

March 2020

PARISH LIFE

**A Monthly
Publication
of the
Russian Orthodox Cathedral of
St. John the Baptist
Washington, DC**

**A Parish Founded in 1949 by
St. John of Shanghai and
San Francisco**

THE GREAT PENITENTIAL CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE

The first week of Great Lent has been known since times of old as the “dawn of abstinence,” or “clean week.” During that week, the Church persuades her children to come out of that sinful state into which all of mankind fell because our forefathers did not abstain, because they lost the blessings of heaven, the state of sin which each of us increases by his personal sins. It coaxes them into coming forth by way of faith, prayer, humility and fasting, things, which are pleasing to God. This is the time for repentance, says the Church *Behold the day of salvation, the entrance to the Fast. O my soul, be watchful, close all the doors through which the passions enter, and look up towards the Lord.* (From the first canticle of the triodion canon at Matins on Monday of the first week of Great Lent).

The Old Testament Church, which held especially sacred the first and last days of several great feasts, likewise, according to the *ustav*, Orthodox Christians, prepared and inspired by the maternal

instructions offered by their Church from antiquity, observe the first and last weeks of Great Lent especially strictly and assiduously.

The services of the first week are especially lengthy, and the podvig of physical abstinence during that week is considerably more rigorous than in the subsequent days of Great Lent. Over the course of the first four days of Great Lent, Great Compline is served, with the reading of the Great Penitential Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, which as it were sets the tone which is to resound throughout Great Lent. During the first week of Great Lent, the Canon is divided into four separate parts, one chanted at each Compline. On Thursday (actually Wednesday evening) of the fifth week of Great Lent, our attention is again directed to St. Andrew's marvelous composition, this time in its entirety, so that with the conclusion of Great Lent in sight, we might not become lackadaisical, careless, and negligent, so that we might not forget ourselves and stop strictly watching over ourselves in everything.

The refrain *Have mercy upon me O Lord, have mercy upon me* accompanies each verse of the Great Canon. Several troparia in honor of St. Andrew, composer of the canon, and to St. Mary of Egypt are also included. The Church of Jerusalem implemented this practice during St. Andrew's lifetime. When in the year 680 AD, St. Andrew traveled to Constantinople for the 6th Ecumenical Council, he brought with him and made public both his great composition and the life of St. Mary of Egypt, written by his compatriot and teacher, St. Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem. The Life of St. Mary of Egypt is read together with the Great Canon at Matins on Wednesday of the fifth week of Great Lent.

The Great Canon is more astonishing than any other liturgical text encountered during Great Lent. It is a marvel of liturgical hymnography, with texts of amazing power and poetic beauty. The Church decided to call it the Great Canon not so much for its length (250 troparia, or verses), as for the quality and power of its content.

St. Andrew, Archbishop of Crete, who composed the Canon in the 7th Century, also composed many other canons used by the Church over the course of the liturgical year.

The Great Canon consists of a conversation between the penitent and his own soul. The conversation begins:

Where shall I begin to weep for the actions of my wretched life? What first-fruit shall I offer O Christ in this my lamentation? But in Thy compassion grant me forgiveness of sins. – with what shall I begin to repent, for it is so difficult.

A marvelous troparion follows:

Come wretched soul, with thy flesh to the Creator of all. Make confession to Him and abstain henceforth from thy past brutishness; and offer to God tears of repentance.

The words are astonishing, containing both Christian anthropology and asceticism: our flesh, an inseparable part of human nature and being, must also participate in our repentance.

The apogee of this conversation with the soul, its constant unremitting call to repentance, comes in the kontakion sung following the 6th canticle of the Canon:

My soul, O my soul, rise up! Why art thou sleeping? The end draws near and soon thou shalt be troubled. Watch, then, that Christ thy God may spare thee, for He is everywhere present and fillest all things.

