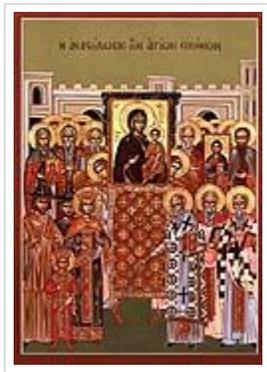


**St. Nikolai of Zica, Orthodox Mission of Alliance
820 South Linden Avenue, Alliance, Ohio
(at St. Theodore Romanian Byzantine Catholic Church)
Divine Liturgy, 9:30**

**Right Rev. Bishop Alexander, Bulgarian Diocese, Orthodox Church in America
Very Reverend Father Joseph Cervo, Archpriest (AOCANA-retired)
Rev. Protodeacon James Gresh, Mission Administrator (Bulgarian Diocese OCA)
March 1, 2015: 1st Sunday of Great Lent/The Sunday of Orthodoxy**



Welcome to Visitors. Thank you for coming and praying with us today. In the Orthodox Church, Holy Communion is reserved only for Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and confession during the Church fasting seasons. We invite you to introduce yourself to Father Joe and Deacon James at the end of the Liturgy and receive a piece of the blessed bread and join us for fellowship and Christian education at the Jonathan Casteel hall, directly through the alley way behind the church. We look forward to seeing you again and encourage you to learn more about the Orthodox Faith.

Tone 5 Troparion (Resurrection)

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead// by His glorious Resurrection.

Tone 2 Troparion (Sunday of Orthodoxy)

We venerate Your most pure image, O Good One;
and ask forgiveness of our transgressions, O Christ our God.
Of Your good will You were pleased to ascend the cross in the flesh
and deliver Your creatures from bondage to the Enemy.
Therefore with thankfulness we cry aloud to You:
“You have filled all with joy, O our Savior, //for You alone have come to save the world.”

Tone 4 Troparion (St. Nikolai)

In truth you were revealed to your flock as a rule of faith, an image of humility and a teacher of abstinence; your humility exalted you; your poverty enriched you. Hierarch Father Nikolai, entreat Christ our God that our souls may be saved!

Tone 8 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)

No one could describe the Word of the Father;
but when He took flesh from you, O Theotokos, He accepted to be described,
and restored the fallen image to its former state by uniting it to divine beauty.//
We confess and proclaim our salvation in words and images.

Tone 4 Prokeimenon

Blessed are You, O Lord God of our fathers and praised and glorified is Your name forever!
v: For You are just in all that You have done for us!

Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2

Tone 4 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v: Moses and Aaron were among His priests; Samuel also was among those who called on His Name.
v: They called to the Lord and He answered them.

Gospel: John 1:43-51

(Instead of “It is truly meet ... ,” we sing the following hymn to the Theotokos)

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace: the assembly of Angels and the race of men. O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins,
from whom God was incarnate and became a Child – our God before the ages.
He made your body into a throne, and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens. All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace.// Glory to you!

Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!
Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!



Lenten Cuisine

By: Father Lawrence Farley: The first question which presents itself during the Lenten season is one of cuisine: “What on earth can I eat since the Church forbids eating meat, fish, and dairy?” It is a reasonable question, but must not be allowed to skew one’s understanding of what Lenten fasting is all about or give the impression that Lent is primarily about food. For one thing, the Church does not have any food laws in the same way that Judaism, Islam, or Hinduism have food laws. Religions often have food laws, but Christianity is not a religion. Rather it is our participation in this age of the powers of the age to come, and as such it transcends religion with all its categories, including the category of unclean food. Religions have such a category, and both Judaism and Islam forbid the eating of pork. Hinduism (at least as practiced by some) famously forbids eating cows, and some of its literature declares that no one who eats meat can have any knowledge of God. These are true food laws, and no one can obtain a dispensation from them to eat pork any more than they could obtain a dispensation from the law of gravity. They are not “food guidelines,” but “food laws.” Unclean food remains unclean, no matter what.

Christianity knows nothing of this. Saint Paul declared that “nothing is unclean in itself” (Romans 14:14), and that “nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for then it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.” To deny this in the Church, he says, is one of the “doctrines of demons” (1 Timothy 4:1-5). Our fasting rules are not food laws.

What then is the point of them? The rules and abstinence have less to do with the stomach and more to do with the heart. God originally made us as spirit, soul, and body, with these three hierarchically ordered—our bodies submitted to our souls and our souls submitted to the spirit. Now everything is topsy-turvy and inverted—our bodily appetites rule over us, with our souls and personalities following obediently these bodily desires. The spiritual life comes a distant third. Fasting is meant to overturn all this, and restore us to proper balance. By fasting from good things such as meat, fish, dairy, and wine, we train our appetites to submit. Have you ever seen a dog with a treat balanced on its nose? The dog longs for the treat, but has been trained by its master not to eat the treat until allowed. Lent disciplines us to imitate the obedience of the well-trained dog, and not to eat the treat of more luxurious cuisine until allowed at Pascha. Lent says to our imperious desires, “You’re not the boss of me—the Lord is,” and demands that it submit to the spiritual life.

