

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

Volume XXI

Number 25

17 February / 1 March 2020

SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS: CHEESEFARE SUNDAY *(Tone 4)* Commemoration of the Casting Out of Adam from Paradise

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES THIS WEEK

CHEESEFARE SUNDAY *(Tone 4)*

Saturday, 29 February *(16 February, o.s.)*

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 1 March *(17 February, o.s.)*

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
11:30 AM Forgiveness Vespers;
Trapeza (coffee hour)

Monday, 2 March *(18 February, o.s.)*

6:00 PM Great Compline & Great Canon

Tuesday, 3 March *(19 February, o.s.)*

6:00 PM Great Compline & Great Canon

Wednesday, 4 March *(20 February, o.s.)*

9:00 AM Ninth Hour & Typika
9:30 AM Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
6:00 PM Great Compline & Great Canon

Thursday, 5 March *(22 February, o.s.)*

6:00 PM Great Compline & Great Canon

Friday, 6 March *(23 February, o.s.)*

5:30 PM Ninth Hour & Typika
6:00 PM Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts;
Canon to Great-martyr Theodore

1ST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT *(Tone 5)*

Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy

Saturday, 7 March *(24 February, o.s.)*

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 8 March *(25 February, o.s.)*

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy;
Trapeza (coffee hour)

FASTING DAYS THIS WEEK

Tomorrow is Pure Monday and the Great Fast begins. Therefore, all the days of this week from Monday onwards are fast days. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday are normal fast days, with no fish, wine, or oil permitted. Next Saturday and Sunday, as on all weekends of Great Lent, wine and oil are also allowed.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Week of 1 March

Su	Cheesefare Sunday: The Sunday of Forgiveness	
	<i>Resurrectional Matins Gospel:</i>	
	Rom. §112 (13:11b-14:4)	Matt. §17 (6:14-21)
FIRST WEEK OF THE GREAT FAST		
<i>1st Monday of Great Lent</i>	<i>Sixth Hour:</i> Isaiah 1:1-20 <i>Vespers:</i> Genesis 1:1-13 • Proverbs 1:1-20	
<i>1st Tuesday of Great Lent</i>	<i>Sixth Hour:</i> Isaiah 1:19-2:3 <i>Vespers:</i> Genesis 1:14-23 • Proverbs 1:20-33	
<i>1st Wednesday of Great Lent</i>	<i>Sixth Hour:</i> Isaiah 2:3-11 <i>Vespers:</i> Genesis 1:24-2:3 • Proverbs 2:1-22	
<i>1st Thursday of Great Lent</i>	<i>Sixth Hour:</i> Isaiah 2:11-21 <i>Vespers:</i> Genesis 2:4-19 • Proverbs 3:1-18	
<i>1st Friday of Great Lent</i>	<i>Sixth Hour:</i> Isaiah 3:1-14 <i>Vespers:</i> Genesis 2:20-3:20 • Proverbs 3:19-34	
1st Saturday of the Great Fast: St Theodore the Recruit		
<i>1st Saturday</i>	Heb. §303 (1:1-12)	Mark §10 (2:23-3:5)
<i>St Theodore</i>	2 Tim. §292 (2:1-10)	John §52 (15:17-16:2)
1st Sunday of the Great Fast: Sunday of Orthodoxy		
<i>1st Sunday</i>	<i>Matins Gospel:</i>	
	Heb. §329a (11:24-26, 32-12:2a)	John §5 (1:43-51)

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today is Forgiveness Sunday. Forgiveness Vespers will be immediately after the Divine Liturgy. Please remain in church for this beautiful service, the first liturgical service of Great Lent. This Vespers service is called Forgiveness Vespers because there is a rite of mutual forgiveness at the conclusion of the service. This is our opportunity to ask each other's forgiveness for any offence that we may have committed knowingly or unknowingly over the past year, and so to begin Great Lent with a clean slate. Those that cannot kneel or make prostrations should not feel obliged to do so; those that can should.

The Prayer of St Ephraim the Syrian is said on weekdays of Great Lent at all services and in private prayer. It is a striking characteristic of Lenten services. It is said usually with three prostrations to the ground, twelve bows, and a final prostration:

O Lord and Master of my life, a spirit of idleness, despondency, lust of power, and idle talking give me not.
Prostration.