The great luminary of the Church addresses these words to himself, to the one who could be described with the words he used to describe St. Mary of Egypt, who truly was an “angel in the flesh.” And yet, he so addressed himself, reproaching himself for his soul being in slumber. If he could see himself as such a one, how should we see ourselves? As immersed not only in spiritual sleep from which we cannot be roused, but also in some kind of necrosis.

When we heed the words of the canon of St. Andrew of Crete, we have to ask ourselves: What must I do? If one were to fulfill God’s Law, as he ought, the contents of his life would be of quite a different composition. It is for this reason that the Church offers us this profound Great Lenten Penitential Canon, so full of feeling and conviction, so that we might look deeper into our souls and see what is there. And yet, the soul continues to sleep; in that is our sorrow and our misfortune.

In the wonderful prayer of St Ephraim the Syrian, which we repeat throughout Great Lent, we hear words to the following effect: *O Lord and King, grant unto me to see my transgressions! I do not see them; my soul has dozed off, has fallen asleep, and I cannot even see those sins, as I ought. How then will I be able to repent of them!* This is precisely why, in the days of Great Lent, each of us should focus even more on himself/herself, must examine his life, and measure it against the standard set forth in the Gospels, and against no other.

A basic distinguishing feature of the Great Canon is its extremely broad use of images and subjects taken from Sacred Scripture, from both the Old and New Testaments. Unfortunately, we do not know the Holy Bible as well as we ought, and because we do not, for many of us the names mentioned in the Great Canon mean nothing.

And yet, the Bible is not merely a history of the people of Israel. It is also a great chronicle of the soul of mankind, of the souls which would repeatedly fall and stand up again before the face of God, which repeatedly fell into sin and repeatedly repented. If we were to examine the lives of those mentioned in the Bible, we would see that each of them is presented not so much as a historical figure, an individual that did such and such, but as an individual standing before the Living God. The person's historical or other accomplishments are accorded second place. What remains is what is most important: did that person remain faithful to God, or not. If we read the Bible and the Great Canon with that frame of reference, we will see that much of what is said about the righteous ones and sinners of antiquity is nothing less than a chronicle of our soul, of our repeated falling and rising, of our repeated sin and repentance.

In this regard, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, the 20th century liturgist said something quite relevant: "If, in our days so many find it [the Great Canon] boring and not relevant to our lives, it is because their faith is not taking nourishment from the fount of Sacred Scripture, the spring which for the Fathers of the Church was the very source of their faith. We must once again learn to apprehend the world as it is revealed to us in the Bible, learn to live in that biblical world. There is no better way of learning this than through the church service, which not only passes on to us biblical teaching, but

also reveals to us the biblical way of life.” (Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann, *Great Lent*, p. 97).

And so, through the individuals and events recounted in the Great Canon, the history of the Old Testament and the New Testament passes before us. Its author points out to us our forefathers’ falling into sin, and the corruption of the original world. He points to Noah’s virtues and the bitterness and lack of repentance shown by the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. He resurrects for us the memory of the righteous patriarchs and valiant men: Moses, Joshua son of Nun, Gideon and Jephthah; he allows us to look at the King David’s piety, his fall and touching repentance; he points out to us Ahab’s and Jezebel’s impiety, and also the great paradigms of repentance – the Ninevites, Manasseh, the harlot, and the wise thief. He accords special attention to Mary of Egypt, and more than once stops the reader at the Cross and at the Holy Sepulcher of our Lord. Everywhere, he teaches repentance, humility, prayer, and self-denial. It is in these examples that the exhortation to the soul constantly takes place – [O my soul] remember this righteous one; thus did he please God; remember that righteous one as well; thus did he please God; you have done nothing comparable.

The Bible speaks of some individuals in a positive light, and about others in a negative one. We must emulate the one, and not the other.

Riding in the chariot of the virtues, Elijah was lifted up to heaven, high above earthly things. Reflect, my soul, upon his ascent. – Reflect, O my soul, upon the ascent of the righteous ones of the Old Testament.