The fasting rules fulfill another function—that of binding us together as one family. If simple ascetic abstinence were the sole function of Lent, then rules would not be necessary. Each person could decide for himself or herself “what to give up for Lent” and proceed with his or her own individual program of disciplining the desires. But Christianity is not a philosophy but a family. Nothing in it is individual and isolated. We do not baptize ourselves when we become Christians, but receive baptism at the hands of another. We do not take bread and wine at home alone, but come to the Eucharistic assembly along with our fellows to receive it from the priest. The New Testament epistles were mostly not written to individuals, but to churches, and the prayer the Lord taught us was not the “My Father,” but the “Our Father.” Christianity is relentlessly corporate, and it binds us together as a single body, a united family. That is why the Church gives a single

set of rules for everyone to follow. If one gave up meat, while another gave up chocolate and a third gave up coffee, all might benefit from their asceticism, but corporate meals would become impossible. So the Church bids us become one, and to eat together, sharing not only the same Eucharistic Chalice, but also the same fellowship table. The food on that table must be allowed by everyone who approaches it—hence the single set of fasting rules for all.

Finally, the most important thing about the Lenten fasting cuisine is that it helps soften our heart and promote love. An old book once proclaimed, “Real Men Don’t Eat Quiche,” and a wise woman I know once built on that and further proclaimed, “Real Christians Don’t Eat Each Other.” It is tempting to be cannibalistic. As Saint Paul once warned his Galatian converts, “If you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another” (Galatians 5:15). It is too easy to speak words which wound, and to destroy another by gossip, criticism, and insult. As Solomon once taught, life and death are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21), and we often use that power for death and not for life. Saint James warned us that the tongue is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. Man stands at the top of the food chain, and has tamed every other species—lions, and tigers and bears. But oh my!—no one can tame the tongue. If one has tamed the tongue, one has arrived, and is mature and perfect man (James 3:1-12).

Lent bids us tame the tongue and to love silence. Some people when they arise in the morning turn on the computer or the television or the radio and leave it on all day. Most of us do the same with the tongue—when we rise, we turn on the tongue, and leave it on. Lent bids us to turn off the tongue, and only turn it on when we need to use it—and then turn it off again. It’s hard work, just as fasting is hard work. But only by doing this can we achieve spiritual maturity.

Lenten cuisine is ultimately not about food, like an Orthodox version of Jenny Craig. It is about spiritual maturity, and drawing near to Christ and to each other. It will be over soon enough, as Pascha draws ever closer. All the more reason to use it while we have the chance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DAILY SCRIPTURAL READINGS ARE AVAILABLE TO READ ON OUR WEBSITE.

The Stark County Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood Pan-Orthodox Pre-Sanctified Liturgy schedule for the first 3 weeks of Lent is as follows: (All services are @ 6:30 pm, followed by a Lenten Dinner)

1. March 4, St. George Antiochian, 1118 Cherry Avenue NW, Canton
(Our choir members have been invited to sing with choir members from St. George, Massillon and Holy Assumption, Canton.)
2. March 11, Holy Assumption OCA, Canton

After the clock moves forward and nightfall is later, we will schedule Wednesday Pre-Sanctified Liturgy at St. Theodore Church.

PRAYERS requested

For The Health and Salvation of:

Mother Ana

Father Joe Cervo

Doreen Wishnok (friend of the Krupko’s who is battling breast cancer)

George Ralich, (Dan’s father)

Stefanie Waseman

Kerri Baugher (friend of the Krupko’s who has cancer)

The Knoll Family

Mildred (Peggy) and Walter Borojevich (Wally’s Parents)

Stephanie (Father David’s Cousin), who suffered a mild heart attack

Mara (Jaga's Sister)

For The Repose of the Souls of:

Matushka +Mildred Klutchko (friend of Frs. Joe & Dragan)
+Despina Poulos (the mother of Steve Poulos and Bishop Andonios - Greek Archdiocese Chancellor)
+Mary Rossi (parishioner of Christ the Savior OCA Church, Byesville, Oh.)
+Dr. Gregory Spohn, Canton Area Pediatrician and doctor to Tillman Children
+Raymond Corbin (father of Fr. Michael Corbin, St. George Antiochian Church)
+James Kannam (St. George Antiochian Church)

(Please update prayer requests at the beginning of each month. Names will be removed if the request is not renewed.)

COFFEE HOUR:

March 1 - Jaga Radosevic
March 8 -
March 15 - Dan Ralich
March 22 - Gresh Family
March 29 - Dan Ralich

We have received several suggestions that we go to a simpler coffee hour. Please try to keep it to bagels, donuts, coffee cake, etc. Please see Deanna and Larry Dordea if you are interested in hosting a Coffee Hour. There are plenty of dates available. Thank you to Deanna, Larry and Georgie for chairing our Coffee Hours.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE HOSTED COFFEE HOUR!!!!

DONATIONS:

Please note, any special donations will be added directly to our building fund unless otherwise specified by the donor. God bless all who have generously donated to and support our mission.

SPECIAL DONATIONS WERE RECEIVED IN FEBRUARY FROM:

Jaga Radosevic for the health of her sister Mara
Corsalea Family honoring the anniversary of Helen and George Blebea
Helen and George Blebea for the health of the members of the mission

ADULT EDUCATION:

Sessions begin Saturday, February 28. Please bring your bible and we will meet every Saturday, 5 pm in the Gresh home located at 9135 Gans Ave NE.

BUILDING PROJECT:

We are finalizing plans to begin phase one construction of our mission building project. If you have not made a commitment and would like to, please discuss this with either Father Joe or Deacon James by email or phone and/or by making your check payable to St. Nikolai Orthodox Mission of Alliance. May God Bless all donors for their support of our Mission and purpose in celebrating Orthodoxy.

CHOIR PRACTICES:

Choir Practice will be held on Tuesdays at 7:00 pm at the Gresh Home. Please see Heidi for details

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES:

MARCH BIRTHDAYS:

Presbytera Mira Filipovich – 14th
Josephine White – 17th

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