

## Holy Scripture Lessons for the Day

### Epistle Lesson: St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

### Gospel Lesson: Gospel According to St. Matthew 6:14-21

The Lord said, "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.

"And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

**Communion Rules for the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy.** During the season of Great Lent we have the unique opportunity to participate in the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts. An ancient liturgy of the Church, sometimes attributed to St. Gregory Dialogos, Pope of Rome, this service is simply vespers with the distribution of Holy Communion "pre-sanctified" from the prior Sunday's liturgy. This is done because we are instructed to fast liturgically from the standard Holy Liturgy on weekdays during Great Lent. The service of the Pre-Sanctified is only celebrated during Great Lent. Traditionally celebrated in the late afternoon or early evening, it requires some modified fasting in preparation to receive the Holy Communion. This preparation includes: recitation of the Canon of Preparation for Holy Communion on the evening prior to Communion. For those of strong enough countenance, they are encouraged to fast from all food and drink following breakfast on the morning of the day of their Communion until the time of the Mystery. For those that, for whatever reason, are unable to do this, they are encouraged to fast from all food and drink following lunch but no less than four hours prior to the Mystery. Additionally, those desiring to receive the Body and Blood of the Master should read the usual Prayers in Preparation for Holy Communion as contained in most Orthodox prayer books. Finally, it is a good idea to participate in the Mystery of Holy Confession prior to the reception of Holy Communion. And most certainly, following the Holy Communion, we are encouraged to read the Prayers of Thanksgiving included in most prayers books. Don't miss this opportunity to experience this most beautiful Lenten service.

*Devote yourself to stillness and know that I am God - Psalm 45:10 (LXX)*

## Traverse City Orthodox Mission Church

*Traditional Worship for Modern Life*

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### PARISH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

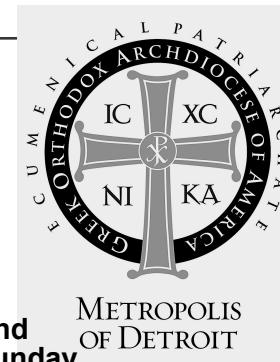
Sunday, 1 March	<b>Sunday of the Expulsion of Adam and Eve From Paradise. Cheese Fare Sunday. St. Eudokia the Martyr.</b> Fast Day-Dairy, Fish, Wine and Oil Permitted. 9 am Orthros/10 am Liturgy of St. Chrysostomos 11:30 am Fellowship Hour-Cheese Fare Potluck Meal 1 PM Vespers of Forgiveness
Monday, 2 March	<b>Clean Monday. St. Hesychios the Martyr.</b> Fast Day 5:30 PM Compline and Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
Tuesday, 3 March	<b>St. Eutropios and Companions, Martyrs.</b> Fast Day
Wednesday, 4 March	<b>St. Gerasimos the Righteous of Jordan.</b> Fast Day 5:30 PM 9th Hour and Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts
Thursday, 5 March	<b>St. Konon the Gardener.</b> Fast Day
Friday, 6 March	<b>42 Martyrs of Amorion in Phrygia.</b> Fast Day 5:30 PM Akathistos Hymn Stasis A'
Saturday, 7 March	<b>7 Hieromartyrs of Cherson.</b> Fast Day-Wine and Oil Permitted. 4:30 PM 9th Hour and Vespers 5:30 PM Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, 8 March	<b>First Sunday of Great Lent. The Triumph of Orthodoxy.</b> Fast Day-Wine and Oil Permitted. 9 am Orthros 10 am Liturgy of St. Basil the Great 11:30 am Fellowship Hour 5 PM 9th Hour and Vespers

[www.tcorthodoxchurch.com](http://www.tcorthodoxchurch.com)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2356, Traverse City, MI 49685

Meeting Address: 1030 Hastings St., Traverse City, MI 49686

Church Phone: 231.668.6583 Cell: 231.590.2038 e-Mail: [iakovos@charter.net](mailto:iakovos@charter.net)



**Strategic Planning Meeting Sunday, 8 March.** Our parish will have its second in a series of meetings aimed at developing a strategic plan on the first Sunday of Great Lent immediately following the Holy Services. Critical to the entire process is the participation of as many “stakeholders” as possible. This is why you are cordially invited to join us at our next meeting and help with the process. For more information, please feel free to contact Stephanie Long, Holly Olszewski or Fr. Iakovos. See you on the 8th!

**Coin Drive To Benefit Crisis Fund.** Our church school is sponsoring a coin drive throughout Great Lent. Proceeds from the drive will benefit our newly established crisis fund. There are two empty five gallon water bottles in the church. One bottle is for adults, the other is for the youth or the parish. The idea is that each group will collect coins and lose change and place them in the bottles. At the end of Great Lent, we will tally the amount of coins in each bottle. The funds will be deposited to help bolster our crisis fund which is used to provide financial aid to our parishioners that find themselves facing some kind of crisis. The group generating the most coins will receive a prize for their efforts. Don't forget to bring your loose change and donate toward this worthwhile cause.

