

Sts. Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church

First-enthroned of the apostles, teachers of the universe: Entreat the Master of all to grant peace to the world, and to our souls great mercy!

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March 7, 2021

SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT

MEATFARE SUNDAY

TONE 6

Today 10:00am Divine Liturgy
Wed. 10 7:15pm Bible Study
Sun. 14 10:00am Divine Liturgy

One must be baptized and chrismated an Orthodox Christian to receive Holy Communion. Guests are invited to receive a blessing at the chalice and partake of the post-Communion bread (Antidoron).

Fast Days: Meat fast every day Strict fast on Wednesday and Friday (fasting from meat, fish, eggs, dairy, oil, wine and hard spirits as you are able.)

Troparion – Tone 6 (Resurrection)

*The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Thy grave,
seeking Thy most pure body.
Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it.
Thou didst come to the Virgin,
granting life.
O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead,
glory to Thee.*

Troparion – Tone 1 (from the Lenten Triodion)

*When Thou, O God, shalt come to earth with glory,
all things shall tremble,
and the river of fire shall flow before Thy judgment seat;
the books shall be opened, and the hidden things disclosed;
then deliver me from the unquenchable fire,
and make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand, O Righteous Judge!*

Prayers for those in our Sts. Peter and Paul community (parishioners, family, friends) can be listed for remembrance in our litanies during the Liturgy. Feel free to give names to Fr. Nicholas - please indicate how each person listed is connected to us (parishioner, family, friend, etc.), as well as why we are praying for them (health, memory, travel, etc.).

Confessions can be heard by appointment. If you need, I will come to you during the week. Please do not hesitate to call for a time to drop by the church or to have me visit you.

Remembrances for both the living and the dead during the prayers of preparation of the Eucharistic Lamb and during the Augmented Litany should be given the week before the desired remembrance so that the names can be put into the bulletin and given to the Deacons for the prayers. Any names of the living that are not marked as sick or traveling will be listed under general prayers.

SCRIPTURE THIS WEEK

Church Lectionary

Today

1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2
Matthew 25:31-46

Monday

3 John 1:1-15
Luke 19:29-40, 22:7-39

Tuesday

Hebrews 12:1-10
Matthew 20:1-16
Jude 1:1-10
Luke 22:39-42, 45-23:1

Wednesday

Joel 2:12-26
Joel 3:12-21

Thursday

Jude 1:11-25
Luke 23:2-34, 44-56

Friday

Zechariah 8:7-17
Zechariah 8:19-23

Saturday

Galatians 5:22-6:2
Matthew 11:27-30
Romans 14:19-23, 16:25-27
Matthew 6:1-13

Reading the Bible in a Year

Mar 07: 1 Samuel 25-28
Mar 08: 1 Samuel 29-31
Mar 09: 2 Samuel 1-4
Mar 10: 2 Samuel 5-8
Mar 11: 2 Samuel 9-12
Mar 12: 2 Samuel 13-16
Mar 13: 2 Samuel 17-20

Falsehood - and only falsehood - separates us from God ... False thoughts, false words, false feelings, false desires - Behold the aggregate of lies that leads us to non-being, illusion, and rejection of God.

-St. Nicholas of Serbia

When we forget the things of God

The Lenten struggle is a perfect time to do battle with the passions that create a state of unrest in our hearts. Anything that causes us to forget the goal, which is union with God, must be resisted. Saint Basil the Great tells us we cannot approach the knowledge of the truth with a disturbed heart. Conflict, downheartedness, lust, worry, and judging others, are all things that can not be allowed to distract us from the goal. Letting ourselves become troubled, or full of anxiety, does nothing to further our journey into the heart. Giving ourselves over to the passions depletes us, and leaves us waylaid along the side of the narrow path into the Kingdom of God.

Health of the Parish



\$15,000.00

\$12,700

\$10,000.00

\$5,000.00

During this Lenten journey we must not be so self-consumed as to have no compassion for others. Saint Basil the Great tells us that a man who has two coats or two pairs of shoes, when his neighbor has none, is a thief. In the Holy Scriptures we read, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell in it (Psalm 24:1)." No one can be saved, according to Saint John Chrysostom, without giving alms and without caring for the poor. We are but stewards of what belongs to God, and Great Lent is the perfect time to share the gifts of God's creation with one another as much as we can. To store up earthly possessions, according to Christ, is the epitome of foolishness, and a rich man shall hardly be saved (Luke 12:15-21).

