

Family & Personal Focus – Making Personal Changes

Things you should know:

- ❖ **Fasting:** The purpose of fasting is to “give wings” to our prayer life. By denying ourselves the food of this world, we enter into a state of hungering after life in Christ. At the very least, no meat should be eaten for forty days. Each person must decide what type of spiritual tithe (offering of one tenth of the year back to God) they are willing to make according to their health conditions and experience.
- ❖ **Prayer & Worship:** Prayer is an expression of our love for God. As our relationship with Christ deepens, our desire for prayer intensifies. Worship services are offered quite frequently during Lent to strengthen our relationship with Christ.
- ❖ **Confession:** I am encouraging everyone to find a priest and make your confession, even if it is not your parish priest. There are at least eight Orthodox priests in the valley who can hear your Confession.
- ❖ **Acts of Charity:** As our love for Christ grows so does an inner desire to love our neighbor. Start with family members, spending quality time together, meeting one another’s needs. Call or visit friends whom we have lost contact with, make time to assist someone in need.

Things You should do:

- Talk about fasting with children and how prayer can help them make changes in their behavior.
- Replace television and video games with family activities.
- Parents can model to their children reading the bible and praying.
- Ask children what changes they would like to see in themselves and what changes they would like to see in their parents.
- Attend as a family at least one service during the week.
- Be joyful! If we are not experiencing joy, we are doing something wrong.

The First Week of Lent

The Lenten Journey



Great Lent began with forgiveness Vespers on Sunday, March 6. In a dramatic manner, the entire church gathers to say before God and one another, ‘Forgive me, for I am a sinner.’ Together confessing before God, we realize an important fact; our sins affect one another and the Church.

As the entire Orthodox Church begins Great Lent, with one heart and mind, parishes, monks, nuns and the Orthodox worldwide, in a deep spirit of repentance recommit themselves to living for Christ. The Orthodox Church has not abandoned its’ Lenten Way, but calls upon all to enter into the arena and contest set before us.

[Lenten Resources](#)

Church Services the First Week of Lent

The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete is dedicated to repentance and the acknowledgment of sins. This year, the service is divided into two parts the first week of Lent. The entire Canon is offered on **April 7, at 6:30 pm**, along with the reading of the life of St. Mary of Egypt.

Matins (Orthro or morning prayer service) Monday through Wednesday at 8:30 am for the first week of Lent is offered as well.

Clean Monday as well as the first week of Lent is meant to be severe in fasting. Clean Monday is an opportunity to “clean the inner room” of the heart by taking some personal time and set some goals for Lent.

March 7, Monday, Great Canon of St. Andrew, part 1 - 7:00 PM

March 8, Tuesday, Great Canon of St. Andrew, part 2 - 7:00 PM

Pre-sanctified Liturgies – spiritual fuel for the journey

Weekday “Pre-Sanctified Liturgies” use holy gifts sanctified from the previous Sunday. The Eucharist is offered frequently throughout Lent to strengthen our fasting and prayer life. A fast should be kept prior to receiving Communion.

❖ **March 9, Wednesday, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy - 5:30 PM**

❖ **March 11, Friday, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy – 8:30 AM**

The Akathist Hymn (Fridays of Lent)

A Compline service (Akathist) dedicated to the Virgin Mary is conducted the first five Fridays of Great Lent. Mary, the Theotokos stands as the great Christian example and helper in our Lenten effort.

❖ **Friday, March 11 ~ Akathist Hymn 7:00 PM**

Saturday of Souls (St. Theodore the Great Martyr)

Saturdays represents the “Sabbath” as a day on which we rest from our work and celebrate the “goodness” of God’s creation. As our Lord rested in the Tomb on Great and Holy Saturday he committed the final act of re-creation and destroyed the bonds of death. In anticipation of the general resurrection of all, we remember those who have fought the good fight and have received their crowns on this day.

Saturday, March 12

Liturgy at 9:30 AM, Memorial Service 10:15 AM

Great Vespers – 5:00 PM

Sunday, March 13 (First Sunday of Lent)

Sunday of Orthodoxy

Children are to bring an icon from home and come together with their class to participate a procession at the conclusion of the Liturgy.

Godparent Sunday (March 13)

Godparents are invited to contact their godchildren and be together in Church on this day. As a godparent, you renounced Satan on their behalf and united them to Christ. It is a sacred life-long relationship that needs to be nurtured whether your godchild was adult when they were Chrismated or a just a child.

Our Philoptochos is serving “Lukomades” (Greek donuts)

March 13 ~ Sunday of Orthodox Vespers, 6:00 PM

St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church