O wretched soul, always thou hast imitated the polluted thoughts of Gehazi. Cast from thee, at least in thine old age, his love of money. Flee from the fire of hell, turn away from thy wickedness. - At least in old age, rid yourself of Gehazi’s avarice, O soul, and leaving behind your evil deeds, avoid the fires of hell.

As we can see, the texts are fairly difficult, and therefore, it is essential to prepare well for the Great Canon, so that we might apprehend it.

In the concluding ode chanted on the first day, after all of the historical recollections, there follow troparia of amazing power:

The Law is powerless, the Gospel of no effect, and the whole of Scripture is ignored by thee: the prophets and all the words of the righteous are useless. Thy wounds, my soul have been multiplied, and there is no physician to heal thee. – it is useless to remind you of the Old Testament; everything is useless. I will give you examples from the New Testament, and perhaps you will then repent.

I bring thee, O my soul, examples from the New Testament to lead thee to compunction. Follow the example of the righteous, turn away from the sinful, and through prayers and fasting, through chastity and reverence, win back Christ's mercy.

Finally, having presented all from the Old Testament, the writer ascends toward the Giver of Life, the Savior of our souls, and like the thief, he cries out “Have mercy upon me!” and like the publican exclaims “God be merciful to me a sinner!” Emulating the persistence of the Canaanite woman and the blind man at the crossroads he says “have mercy on me O son of David! Like unto the harlot, he pours out tears instead of myrrh onto Christ's head and feet, and weeps bitterly over himself as Martha and Mary did over Lazarus.

Farther on, the Canon underscores the fact that the worst of sinners repented, and will enter the Heavenly Kingdom before we do:

Christ became man, calling to repentance thieves and harlots. Repent, my soul: the door of the Kingdom is already open, and Pharisees and publicans and adulterers pass through it before thee, changing their life.

And when, in some kind of spiritual horror, following from afar after the miracles of the Savior, and brought to compunction by each spiritual struggle in His earthly life, the author of the Canon reaches the awful sacrifice of Christ, his heart's strength flags, and together with all Creation, he falls silent on quaking Golgotha, and cries out one last time:

O my Judge who dost know me, when Thou comest again with the angels to judge the whole world, look upon me then with Thine eye of mercy and spare me; take pity on me Jesus, for I have sinned more than any other man.

In its concluding troparia, the Great Canon, using every possible means to move us to repentance, as it were reveals to us its “method” [of instruction]: How I have talked with thee, O soul! I have reminded thee of the Old Testament righteous ones, and have given thee examples from the New Testament [to lead thee to compunction], and yet it is has all been for naught, for “thou, my soul hast not followed their lives and actions. Woe to thee when thou art judged!” – woe unto thee, when thou shalt stand before the Judgment!

Attending the words of the Great Canon, having scrutinized the history of people who ran from God only to be overtaken by Him, people who were in chasms, but whom God led out, let us contemplate the fact that God brings each of us out of the chasm of sin and despair, so that we might offer Him the fruits of repentance.

One should not imagine that repentance consists of rooting around in one’s personal sins, engaging in self-flagellation, and striving to expose in oneself as much evil and darkness as possible. To truly repent is to turn from the darkness to the light, from sin to righteousness, to understand that our life has been unworthy of its high calling, to confess before God how insignificant we are, and confess that our only hope is God Himself. True repentance is when, standing before the face of God, Who, as the Apostle Peter says “hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light,” (I Peter 2: 9), we understand that life was given to us so that we might become children of God, so that we might commune of the Divine Light. True repentance is reflected not so much in words as in deeds: in readiness to come to one the aid of others, to be open with our neighbors, and not become too focused onto oneself. True repentance is understanding that, while we do not possess the power to become true Christians, God is capable of making us so. As it says in the Great Canon “wheresoever God wishes, the order of nature is overcome.” That is to say, where God so wishes, supernatural events occur: Saul becomes Paul, Jonah is brought out of the belly of the whale, Moses crosses the sea on dry land, the dead Lazarus is

resurrected, Mary of Egypt is turned from a harlot into a great righteous one. For, according to the Savior “with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” (Matt. 19: 26).