But rather a spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love bestow on me Thy servant. *Prostration.*

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own failings, and not to condemn my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen. *Prostration.*

O God, cleanse me a sinner. *Twelve times with a reverence (bow from the waist) at each.*

Then once more: O Lord and Master of my life (*the entire prayer*) with a single prostration at the end.

The Service of the Great Canon will be served on the first four weekday evenings of Great Lent at 6 o'clock. This is the Service of Great Compline with the Great Canon of Repentance composed by St Andrew of Crete, an Archbishop and hymnographer who died in the 8th Century. This Canon, a masterpiece of Orthodox hymnography, recounts incidents and personalities throughout the whole of Biblical history, weaving the theme of repentance throughout. On each of the four evenings, a quarter of the Canon is chanted. Participating in these moving services is a most important way to begin the Fast.

The Presanctified Liturgy will be served this week on Wednesday and Friday. The Orthodox Church traditionally ascribes the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts to St Gregory the Great, Pope of Old Rome. St Gregory is usually referred to in the Eastern Church as 'the Dialogist,' because he is the author of a book entitled, *The Dialogues*, a very soul-profitting work. The Presanctified Liturgy is actually not a full celebration of the Divine Liturgy in which the Gifts of bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ, but a Lenten Vespers Service with a communion of the Faithful from the reserved Body and Blood of Christ consecrated at the full Liturgy the previous Sunday. There are several ceremonies performed at the Liturgy of the Presanctified that are quite unique, to which the faithful look forward to participating in each year.

On Wednesday, the Presanctified Liturgy will be served in the *morning* at 9:30, preceded the Lenten service of the Ninth Hour with the Typika at 9:00 a.m.

On Friday, the Presanctified Liturgy will be served in the *evening* at 6:00, preceded the Lenten service of Ninth Hour with the Typika at 5:30 p.m.

This Saturday is the Saturday of St Theodore. On this day we remember how the Great-martyr Theodore Tyro appeared in a dream to Archbishop Eudoxios of Constantinople to warn him that the Emperor Julian the Apostate intended to defile all the foods in the market with blood from idolatrous sacrifices so that the Christians would have no choice but to participate in idolatry by partaking of this food. St Theodore instructed the Archbishop to tell the faithful to boil

wheat (*kolyva*), which they already had on hand, and eat this alone. Thus the faithful were saved from Julian's plot. At the end of the Presanctified Liturgy on Friday morning, a supplicatory canon to the Saint is chanted and *kolyva* is blessed and distributed to the faithful as a remembrance of the miracle of St Theodore.

We need a donation of *kolyva* (sweetened boiled wheat) for the Saturday of St Theodore. If you can make the *kolyva* and bring it to church for Friday evening, please speak to Father.

Because of the great number of communicants at our parish, especially during the Great Fast, the number of parishioners needing to go to Confession at St Elizabeth's Church is usually quite high. Because we have only one priest, who must serve in the altar as well as hear all the Confessions, this presents practical difficulties in applying the usual rule of the Russian Church insisting on Confession before every Communion. The only workable solution seems to be applying the exceptional practice of Holy Week to the rest of the year. For those who desire it, or for those whom a Spiritual Father recommends or requires it, Confession before every Communion will certainly be provided. But for those who are able to lead a disciplined spiritual life, abstaining from serious sin, and fulfilling the other preparations for Holy Communion, a more relaxed rule is in order. Confession before the Liturgy of one weekend will suffice for all the Liturgies for the next two weeks, so that regular communicants will only have to go to Confession every other weekend. There may also be some cases when a Spiritual Father has allowed his spiritual child an even more relaxed rule on Confession before Holy Communion. It is important for us to abstain from judging others regarding the frequency of their Confessions before Holy Communion.

No non-lenten foods are served at parish functions during the Great Fast. Nothing with meat, dairy products, or eggs is permitted on a fast day. Fish may be eaten only on the Feasts of the Annunciation and Palm Sunday. If in doubt as to what foods are permitted on a particular day, please consult Father.

There will be a blessing of Icons at St Elizabeth's at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on the First Sunday of Great Lent: the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. Because this day is a celebration of the victory of the Orthodox Faith over the heresy of Iconoclasm, it is a very appropriate day for the sanctification of icons. If you have icons at home that have not yet been blessed, please bring them to church as soon as possible so that they can be placed in the altar to begin the process of sanctification that will be

complete after the prayers of blessing on the First
Sunday of the Fast.