

# The Great Fast 2024

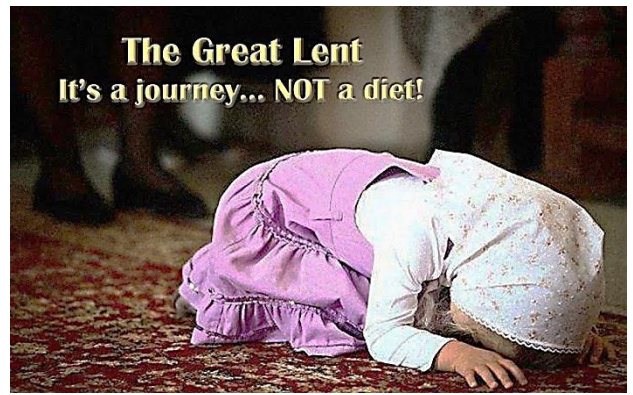


*Let us set out with joy upon the  
season of the Fast, and prepare  
ourselves for spiritual combat.*

- From the Vespers of Forgiveness Sunday

# Guidelines for the Great Fast

- ❖ The Great Fast begins on Monday 18 March. This is a **Strict Fast Day**, meaning no meat or dairy products are to be eaten. Likewise Great & Holy Friday and Great & Holy Saturday 3&4 May).
- ❖ Remember the Tradition of the Orthodox Church is a strict fast the entire 40 days of the Fast and for all of Great & Holy Week is given forth to all of the faithful. If you cannot physically do this, adopt a fasting rule (see Father for some guidance) and stick to it for the duration of the Fast. *Examples: doing the strict fast on certain days while keeping at least a meat fast on the others; keeping a total meat fast for certain weeks (1<sup>st</sup>, Cross Week, last week and Holy Week) and each Monday, Wednesday and Friday throughout the fast.* The more effort you put forth in your fasting, the more spiritually uplifting your Lenten Season will be. See Fr Peter for help.
- ❖ The entire Great & Holy Week (29 April-4 May) are days of abstinence from meat and meat products.
- ❖ A minimum three (3) hour complete fast from all food and drink for those receiving Communion at the evening Pre-sanctified Liturgy (the regular "midnight Fast" is called for the Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom & St. Basil the Great)
- ❖ The sick and infirm are not bound by the fast at any time. Those requiring medications or certain prescribed diets are to follow their physician's instructions. See Fr Peter if you have any questions



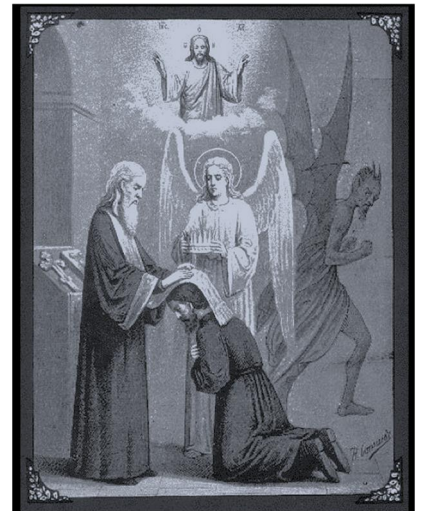
Finally, the Great Fast is not a "40 day diet program" or simply a "dietary adjustment." Attend as many of the Divine Services as possible. Come to the Sacrament of Confession and approach the Chalice to receive the Holy Eucharist. If Lent is "too easy" you are not doing it right!

## Notes on Confession:

Confessions will be heard before and after all weekday/night Divine Services, before and after All-Souls Liturgies and after Divine Services on Sundays, (Please try not to wait until Sunday mornings, if possible). Fr Peter asks that you contact him so that he knows to expect you. Confessions can also be scheduled by appointment

If you have a regular Spiritual Father, or wish to go to another Orthodox Priest for the Sacrament, please let Fr. Peter know.

The **final** opportunity to have your Confession heard before Pascha will be after Divine Services on Great & Holy Wednesday evening (1 May).  
Confessions will not be heard after Resurrection Matins or on Pascha morning!



## Lenten Prayer Friends



Please 'blindly' pick one card rather than filing through to find a person we would want as our Lenten Prayer Friend. Praying for someone we don't know well--or not at all ... or, even, for someone we don't particularly "click with" -- is often a huge blessing for us as well as the person we're praying for. It bonds us together in a very special way that only prayer can do.