Archpriest Victor Potapov

THE MOTHER OF GOD

The Blessed Heaven Icon 6/19 March



The Icon of the Mother of God known as the “Blessed Heaven” Icon is in the Iconostasis of the Cathedral Church of the Archangel in the Moscow Kremlin. We know that it used to be in Smolensk, and that it was translated to Moscow by Sophia, daughter of Lithuanian Prince Vitovt, at the time she married Prince Vasily Dmitrievitch (1389 - 1425) of Moscow. The Icon bears a full-length depiction of the Mother of God, with the Divine Infant on her left arm. Some people refer to this Icon as the “What shall we call thee” Icon

of the Mother of God.

The Icon is celebrated on March 6 and on the Sunday of All Saints.

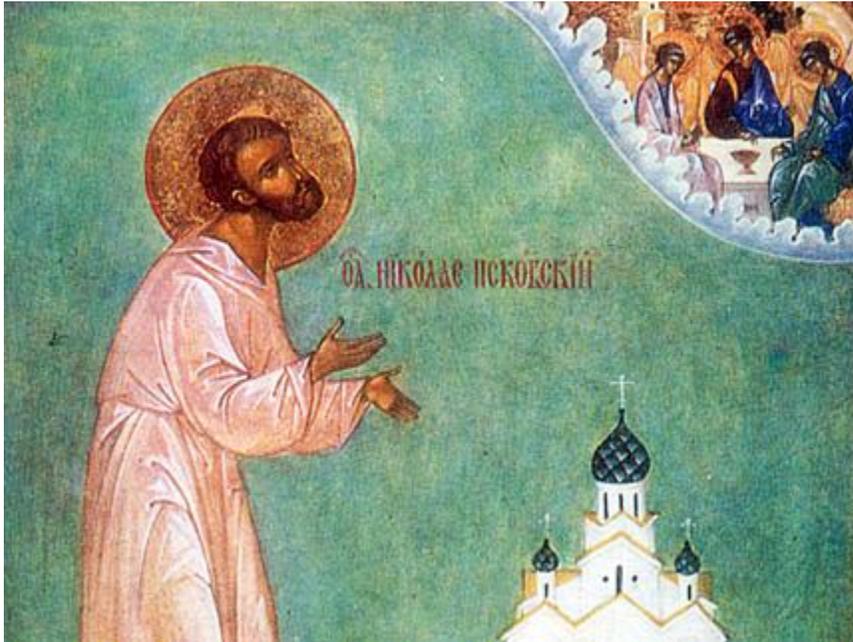
LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Blessed Nikolai of Pskov 28 February/13 March

For over three decades, Blessed Nikolai of Pskov waged the spiritual struggle of being a fool for Christ. Well before his death, he acquired grace-filled gifts of the Holy Spirit and was made worthy of

the gifts of wonder-working and prophecy. His contemporaries in Pskov referred to him as Mikula (Mikola, Nikola) Sallos, which, translated from the Greek means “blessed, holy fool.” During his lifetime, people already venerated him as a saint, calling him “Mikula the Holy.”

In February 1570, after waging a devastating campaign with his *oprichnina* [special forces] against Novgorod, Tsar Ivan [Ioann]



Grozny [the Formidable, often translated in the West as “the Terrible”] was preparing to inflict the same fate upon Pskov, which he suspected of treason.

According to the Pskov Chronicle, “the

Tsar came... with great anger, roaring like a lion, wanting to tear apart the innocent people, and to spill a great deal of blood.”

The entire city prayed that the Tsar’s anger might be averted. The miraculous Liubyatovskaya “Tenderness” Icon of the Mother of God bears an inscription to the effect that on hearing the bells for Matins ringing throughout the city, the Tsar (whose forces were arrayed in Liubyatov) “with his heart softened, said to his warriors, ‘Blunt your swords against the stones, and let the killing come to an end.’”

