great Lent even greater!

Let's join together in thought, word and deed to make this a Pascha to Remember!