Ideas on how we can be an effective prayer friend: pray daily for the person; send the person an encouraging card during Lent; sit with your prayer friend during coffee hour and make an effort to get to know them ... ask them questions and really listen; light a candle for them, etc.

Encourage your children (especially, the little ones) to pray daily for their prayer friend. They can color pictures for their prayer friend and bring them to church, light a candle for them, etc.

## Weekday Lenten Divine Services

- This year, to try to help more of our faithful attend Lenten Services we will have the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts on Wednesday evenings at 7pm and Friday mornings at 9:30am.
- Attending the All-souls Saturday Liturgies and remember the departed in your family
- Watch the Sunday Bulletin, the bulletin board and weekly emails regarding special Lenten Services and/or retreats in our area



~~~~~  
Fasting is wonderful, because it tramples our sins like a dirty weed, while it cultivates and raises truth like a flower.

(St. Basil the Great)



# HOLY RESURRECTION ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Ecumenical Patriarchate  
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www.facebook.com/groups/hroc25  
YouTube: HROC Media



Very Rev. Peter Zarynow, Pastor  
Protopresbyter John Fedornock

Subdeacons Anastasios Davis & Michael Vaporis Reader Stephen Sudik

**Sunday 17 March 2024**

**Cheesefare Sunday**

**Venerable Gerasimus of the Jordan**

**Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21**

**Tone Eight**

## **THE SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES FOR THE WEEK IS AS FOLLOWS:**

**17 Mar (SUN) Cheesefare Sunday**

Chanting of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Hour 9:15am

Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom 9:30am

Sunday School, Coffee Social to follow

Forgiveness Sunday Vespers approx. 12noon

**18 (Mon) First Day of the Great Fast**

**Strict Fast Day**

Canon of St Andrew of Crete (pt1) 7:00pm

**20 March (Wed) 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of the Great Fast**

Liturgy of the PreSanctified Gifts 7:00pm

(fast from 3pm if receiving Communion)

**22 March (Fri) 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the Great Fast**

Liturgy of the PreSanctified Gifts 9:30am

**05 March (SUN) 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the Great Fast**

Chanting of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Hour 9:15am

Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great 9:30am

Coffee Social to Follow

## **Announcements:**

Confessions will be heard after Divine Services on Sundays and weekdays and by appointment. Please contact Fr Peter to schedule. All faithful are encouraged to come to the Sacrament every 8-10 weeks, on average, to help maintain spiritual health. Make note that the final opportunity to have your Confession heard before Pascha will be after Holy Unction on Great & Holy Wednesday evening, 1 May. Please do not wait until the last minute.

The Great Fast begins on Monday 18 March. This is a Strict Fast Day, meaning no meat or dairy products are to be eaten. The goal of the Church, for our Lenten Fast is the Strict Fast for the entire Lent and Holy Week. If you are not able to do this, make a fasting rule for yourself (Father will assist in this matter) and stick to it.