The residents of Pskov came out onto the streets. Kneeling in front of their houses, each family, met the Tsar with the bread and salt of greeting. On one of the streets, Blessed Nikolai ran out, riding a broomstick, and shouting “Ivanushka, Ivanushka, come eat bread and salt instead of Christians’ blood.”

The Tsar ordered that the fool for Christ be seized, but he disappeared. Ivan Grozny still harbored the intention of looting the city. He attended the Moleben in the Holy Trinity Cathedral,

venerated the relics of Holy Righteous Prince Vsevolod-Gavriil, and then sought Blessed Nikolai's blessing.

When the Tsar came into Blessed Nikolai's cell, the Blessed One said, "Don't touch us, itinerant; leave us, [otherwise] you won't have anything on which to flee." The Fool for Christ offered the Tsar a piece of raw meat to eat. Ioann said to him, "I am a Christian, and do not eat meat during Lent." "You drink human blood," replied the Blessed One, and with "many terrifying words" instructed him to put an end to his killing and his looting of God's holy churches. Ioann did not listen and ordered the removal of the Holy Trinity Cathedral bell. Then, as prophesied by the Saint, the Tsar's best mount fell dead.

The Blessed One's prayer and instruction awakened the Tsar's conscience. Frightened by the fulfillment of the prophecy, and stung by the denunciations of his evil deeds, Grozny ordered his forces to stop looting, and fled the city. *Oprichniki* who had witnessed this later wrote, "The powerful tyrant... left defeated, put to shame and fright, literally driven off by the foe. Thus did the lowly one, who had [no weapons], terrify and drive off the Tsar and his many thousands of soldiers."

Blessed Nikolai reposed on 28 February 1576 and was interred in the Holy Trinity Cathedral, in the city he had rescued. This was an honor previously accorded only to the princes, and later, the archpastors, of Pskov.

Local veneration of the Blessed One began a mere 5 years after his death. In 1581, while the forces of King Stephan Batory of Poland were besieging Pskov, a blacksmith named Dorothei had a vision of the Mother of God and the assembly of the saints of Pskov – including Blessed Nikolai - praying for the city.

To this day, the relics of Blessed Nikolai of Pskov are in Pskov's Holy Trinity Cathedral.

LESSONS FROM THE FATHERS

Enmity

Do not nurture enmity toward anyone, else your prayers will not be pleasing to God.

Venerable St. Isaiah the Hermit

There is but one person toward whom we are permitted to bear enmity: that is the devil. Do not ever reconcile yourself to him.

St. John Chrysostom

When you stand between two warring parties, be on the side of the hurt and offended, not on the side of those who cause the offense.

St. John Chrysostom

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION: Is watching television permitted during Great Lent?

ANSWER: Some people keep the television turned off throughout Lent. Others watch only religious programming or news programs. However, if there are certain programs that the members of your family want to watch, in most cases there is little you can do about it. It is far more important to keep peace in the family than to obey some kind of ascetic directive. Something is wrong if turning off the television becomes a source of argument and dissension. In my opinion, if one of the faithful should come home and, on seeing everyone watching television, becomes indignant, says that it's Lent, you should be repenting instead of entertaining yourselves, etc., and turns off the TV set, the effect will be the opposite of the one intended. That show of indignation may turn people against not only the Fast, but also the Church. Often, to steer children onto the True Path, religious parents forbid them from watching television. This may produce in the child's soul a growing powerful and bitter protest not only against his parents, but also against the Church in

general, against the entire Church structure and way of life. A child should not be made to feel that he is deprived of what is available to other children. It is far more important to gradually instill in a child the sense, the meaning, of what is happening in Church, to reveal to him the meaning of the Fast in such a way as to make it a source of joy, something he himself would want to strive to observe.

Do you have questions about the Church or about spiritual life? Send them to vpotapov@comcast.net or to our church at 4001 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20011 by conventional mail. We will try to address your questions in one of the coming issues of "Parish Life."