When we turn our attention towards the needs of others, our focus changes, and we are no longer consumed with self. In this turning of the heart towards those in need, we are turning our hearts to God. "Verily I say unto you, Since you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me (Matthew 25:40)." In our fasting, increased time spent in prayer, and acts of alms giving (charity), we are energized in our battle against the passions, and our hearts become at rest in Christ.

With love in Christ,
Abbot Tryphon

March Events

March

- 03 – 7:15pm Bible Study via Google Meet
- 07 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 10 – 7:15pm Bible Study via Google Meet
- 14 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy *Forgiveness Sunday*
- 17 – 7:00pm Presanctified Liturgy followed by pot-luck and Lenten study
- 21 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy
- 25 – 7:00pm Presanctified Liturgy followed by pot-luck and Lenten study
- 28 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy

A Prayer for Use During the Week

Dear Lord, You have not stopped providing everything we need for our salvation. You have lavished on each of us treasures, old and new, to heal all our diseases and grant us the formation of our inner selves to be a true reflection of Your character and life. You are our salvation, O Lord and You give us what we need to become by grace what You are by nature. As we approach the awesome Judgment Seat, give me the right answer as I stand before You. Amen.

Children's Word

1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 (Epistle)

But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble. Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

Matthew 25:31-46 (Gospel)

When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.' Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?' Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Goats and sheep

Have you ever seen a goat? Maybe you have visited a farm and fed the animals. Maybe you have some goats that you take care of yourself.

Did you notice today's Gospel reading says a little about sheep and goats? Jesus tells about how God will judge us all. He will put some people on one side and other people on the other side, just "as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats."

Do you know something about goats? They are stubborn animals. It's hard to get them to do something. They are smart, but they don't do things they don't want to do. They just think about what they want to do. Sheep are different, because they usually follow the shepherd. They go where the shepherd wants them to go.

God doesn't want us to be like the goats! God doesn't want us to be stubborn. He doesn't want us to think about ourselves all the time and what we want to do. God doesn't want us to run off and get into trouble (like goats always do!). God wants us to stick with the Shepherd. And who's the Shepherd? Well, God is the Shepherd, the loving Shepherd who is always looking out for His sheep. Let's think about how we can be more like sheep, and less like goats. Can you think of times you think about what you want too much? Can you think of how you can think about what others want?

SAINT PAUL THE SIMPLE BLESSED SIMPLICITY

Have you ever heard somebody call a person "simple"? Usually, it doesn't mean something good! Somebody simple might be somebody who isn't too smart or doesn't understand anything!

But today we celebrate Saint Paul the Simple, and "simple" for this saint was a great compliment! Saint Paul was simple, because he knew the simplest thing—that he wanted to love God and to serve Him! In a way, life was simple for this saint, because he knew that one thing.

Do you want to hear an example of how Saint Paul was simple? Well, when he was 60 years old, he knew that he wanted to live in the desert in Egypt. He wanted to become a monk. He visited the great Saint Anthony, who lived there. Saint Anthony told Paul he was too old; he told him he couldn't live such a hard life in the desert. But Saint Paul stood outside Saint Anthony's hut for three days. He didn't argue. He didn't complain. He just waited. Finally, Anthony knew Paul was serious, and he guided him to become a monk, praying and living in the desert.

God saw Saint Paul's love for Him. He saw his simple ways. God gave him special gifts, and Saint Paul was able to heal people (even one Saint Anthony the Great wasn't able to heal!) God loves the simple!

We celebrate St. Paul the Simple today, March 7th.

Time to Be Judgemental!

March 5, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

“Don’t judge me!” That’s the cry of modern man in a modern society that has come to see every desire as a right and every pleasure as a perfectly normal expectation. There’s a new Hollywood movie coming out that illustrates my point. It’s called “50 Shades of Grey.” I won’t bore you with the details, but suffice it to say this movie is about the fantasy of living a life with no boundaries and being so rich no one would ever dare to withhold anything from you! Ah, every modern man’s fantasy.

But it really is just that: a fantasy. Because no life gets to escape from the consequences of your actions. Ever. Even those who foolishly go through life believing they’ve gotten away with it will find out all too soon they haven’t. And it isn’t Karma; it isn’t “what goes around comes around” or any other feel-good just deserts ending. It is the reality that we are all rushing headlong to a moment where all our prayers will finally bear the fruit of our faithfulness: “For a Christian end to my life, peaceful; free of shame and suffering; and for a good answer before the awesome judgment seat of Christ, let us pray to the Lord.” Lord, have mercy!