More copies of the Lenten Reading books are on order. Hopefully they will be in during the coming week. Let's all read together during the coming season of the Great Fast!

Thank you to everyone who participated in our bake day yesterday. Our next bake will be on Saturday 13 April. Baking will begin at 8am and a lunch will be provided. Even if you did not sign up, we'd still love to have you come and help!

We are trialing a small group format for anyone who like to meet in person for fellowship and discussion with fellow parishioners mid-week. We will be meeting weekly at the Mt Airy Starbucks (441 E Ridgeville Blvd, Mt Airy, MD) on Thursdays at 7PM beginning on 21 March. Contact Jason Aumen with any questions or to let him know you are going to participate.

The National ACRY is sponsoring an "Eastern Seaboard Lenten Retreat" at Holy Ghost Church in Phoenixville on Saturday 6 April. Online registration is until 25 March. See the bulletin board and the flier attached to today's bulletin for details. This retreat is sponsored by the National ACRY and is open to everyone.

***Flowers on the Altar & Tetrapod*** are donated this week by Tom & Amy Koval in memory of +Edward and Dolly Cvengros (*Memory Eternal!*)

We will be needing Coffee Social hosts for the remainder of March and April. Keep in mind that during the Great Fast all selections need to be fast appropriate with at least a few strict fast items available as well. Also, during the Great Fast, with the exception of Cross Week, flowers will not be on the Altar or Tetrapod.

# CANDLE OFFERINGS

**Altar Candles:** Health & Wellness for Panfilov, Mazur, Lore, Vovk & Sabirov families-Irina Panfilov (*Mnohaja L'ita!*)

**Eternal Light:** Birthday Blessings Nancy Hall-Rose Plowchin (*Many Years!*)

## Vigil Candles Offered For the Living (*Many Years! Mnohaja L'ita!*)

- 2-for health-love Mom & Dad  
*Jonathan & Lara; Stephanie*
- 1-health of Melanie-love Alex
- 1-health of Alex-love Melanie
- 1-health & Special intention John & Marie Smith, Georgene & Ray Ammon, Fr Peter & Pa i Bernadette, Alex Zarynow, Marie Skasko, Fr John & Pa i Marge Fedornock, Lois Erhard, Charlie & Debi Myers, Chris Fallon, Barbara Homick, All parishioners of HROC-Carol Miller
- 2-for health-Sheila  
*HROC parishioners; Family members*
- 3-special intention-Sheila  
*Fr. Peter & family; Diocesan Priests & their families; OCMC Missionaries*
- 1-health of children & grandchildren-Tom & Amy
- 1-health of Chris Fallon-Michael, Kathleen, John & Anna
- 2-special intention-brother George  
*Archbishop Michael; Barbara Knighton*
- 2-special intention-George Dahulich  
*Metropolitan Gregory; Bishop Matthias*
- 13-for health-George Dahulich  
*Archbishop Michael; Fr Tom Kadlec; Fr Jim Dutko; Chris Fallon; Charlie Myers; Barbara Knighton; Pañi Kathy Dutko; Alex Zarynow; Emily Dzubak; Bishop Matthias; Katherine Chow; Psa. Diana Acsete; Fr. John & Pañi Marie Brancho*
- 5-happy birthday-George Dahulich  
*Pearl Vaporis; Kristy Clark; Laynie Sofelkanik; John Dancho; Jon Dzubak*
- 1-health of Savannah, Chloe, Caroline, Christopher, Natalie, Cole-love Grandparents
- 18-health & healing-John & Marie Smith  
*Irene Dzubak; Melanie Sampson; Carol Miller; Barbara Homick; Marie Skasko; Georgene & Ray Ammon; Fr Tom & Pañi Linda Kadlec; Fr John & Pañi Marge Fedornock; Fr John & Pañi Eleanor Pribish; Eleanor Breno; Charlie Myers; Lois Erhard; Pañi Marie Brancho; Pañi Jean Hutnyan; Chris Fallon; Fr Peter & Pañi Bernadette, Dorothy Sudik; Angela & son*