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR MARCH

Sun 1 Cheesefare Sunday; Commemoration of the Expulsion of Adam from Paradise. *Hieromartyr Hermogenes, Patriarch of Moscow and of All Russia.* English Liturgy – 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: Romans **13: 11 – 14: 4**; Matthew **6: 14-21**. *Eve of Great Lent.*

Sun 1 Forgiveness Sunday. Vespers with the Rite of Forgiveness – 6:30 PM.

The Rules of Great Lent: Fish is permitted on Annunciation (April 7) and the Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem (April 12).

Wine and oil are permitted on all Saturdays and Sundays of Lent, (except for Great and Holy Saturday (April 18), when only wine is permitted); on April 1 – the eve of the St. Andrew Standing, and on April 16 – Great Thursday.

Wine, but not oil, is permitted on April 18 – Holy Saturday.

On all other days of Great Lent, we abstain from fish, wine, and oil.

Mon 2 Clean Monday. Matins, Hours, Typica and Vespers – 7:00 AM.

Mon 2 Great Compline with the reading of the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete – 7:00 PM. *The English reading of the Canon will take place simultaneously in the Parish Hall.*

Tue 3 Clean Tuesday. Matins, Hours, Typica and Vespers – 7:00 AM.

Tue 3 Great Compline with the reading of the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete – 7:00 PM. *The English reading of the Canon will take place simultaneously in the Parish Hall.*

Wed 4 Clean Wednesday. Matins, Hours, Typica and Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts – 7:00 AM.

Wed 4 Great Compline with the reading of the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete – 7:00 PM. *The English reading of the Canon will take place simultaneously in the Parish Hall.*

Thu 5 Clean Thursday. Matins, Hours, Typica and Vespers – 7:00 AM.

Thu 5 Great Compline with the reading of the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete – 7:00 PM. *The English reading of the Canon will take place simultaneously in the Parish Hall.*

Fri 6 Matins, Hours, and Typica – 7:00 AM.

Fri 6 Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts – 7:00 PM. (Confession – beginning at 6:00 PM).

Sat 7 St. Theodore Saturday. *Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit.* Matins, Hours, and Liturgy – 8:00 AM. Scripture: Hebrews **1**: 1-12, Mark **2**: 23 – **3**: 5; for St. Theodore: II Timothy **2**: 1-10; John **15**: 17 – **16**: 2.

Sat 7 Vigil – 5:00 PM. 5th Resurrectional Gospel: Luke **24**: 12-35.

Sun 8 1st Sunday of Great Lent. Triumph of Orthodoxy. First and Second Findings of the Head of St. John the Baptist

and Forerunner of our Lord. English Liturgy – 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: Hebrews **11**: 24-26, 32 – **12**: 2; John **1**: 43-51; for the Forerunner: II Corinthians **4**: 6-15; Matthew **11**: 2-15. *After each Liturgy, a Moleben for the return of those gone astray from Holy Orthodoxy.*

Sun 8 Vespers – 7:00 PM.

Wed 11 Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts – 7:00 PM. (Confession – beginning at 6:00 PM).

Fri 13 Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts – 7:00 PM. (Confession – beginning at 6:00 PM).

Sat 14 2nd **Saturday of Great Lent. Ancestral Saturday.** Requiem Matins, Hours, and Liturgy – 8:00 AM. Scripture: Hebrews **3**: 12-16; Mark **1**: 35-44; for the reposed: I Thessalonians **4**: 13-17; John **5**: 24-30.

Sat 14 Vigil – 5:00 PM. 6th Resurrectional Gospel: Luke **24**: 36-53.

Sun 15 2nd **Sunday of Great Lent. Commemoration of Holy Hierarch St. Gregory Palamas.** English Liturgy – 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: Hebrews **1**: 10 – **2**: 3; Mark **2**: 1-12; for St. Gregory: Hebrews **7**: 26 – **8**: 2; John **10**: 9-16.

Sun 15 Vespers – 7:00 PM.

Wed 18 Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts – 7:00 PM. (Confession – beginning at 6:00 PM).

Fri 20 Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts – 7:00 PM. (Confession – beginning at 6:00 PM).