With all our emotional hiding, excuse-making, justifications, explanations, and downright lies to cover up; each of us will finally be judged. But not by an angry God. No, not even your sins can make God feel anger. You simply are not that powerful. God loves you and His decision is irrevocable. No, we will be judged by comparing our life to the life of Christ, and then we will see how we measure up. Of course, none of us will fare very well, but some of us will have been wise enough to understand the Gift Christ offers us in giving us His life for our own! Some of us will have learned the wisdom of St. Isaac the Syrian: “This life is given to you for repentance; do not waste it on vain pursuits.”

Look at our Gospel Lesson today in Mark 15:20,22,25,33-41:

At that time, the soldiers took Jesus and led him out to be crucified. And they brought him to a place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). And it was the third hour, when they crucified him. And when the sixth hour had come there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?” which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” And some of the bystanders hearing it said, “Behold, he is calling Elijah.” And one ran and, filling a sponge full of vinegar, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.” And Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that he thus breathed his last, he said, “Truly this man was the Son of God! There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome who, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered to him; and also many other women who came up with him to Jerusalem.

Just before we face the Sunday of the Last Judgement, the Church shows us the scene of our Lord’s Crucifixion. Here Christ is at His weakest, at His most loving. Here we see our Champion ascending the wood of the Cross for our sakes to finally “trample down death by death.” Here we see the women who refused to forsake Him. Here we see a Gentile Roman soldier recognize Him at last. Here we see the Last Judgement played out for our lives and for every life. Here we see the extent to which God is willing to go for those Whom He loves. This is what our lives will be measured against on that Last Day. No greater love has any man that He would lay down His life for His friends! You see, my dearest, as we move toward the rigors of Great Lent, we are invited to gaze onto the fullest extent of God’s love for you and me. Only by truly seeing Him there will we ever understand Him in our hearts, our lives, and in the Divine Mysteries of the Church. Here we are confronted with the love that will be the same love that will judge us all. How will you measure up in the face of that love?

Today, there is simply no excuse strong enough to explain why you don’t use the spiritual tools dropped at your feet for your own salvation. We stand at the Final Judgement knowing full well NOTHING was left undone that could have prepared our souls for that moment. All the fasting. All the services. All the prayers, the homilies, the candles, the incense, the seasons of fasting and feasting, the traditions, and the examples of the saint, all there waiting for your moment of courage to reach and take them and practice them and be Orthodox on Purpose!

1-е Коринфянам 8:8-9:2

Пища не приближает нас к Богу: ибо, едим ли мы, ничего не приобретаем; не едим ли, ничего не теряем. Берегитесь однако же, чтобы эта свобода ваша не послужила соблазном для немощных. Ибо если кто-нибудь увидит, что ты, имея знание, сидишь за столом в капище, то совесть его, как немощного, не расположит ли и его есть идоложертвенное? И от знания твоего погибнет немощный брат, за которого умер Христос. А согрешая таким образом против братьев и уязвляя немощную совесть их, вы согрешаете против Христа. И потому, если пища соблазняет брата моего, не буду есть мяса вовек, чтобы не соблазнить брата моего. Не Апостол ли я? Не свободен ли я? Не видел ли я Иисуса Христа, Господа нашего? Не мое ли дело вы в Господе? Если для других я не Апостол, то для вас [Апостол]; ибо печать моего апостольства--вы в Господе.

От Матфея 25:31-46

Когда же приидет Сын Человеческий во славе Своей и все святые Ангелы с Ним, тогда сядет на престоле славы Своей, и соберутся пред Ним все народы; и отделит одних от других, как пастырь отделяет овец от козлов; и поставит овец по правую Свою сторону, а козлов--по левую. Тогда скажет Царь тем, которые по правую сторону Его: приидите, благословенные Отца Моего, наследуйте Царство, уготованное вам от создания мира: ибо алкал Я, и вы дали Мне есть; жаждал, и вы напоили Меня; был странником, и вы приняли Меня; был наг, и вы одели Меня; был болен, и вы посетили Меня; в темнице был, и вы пришли ко Мне. Тогда праведники скажут Ему в ответ: Господи! когда мы видели Тебя алчущим, и накормили? или жаждущим, и напоили? когда мы видели Тебя странником, и приняли? или нагим, и одели? когда мы видели Тебя больным, или в темнице, и пришли к Тебе? И Царь скажет им в ответ: истинно говорю вам: так как вы сделали это одному из сих братьев Моих меньших, то сделали Мне. Тогда скажет и тем, которые по левую сторону: идите от Меня, проклятые, в огонь вечный, уготованный диаволу и ангелам его: ибо алкал Я, и вы не дали Мне есть; жаждал, и вы не напоили Меня; был странником, и не приняли Меня; был наг, и не одели Меня; болен и в темнице, и не посетили Меня. Тогда и они скажут Ему в ответ: Господи! когда мы видели Тебя алчущим, или жаждущим, или странником, или нагим, или больным, или в темнице, и не послужили Тебе? Тогда скажет им в ответ: истинно говорю вам: так как вы не сделали этого одному из сих меньших, то не сделали Мне. И пойдут сии в муку вечную, а праведники в жизнь вечную.