- 2-safety & peace-John & Marie Smith

- for the Ukrainian people; Israel & its people*
- 6-special intentions-the Breno Family  
*Breno Family; Fedornock Families; Peart Family; Nakonecznyj Family; Zankey Family; Fabian Family*
- 3-special intention-the Breno Family  
*Jenn & baby; all who are traveling; all who are ill*
- 2-specail intention-Mom & Dad  
*Brian, Angela & Dominic; Stephen*
- 16-for health & special intention-Mark & Marie  
*Mom; Nancy Shields; Mike Czap; Skeets & Beth; Charlie; Irene Dzubak; Carol Miller; Ray & Georgene Ammon; Eleanor Breno; FrJohn & Pañi Marge; FrPeter & Pañi Bernadette; Chris & Mike Fallon; Dan Zelensky*
- 1-health of Andrew Myers-Mark & Marie
- 4-health-Charlie, Debi, Jacob & Joey  
*Skeets; Jessica; Aunt Dorothy; Carol Miller*
- 2-specail intention Jacob & Joey-love Mom & Dad
- 1-health & healing Hayley, Bob, Peggy and Bruce, Andrea, Katie, Carol Miller, Cathy and her dad John, Chris Fallon, Cindy, Sharon, AnneMarie, Dorothy Sudik, Pa i Jean, Ray Ammon, Vickie Sullivan, Tom Delare, Chryl-Lois
- 1-for health Savannah, Caroline, Natalie, Karen K, Elizabeth Michel, Jeanne Delasko, Irene Dzubak, Barbara Homick, Georgene, Debbie Delare- Lois
- 1-happy birthday Nancy Hall-Lois
- 1-health and wellbeing of Artem-Olga Vovk
- 1-health and wellbeing of Andrey, Lidia and Tatiana, Natalia, Konstantin, Eva, George, Michael, Lubov, Anastasia, Maxim and Ivan-Olga Vovk
- 1-health and wellbeing of Sofia, Sergey, Eva, Matthew, Yuliia, Alex, Dru, Irina and Dennis-Olga Vovk
- 2-birthday blessings-Rose Plowchin  
*Mikey Hall; Jesse Plowchin*
- 5-for health-Rose Plowchin  
*Carol Miller; Barbara Parimucha; Lois Erhard*
- 1-specail prayer-Pa i Marge Fedornock
- 1-special intention Philip-Pa i Marge Fedornock
- 2-for health-Pa i Marge Fedornock  
*all my children; those who are ill*

## Vigil Candles In Loving Memory: (*Memory Eternal! Vicnaja Pamjat!*)

- 1+in loving memory of Les-love Carol
- 1+in memory Mother & Father. Carol Miller
- 1+In loving memory of Chris Hudack, Grandparents, Bettie Searfoss, Myrtle Miller, John Hudack, John Hrapchak, John Homick, Marge Tomasevich-Carol Miller
- 1+in loving memory of our father & mother-Taina and Craig
- 1+in loving memory of Chrysa Thear-Taina and Craig
- 2+loving memory-the Fallons  
*Pañi Jeannette; Anna & John Luchok*
- 1+in memory of parents Helen & Larry Rowland-Diane
- 1+in memory of grandparents Helen & Peter Sedlar-Diane R
- 1+Memory Eternal Parents/Grandparents-Koval Family
- 1+Memory Eternal Uncle George, Aunt Marge & Uncle Tony-Koval Family
- 2+Memory Eternal-love Alex, Melanie  
*parents Michael & Elaine; parents John & Katherine*
- 6+in memory-Sheila  
*John; Dad Kraynok; Mom Kraynok; Charles Hrapchak; Anna Hrapchak; Evelyn Hrapchak*

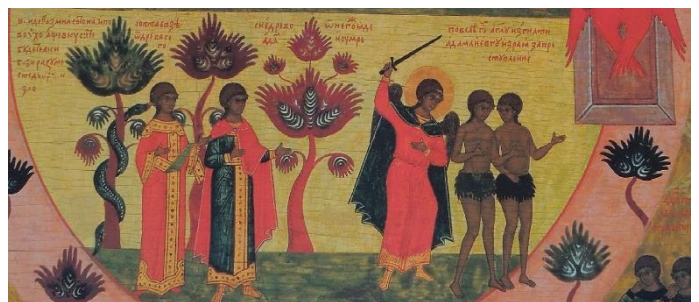
- 1+In loving memory of Metro-Love, Joan and Family
- 1+in loving memory of parents Peter & Ann Dahulich-love son George
- 1+in memory of Grammy-Charlie, Debi, Jacob & Joey
- 4+in memory-Mark & Marie  
*Chris Hudack; Verna Czap; Charlene Myers; Marge Tomasevich*
- 1+loving memory of Vladimir, Irina, Sergey, Nina, Rafael, Germina, Anna, Irena, Lidia, Pavel, Tatiana, Natalia, Olga-Olga Vovk
- 1+loving memory of Leonid, Anna, Izot, Natalia, Afanasii, Anastasia, Lidia-Olga Vovk
- 2+in memory-John & Marie Smith  
*John Homick; Marge Tomasevich*
- 2+in memory-Pa i Marge Fedornock  
*Parents; Brother & Sister*
- 1+in memory of Margaret Morris-Lois
- 1+in memory of Aunt Josie- Charlie, Debi, Jacob & Joey