Sat 21 3rd **Saturday of Great Lent. Ancestral Saturday.** Requiem Matins, Hours, and Liturgy – 8:00 AM. Scripture: Hebrews

10: 32-38; **Mark 2:** 14-17; for the reposed: I Thessalonians **4:** 13-17; John **5:** 24-30.

Sat 21 Vigil (with the bringing out of the Holy Life-giving Cross) – 5:00 PM. 7th Resurrectional Gospel: John **20:** 1-10.

Sun 22 **3rd Sunday of Great Lent** – *Sunday of the Cross, and the 40 Martyrs of Sebaste.* English Liturgy (served by Metropolitan Jonah) – 7:40 AM; Slavonic Liturgy – 10:10 AM. Scripture: Hebrews **4:** 14 – **5:** 6; Mark **8:** 34 – **9:** 1; for the 40 martyrs: Hebrews **12:** 1-10; Matthew **20:** 1-16.

Fri 27 Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts – 7:00 PM. (Confession – beginning at 6:00 PM).

Sat 28 **4th Saturday of Great Lent. Ancestral Saturday.** Requiem Matins, Hours, and Liturgy – 8:00 AM. Scripture: Hebrews **6:** 9-12; Mark **7:** 31-37; for the reposed: I Corinthians **15:** 47-57; John **5:** 24-30.

Sat 28 Vigil (served by Bishop Nicholas) – 5:00 PM. 8th Resurrectional Gospel: John **20:** 11-18 (The miraculous myrrh-streaming “Softener of Evil Hearts” Icon of the Mother of God will be present at the Vigil Service).

Sun 29 **4th Sunday of Great Lent** – *Commemoration of St. John Climacus.* Hours and Divine Liturgy (served by Bishop Nicholas) – 8:30 AM (one Liturgy, in light of Holy Unction). Scripture: Hebrews **6:** 13-20; Mark **9:** 17-31; for St. John: Ephesians **5:** 9-19; Matthew **4:** 25 – **5:** 12.

Sun 29 General Holy Unction for the entire Parish, in the presence of the miraculous myrrh-streaming “Softener of Evil Hearts” icon of the Mother of God – 6:30 PM.

BEGINNING OF APRIL

Wed 1 Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts – 7:00 PM.
(Confession – beginning at 6:00 PM).

Fri 3 Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts – 7:00 PM.
(Confession – beginning at 6:00 PM).

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Sun 1 After each Liturgy – Scout blini.

Tue 10 Slavonic Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Tue 10 Class on Orthodoxy with Metropolitan Jonah – 7:30 PM.

Thu 12 English Choir Rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Fri 13 Rehearsal of the “MatreshkiDC” dance group – Younger group 6:00 PM; intermediate group 6:45 PM. In the St. George house.

Tue 17 Slavonic Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Tue 17 Class on Orthodoxy with Metropolitan Jonah – 7:30 PM.

Tue 17 Meeting of the Parish Council (in the St. George house) – 7:00 PM.

Thu 19 English Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Tue 24 Slavonic Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Tue 24 Class on Orthodoxy with Metropolitan Jonah – 7:30 PM.

Thu 26 English Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Fri 27 Rehearsal of the “MatreshkiDC” dance group – Younger group 6:00 PM; intermediate group 6:45 PM. In the St. George house.

Tue 31 Slavonic Choir rehearsal – 7:00 PM.

Tue 31 Class on Orthodoxy with Metropolitan Jonah – 7:30 PM.

NEW PARISHIONERS

At the February meeting of the Parish Council, the following eight individuals were approved for membership: **1) John & 2) Alexandra Weber, 3) Mark & 4) Sophia [Nigina] Valentini, 5) Elena Kelpus, 6) Dmitry & 7) Anna [Alyana] Balalykin and 8) John Riabtsev.** We offer our heart-felt congratulations to the new member of our church community.