**Mmm...Complex Carbohydrates.** Did you know that rice is a staple food for a large part of the world's human population, especially in tropical Latin America, and East, South and Southeast Asia, making it the second-most consumed cereal grain, after maize? During the season of Great Lent, our Church calls us back to the simplified diet that has been part and parcel of ascetic practice for millennia. In order to encourage the discipline of fasting as well as developing an appreciation of the life circumstances of a majority of humanity, our church school is encouraging all members of the parish to participate in a "Rice Night". It works like this. One night, each week during lent, our people are asked to choose rice as the staple for the meal. Not only are we encouraged to consume this humble cereal grain, but consume it in a small quantity and without having a multitude of foods with it. The idea is to have a simple meal that has you leaving the table a bit hungry and not satisfied. After changing your meal plan for this one day a week, you are next asked to take the money or food that would have been used in preparing a more elaborate dinner to a local food pantry to benefit the poor. Finally, during your dinner you are encouraged to talk about the significance of rice and other simple foods in freeing you from the tyranny of a preoccupation with food preparation and consumption as well as eradicating the problem of world hunger.

For more information on this great project, speak with Fr. Iakovos or visit our web site for details.

**Lenten Grandparent Programme.** Throughout the forty days of Great Lent our parish is sponsoring what we call a Lenten Grandparent Programme. This programme matches up children of the parish with “grandparents.” This program is an amazing way to encourage children throughout the 40 days of Lent and connect them with a loving adult from our parish family. As part of the programme, our children and grandparents make a commitment of praying daily for one another and writing a note of encouragement once a week. A postcard is sent to each child and grandparent during the first week of Lent. It includes their Lenten child's/grandparent's name, address, phone and birthday. They are asked to communicate via letter once a week and praying daily for one another. Often, after the initial connection is made some choose to extend the relationship - by attending a mid-week service together, receiving Holy Communion on Sunday, volunteering at the local food bank or simply sharing a meal together. All children of the parish are given a “Lenten Grandparent” regardless of their involvement in the life of the church. It is an extraordinary outreach reminding families that the church family is there supporting and encouraging them. On the Saturday of La-

zarus, we invite our Lenten Grandparents to attend services side by side with their “grand kids,” share in a Lenten breakfast and afterwards make Palm Crosses and decorate candles with their Lenten Grandparent. It is such a wonderful way to connect our community and encourage us through the 40 days of Lent. If you are interested in being a Lenten Grandparent, please speak with Fr. Iakovos or Holly Olszewski for more information.

**New Curtains Installed.** Thanks to the efforts of Sharon and Andrew Foster of our parish we have new curtains installed in the royal doors, as well as the north and south deacon's doors of our temple. Traverse rods and beautifully pleated curtains in burgundy velvet were manufactured and the installation completed by the couple just yesterday. The curtain, known as the katapetasma, is a reminder of the curtain that hung in the Holy of Holies referred to in the Old Testament Temple and was torn in two from top to bottom when the crucified Christ died upon the Cross for the sake of our salvation. Thank you to the Fosters for the donation of their time, talent and treasure to beautify our chapel. God has been so good to us!

**Sunday of Forgiveness.** And now we have reached the very last days before Lent. Already during Meat-Fare Week, which precedes “Forgiveness Sunday”, two days—Wednesday and Friday have been set apart as fully “Lenten”: The Divine Liturgy is not to be served and the whole order and type of worship have the liturgical characteristics of Lent. On Wednesday at Vespers (this past week) we greet Lent with this beautiful hymn: The Lenten spring has come! The light of repentance; Let us, brothers, cleanse ourselves from all evil, crying out to the Giver of Light: Glory to Thee, O Lover of man. Then on Cheese-Fare Saturday the Church commemorates all men and women who were “illuminated through fasting:” the Saints who are the patterns we must follow, guides in the difficult art of fasting and repentance. In the effort we are about to begin we are not alone.

Finally comes the last day, usually called “Forgiveness Sunday,” but whose other liturgical name must also be remembered: the “Expulsion of Adam from the Paradise of Bliss.” This name summarizes indeed the entire preparation for Lent. By now we know that man was created for paradise, for knowledge of God and communion with him. Man's sin has deprived him of that blessed life and his existence on earth is exile. Christ, the Saviour of the world, opens the door of paradise to everyone who follows Him, and the Church, by revealing to us the beauty of the Kingdom, makes our life a pilgrimage toward our heavenly fatherland. Thus, at the beginning of Lent, we are like Adam.

Lent is the liberation of our enslavement to sin, from the prison of “this world.” And the Gospel lesson of the last Sunday sets the conditions for that liberation. The first one is *fasting*—the refusal to accept the desires and urges of our fallen nature as normal, the effort to free ourselves from the dictatorship of flesh and matter over the spirit. To be effective, however, our fast must not be hypocritical, a “showing off.” We must “appear not unto men to fast but to our Father who is in secret.” The second condition is *forgiveness*—“If you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you.” The triumph of sin, the main sign of its rule over the world, is division, opposition, separation, hatred. Therefore, the first breakthrough this fortress of sin is forgiveness: the return to unity, solidarity, love. To forgive is to put between me and my “enemy” the radiant forgiveness of God Himself. To forgive is to reject the hopeless “dead-ends” of human relations and to refer them to Christ. Forgiveness is truly a “breakthrough” of the Kingdom into this sinful and fallen world.

*Adapted from the book **Great Lent** by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann*

***You must forgive with much humility, placing the blame on yourself—this is a necessary condition for forgiving offenses.***  
***St. Nikon of Optina.***