## Sunday of Cheesefare: Expulsion of Adam from Paradise

As we begin the Great Fast, the Church reminds us of Adam's expulsion from Paradise. God commanded Adam to fast (Gen. 2:16), but he did not obey. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and lost the life of blessedness, knowledge of God, and communion with Him, for which they were created. Both they and their descendants became heirs of death and corruption.

Let us consider the benefits of fasting, the consequences of disobedience, and recall our fallen state. Today we are invited to cleanse ourselves of evil through fasting and obedience to God. Our fasting should not be a negative thing, a mere abstention from certain foods. It is an opportunity to free ourselves from the sinful desires and urges of our fallen nature, and to nourish our souls with prayer, repentance, to participate in church services, and partake of the life-giving Mysteries of Christ.

At Forgiveness Vespers we sing: *Let us begin the time of fasting in light, preparing ourselves for spiritual efforts. Let us purify our soul, let us purify our body. As we abstain from food, let us abstain from all passion and enjoy the virtues of the spirit....+*





# CAMP NAZARETH SUMMER CAMP 2024

**ONLINE REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!!!**

**Week 3: Sunday, July 28 – Saturday, August 3, 2024** -- Pittsburgh, Mid-Atlantic, Washington D.C., and Tri-State Deaneries  
**Science and Nature Camp: Sunday, August 4 - Saturday, August 10, 2024**



**Register Online Starting March 1, 2024 @ 6pm (EDT)**

**Register at – [campnazareth.org](http://campnazareth.org)**

Registration for Camp will be on a **First-Come First-Serve Basis!!** Once capacity for a given week is filled, all other campers will be put on a waiting list.

**\$20 Early Bird Discount Per Child!!!!**

(one-time only, not per week)

**Must Register & pay by May 1, 2024!!!!**

**Online Registration MUST be complete AND payment must be submitted by May 1 in order to qualify for the Early Bird Discount.**

Registration will close on **June 15, 2024 @ 12pm!**

**ALL OF THE CHILDREN OF THE PARISH OF ELIGIBLE AGE ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND OUR CAMPING WEEK! QUESTIONS, CONTACT FRPETER**

**No child should be restricted from attending Camp because of finances. Camperships are available for those who are in need of financial assistance. Please contact FrPeter for more information or to apply**

Along with the above announcement for Camp, if your children are attending Camp for our Deanery session 28 July-03 August, and you are needing a ride to Camp, notify FrPeter as soon as possible. We will once again be renting a van, having room for 11 campers. Space is limited, so let him know early!



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**SOME ADVICE FROM ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ON HOW TO KEEP GREAT LENT:**

**Sharpen your sword and sickle which has been blunted by gluttony- sharpen it by fasting. Lay hold of the pathway which leads towards heaven, rugged and narrow as it is. Lay hold of it, and journey on it. Fasting is a medicine. But like all medicines, though it be very profitable to the person who knows how to use it, it frequently becomes useless (and even harmful) in the hands of him who is unskilled in its use. Do you fast? Give proof of it by your works.**



John Chrysostom  
ca. 349-407