Many good people regularly attend services at our church, but for some reason hesitate to become members. Isn't it about time? It's a simple and easy process. Ask for an application at the candle stand, fill it out and give it back. At the next meeting of the Parish Council it will be looked over for approval. Soon after the meeting you will receive a welcome letter from the Rector and your name will be published in the next issue of *Parish Life*. It's important that you become full-fledged members of our church community and show your support.

OUR BENEVOLENCE

On February 16th, after both Sunday liturgies, collections at the cross were made to benefit Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, NY. \$2600.00 was raised. We thank everyone who donated to this God-pleasing effort.

RESULTS OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH

The Annual General Meeting of the Parish was held on February 2.

In the subject year, since February 10, 2019, the date of the last annual meeting, we served 143 Liturgies.

In the past year, 8 marriages and 89 baptisms were performed.

Over the course of this year, 8 new parishioners joined our community. Our Parish includes about 300 full members..

In the subject year, we served funerals for, and interred, 14 people – most not our parishioners.

With a sense of profound satisfaction, the Rector noted that the past year was outstanding with respect to charitable activity and recognized the dedicated labors of many parishioners on behalf of the Parish.

Results of elections to membership in the Parish Council The Council includes: the Rector - Archpriest Victor Potapov, Priest Alexander Resnikoff, Protodeacon Leonid Mickle, Starosta (Parish Warden) Maxim Agapov, head of building committee P.I. Sumin, treasurer George Halstead, secretary Subdeacon Nikolai Lukianoff, Lazar Aliyev, M.A. Nazaretz, Igor Baumann, Christopher Lasek and Andrey Gidasov. The Sisterhood is represented at the Council by Head Sister Marina Zakharin.

The Auditing Committee is comprised of: chairman Reader Nicholas Rigas, members Reader Andrei Mouravieff and Peter Norris.

SUNDAY LUNCHEONS

The luncheons prepared and served to our parishioners after each Sunday Service depend entirely upon the efforts of volunteers. Such meals not only afford the faithful the opportunity to break their Fast after the Liturgy and to enjoy rest and fellowship, but also further our charitable endeavors.

After the English Liturgy. The English volunteer teams have undergone a reorganization. Now Nathaniel Sweigart has replaced *matushka* Anastasia Dantine as coordinator. The Sisterhood would like to thank *matushka* for skillfully exercising her responsibilities as coordinator over the course of the last 3 years. Please support Nathaniel in taking on his new role. He may be reached by telephone at 434-329-6060 or by email at jnsweigart@gmail.com.

If you stay for lunch after the English Liturgy on a regular basis, please help others by signing up for one of the teams. Currently, there are 6 teams, which means that each team is responsible for a luncheon every 6 weeks; if more teams can be formed, each given team would see a lessening in the frequency of having to prepare meals. Usually the menu consists of a main dish, a side dish, salad, bread, dessert and beverages, and meals for about 60 people need to be prepared. Information about specific team responsibilities is under review and will soon be announced by Nathaniel.

After the Slavonic. If you regularly come to lunch after the Slavonic Liturgy, help by volunteering, using “sign up genius,” <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0c4caaac23abfd0-pokrova>

Usually the menu consists of a main dish, a side dish, salad, bread, dessert and beverages; meals for about 100 people need to be prepared. Should that number seem intimidating, rest assured that we will help you with planning and food preparation. There are a number of different ways to help: You can prepare just one of the dishes or bring the ingredients and have us find someone ready to prepare them, or you can simply donate coffee, bread, juice, or wine.

We appreciate any kind of help, as the funds yielded by the luncheons go to cover expenses, including clean-up, and go to support the Sisterhood's charitable activities both in the Parish and beyond, e.g. helping out monasteries and orphanages. Thank you for your help! If not for YOU, we would be unable to help others,

For the past three years, Theodosia Kydyrova has been coordinating the luncheon schedule. She needs our help and is looking for a replacement. Please contact Theodosia (Jyldiz) Kydyrova by phone at 240-755-7373 or by email at jysakma@yahoo.com , or contact Marina at 301-787-5739, or almazi@aol.com.

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