1 e Korintasve 8:8-9:2

Por të ngrënit nuk na çon te Perëndia; po të hamë, nuk fitojmë asgjë më tepër dhe, po të mos hamë, s'kemi gjë më pak. Por kini mendjen se mos kjo liri që keni të bëhet pengesë për të dobëtit. Sepse, në qoftë se dikush të sheh ty, që ke njohuri, të ulur në tryezë në një tempull idhujsh, ndërgjegja e tij, që është e dobët, a nuk do të marrë guxim që ai të hajë gjërat e flijuara për idhujt? Edhe kështu, për shkak të njohurisë sate, do të humbasë vëllai yt i dobët, për të cilin vdiq Krishti. Dhe, kur mëkatoni kështu kundër vëllezërve, duke plagosur ndërgjegjen e tyre të dobët, ju mëkatoni kundër Krishtit. Prandaj, në qoftë se një ushqim skandalizon vëllanë tim, unë nuk do të ha më kurrë mish, që të mos e skandalizoj vëllanë tim. A s'jam unë apostull? A s'jam unë i lirë? Po a nuk e pashë Jezu Krishtin, Zotin tonë? A nuk jeni ju vepra ime në Zotin? Në qoftë se për të tjerët nuk jam apostull, së paku për ju unë jam; sepse ju jeni vula e apostullimit tim në Zotin.

Mateu 25:31-46

“Dhe kur të vijë Biri i njeriut në lavdinë e tij, bashkë me të gjithë engjëjt e shenjtë, atëherë do të ulet mbi fronin e lavdisë së vet. Dhe të gjithë kombet do të mblidhen para tij; dhe ai do ta ndajë njërin nga tjetri ashtu si i ndan bariu delet nga cjeptë. Dhe delet do t'i vërë në të djathtën e tij dhe cjeptë në të majtën. Atëherë Mbreti do t'u thotë atyre që do të jenë në të djathtën e tij: Ejani, të bekuar të Atit tim; merrni në trashëgim mbretërinë që u bë gatii për ju që nga krijimi i botës. Sepse pata uri dhe më dhatë për të ngrënë, pata etje dhe më dhatë për të pirë; isha i huaj dhe më pritët, isha i zhveshur dhe më veshët, isha i sëmurë dhe ju më vizitonit, isha në burg dhe erdhët tek unë”. Atëherë të drejtët do t'i përgjigjen duke thënë: "Zot, kur të pamë të uritur dhe të dhamë për të ngrënë; ose të etur dhe të dhamë për të pirë? Dhe kur të pamë të huaj dhe të pritëm ose të zhveshur dhe të veshëm? Dhe kur të pamë të lënguar ose në burg dhe erdhëm te ti?". Dhe Mbreti duke iu përgjigjur do t'u thotë: "Në të vërtetë po ju them: sa herë ia keni bërë këtë ndonjërit prej këtyre vëllezërve të mi më të vegjël, këtë ma bëtë mua. Pastaj ai do t'u thotë edhe atyre që do të jenë në të majtë: "Largohuni nga unë, të mallkuar, në zjarr të përjetshëm, të përgatitur për djallin dhe engjëjt e tij. Sepse pata uri dhe nuk më dhatë për të ngrënë, pata etje dhe nuk më dhatë për të pirë, isha i huaj dhe nuk më pritët, i zhveshur dhe nuk më veshët, i sëmurë dhe në burg dhe nuk erdhët të më shihni". Atëherë edhe ata do t'i përgjigjen duke thënë: "Zot, kur të pamë të uritur ose të etur, ose të huaj, ose të zhveshur, ose të lëngatë ose në burg dhe nuk të shërbyem?". Atëherë ai do t'u përgjigjet atyre duke thënë: "Në të vërtetë ju them: sa herë nuk ia keni bërë këtë ndonjërit prej këtyre më të vegjëlve, këtë nuk ma bëtë as edhe mua". Dhe ata do të shkojnë në mundim të përjetshëm, dhe të drejtët në jetën e përjetshme.”