**By what kind of works? If you see a poor man, take pity on him. If you see an enemy, be reconciled with him. If you see a friend gaining honor, do not be jealous of him. If you see a beautiful countenance, pass it by. And let not only the mouth fast, but also the eye and the ear and the feet and the hands and all members of your bodies. Let the hands fast by being pure from plundering and greed. Let the feet fast by ceasing from running to unlawful spectacles. Let the eyes fast, being taught never to fix themselves with strange beauties. Do you eat meat? Feed not upon lasciviousness by means of your eyes! Let the ear fast also. The fasting of the ear consists in refusing to receive evil speakings and calumnies. Let the mouth fast also from disgraceful speeches and railings. For what does it profit if we abstain from fish and fowl and yet bite and devour our brothers and sisters? The evil speaker eats the flesh of his brothers and bites the body of his neighbor. Because of this Paul utters the fearful saying, If you bite and devour one another take heed that you are not consumed by one another (Galatians 5:15). You have not fixed your teeth in the flesh but you have fixed your slander in his soul and inflicted the wound of evil suspicion, and you have harmed in a thousand ways yourself and him and many others, for in slandering your neighbor you have made him who listens to the slander worse, for should he be a wicked person, he becomes more careless when he finds a partner in his wickedness. And should he be a just person, he is tempted to arrogance and gets puffed up, being led on by the sin of others to imagining great things concerning himself. Besides this, you have struck at the common welfare of the Church herself, for all those who hear you will not only accuse the supposed sinner, but the entire Christian community. And so I desire to fix three precepts in your mind so that you may accompany them during the fast: to speak ill of no one, to hold no one an enemy, and to expel from your mouth altogether the evil habit of swearing.**

and sickle which has been blunted by gluttony- sharpen it by fasting. Lay hold of the pathway which leads towards heaven, rugged and narrow as it is. Lay hold of it, and journey on it. Fasting is a medicine. But like all medicines, though it be very profitable to the person who knows how to use it, it frequently becomes useless (and even harmful) in the hands of him who is unskilled in its use. Do you fast? Give proof of it by your works.

## LEAVE A LEGACY GIFT

Did you know there is a way for your giving  
to the Church to live on beyond your life?

Not only can you leave a legacy gift to your loved ones, but also to your church. A legacy gift ensures that your acts of faith will continue to make a lasting difference to Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church. It's easy to do. Consider your options to name the Church as a beneficiary or make a bequest in:

- Your will
- Your trust
- Your life insurance policy
- Your retirement plan
- Your saving, checking or non-retirement investment account



With a gift to the Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church, you can extend your legacy of caring and love that you have shown to your church far into the future. If you already have made a legacy gift to Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church, we thank you! Legacy gifts will be used for major projects or new initiatives of the parish.

*Please consult your legal or tax advisor when preparing estate plans. Our Church cannot provide legal or tax advice.* If you are interested in making a legacy gift, we would be glad to help you and your advisor plan a gift that works for you.

Very Rev. Peter Zarynow  
Office: 301-299-5120  
frzarynow@gmail.com

Rose Plowchin, Council President  
703-968-2989  
[thisrose22@gmail.com](mailto:thisrose22@gmail.com)

*Giving back to God a portion of what He has given to you  
is the way of an Orthodox Christian*

## Sts. Joachim and Anna Senior Retreat

Tuesday-Thursday, April 9-11, 2024  
Camp Nazareth Retreat and Conference Center  
Mercer, PA

**Purchasing the Right Things as a Senior:  
Can You Buy Your Way into Heaven?!**  
Reflections on Proverbs 23:23 – “Buy truth, and do not  
sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.”

**Keynote Speaker:**

**Mother Christophora, Abbess of The Monastery of the Holy  
Transfiguration, Ellwood City, PA**

**Seniors' needs and interests and will offer something for everyone.**

**Schedule includes church services, Social Hours, Meals, presentations, Free-Time, evening  
entertainment, and More!**

**Register at [ACROD.ORG](http://ACROD.ORG)**

**For more information call 724-662-4840 or email [campnazareth@acrod.org](mailto:campnazareth@acrod.org)**

\*It might be possible to get a carpool together from HROC. If you are interested in attending, and if you would like to maybe drive, please contact Fr Peter or Rose Plowchin\*



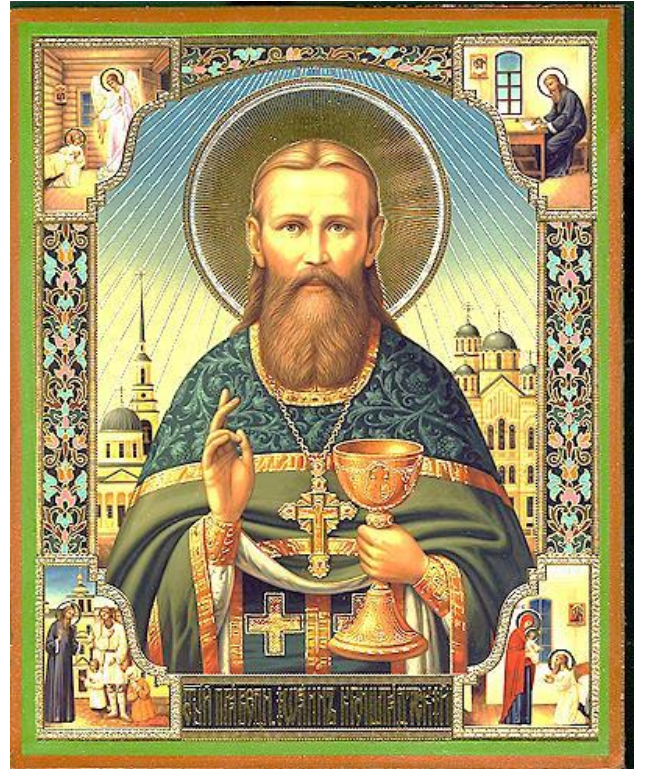


# A Preparation for Confession

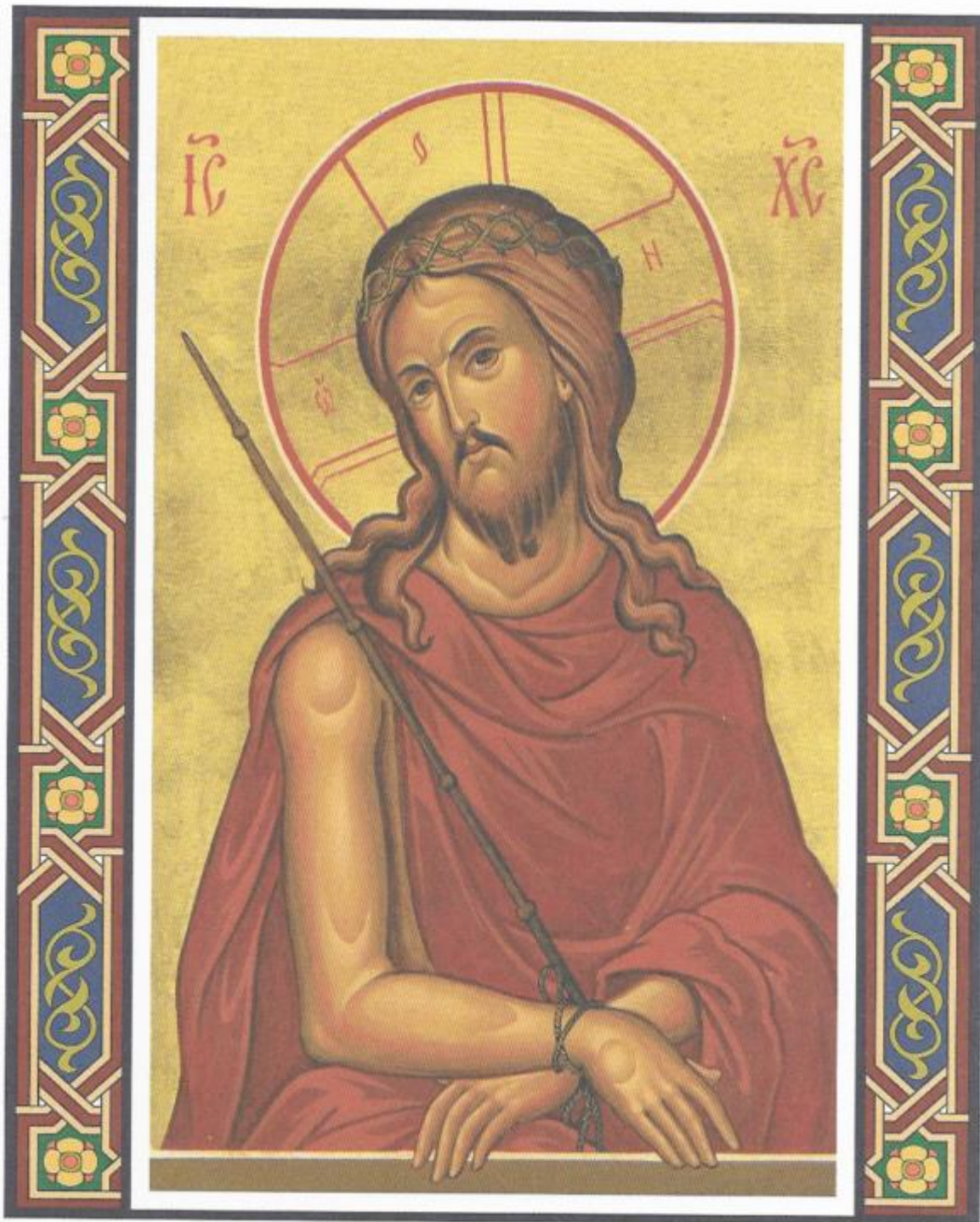
by St. John of Kronstadt

I, a sinful soul, confess to our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, all of my evil acts which I have done, said or thought from baptism even unto this present day.

- ❖ I have not kept the vows of my baptism, but have made myself unwanted before the face of God.
- ❖ I have sinned before the Lord by lack of faith and by doubts concerning the Orthodox Faith and the Holy Church=by ungratefulness for all of God's great and unceasing gifts=His long-suffering and His providence for me, a sinner=by lack of love for the Lord, as well as fear, though not fulfilling the Holy Commandments of God and the canons and rules of the Church.
- ❖ I have not preserved a love for God and for my neighbor nor have I made enough efforts, because of laziness and lack of care, to learn the Commandments of God and the precepts of the Holy Fathers.
- ❖ I have sinned: by not praying in the morning and in the evening and in the course of the day=by not attending the services or by coming to Church only half-heartedly, lazily and carelessly=by conversing during the services, by not paying attention, letting my mind wander and by departure from the Church before the dismissal and blessing.
- ❖ I have sinned by judging members of the clergy.
- ❖ I have sinned by not respecting the Feasts, breaking the Fasts, and by immoderation in food and drink.
- ❖ I have sinned by self-importance, disobedience, willfulness, self-righteousness, and the seeking of approval and praise.
- ❖ I have sinned by unbelief, lack of faith, doubts, despair, despondency, abusive thoughts, blasphemy and swearing.
- ❖ I have sinned by pride, a high opinion of myself, narcissism, vanity, conceit, envy, love of praise, love of honors, and by putting on airs.
- ❖ I have sinned: by judging, malicious gossip, anger, remembering of offenses done to me, hatred and returning evil for evil=by slander, reproaches, lies, slyness, deception and hypocrisy=by prejudices, arguments, stubbornness, and an unwillingness to give way to my neighbor=by gloating, spitefulness, taunting, insults and mocking=by gossip, by speaking too much and by empty speech.
- ❖ I have sinned by unnecessary and excessive laughter, by reviling and dwelling upon my previous sins, by arrogant behavior, insolence and lack of respect.
- ❖ I have sinned by not keeping my physical and spiritual passions in check, by my enjoyment of impure thoughts, licentiousness and unchastity in thoughts, words and deeds.
- ❖ I have sinned by lack of endurance towards my illnesses and sorrows, a devotion to the comforts of life and by being too attached to my parents, children, relatives and friends.
- ❖ I have sinned by hardening my heart, having a weak will and by not forcing myself to do good.
- ❖ I have sinned by miserliness, a love of money, the acquisition of unnecessary things and immoderate attachment to things.
- ❖ I have sinned by self-justification, a disregard for the admonitions of my conscience and failing to confess my sins through negligence or false pride.
- ❖ I have sinned many times by my Confession: belittling, justifying and keeping silent about sins.
- ❖ I have sinned against the Most-holy and Life-creating Mysteries of the Body and Blood of our Lord by coming to Holy Communion without humility or the fear of God.



I have sinned in deed, word and thought, knowingly and unknowingly, willingly and unwillingly, thoughtfully and thoughtlessly, and it is impossible to enumerate all of my sins because of their multitude. But I truly repent of these and all others not mentioned by me because of my forgetfulness and I ask that they be forgiven through the abundance of the Mercy of God.



### “LET US BEGIN THE FAST WITH JOY!”

**A**lthough some may associate Great Lent with suffering and sacrifice, our Church gently reminds us that the 40-day Fast which precedes our Lord's Resurrection is actually a time for us to experience a great spiritual joy. The Church's service book for Lent – the Triodion – calls this period the “spiritual spring which blossoms with the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” For us to “harvest” these fruits, however, it is necessary for us to master two vital disciplines: PRAYER and FASTING.

St. John Chrysostom writes that prayer and fasting are like “two wings that carry a person to the heights of God.” They are the means for us to become mentally, physically and spiritually prepared to encounter the Lord in an intimate way. Prayer and fasting help us to become closer to God. The more time we spend in prayer, the less time we have to become consumed with the sins and temptations that are constantly placed before us. Fasting shows our willingness to cast aside the pleasures of the world, abstaining from wrong-doing as well as food.

While urging us to embrace these admirable virtues during the Lenten season, the Church reminds us of the emphasis that Christ Himself placed on prayer and fasting. There were countless times during His earthly ministry that Jesus became deeply immersed in practicing these disciplines. Indeed, when His disciples questioned why they were unable to cast out demons from a possessed young man, Christ pointed out to them that only through prayer and fasting could they ever receive the ability to do this!

Icon by Fr. Paul Drozdowski – [www.pd-icons.com](http://www.pd-icons.com)