

THE TROPHYBEARER

Pastoral Thoughts

As we begin on this holy journey of Great Lent, the Church, in her wisdom, has structured the first three Sundays to prepare our hearts and souls for the triumph of Pascha. Each Sunday calls us to deeper faith, repentance, and perseverance. Let us reflect on these sacred themes together.

On the 1st Sunday, we commemorate the restoration of the holy icons and the victory of true worship over heresy. The icons are not mere decorations but windows to heaven, reminding us of God becoming man in Jesus Christ. The Gospel reading (John 1:43-51) recounts Christ calling Philip and Nathanael. Nathanael, at first skeptical, is amazed when Christ reveals His divine knowledge: "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." This moment of revelation leads Nathanael to proclaim, "You are the Son of God!" Just as Nathanael moved from doubt to faith, we are also called to trust in Christ fully. The restoration of icons reminds us that our faith is not an abstract philosophy but an encounter with the living God. In this Lenten season, let us renew our faith and devotion, guarding ourselves against the modern heresies of doubt, materialism, and neglect of prayer.

On the 2nd Sunday, we remember St. Gregory Palamas, a great defender of inner stillness and unceasing prayer. His teachings affirm that we can experience God's divine light through prayer and ascetic struggle. The Gospel reading (Mark 2:1-12) tells of the paralytic lowered through the roof to Christ, who not only heals his body but forgives his sins. This reminds us that Lent is a time not just for outward fasting but for deep inner healing. Christ desires to forgive and transform us, but we must come to Him with humility and persistence, just as the friends of the paralytic did. Let us, then, follow the way of St. Gregory Palamas, committing ourselves to prayer, stillness, and repentance. The fast is not a burden but a medicine for the soul, drawing us into communion with God.

As we reach the midpoint of Lent, the Church places before us the Holy Cross, the symbol of victory through suffering. The Gospel (Mark 8:34-9:1) contains Christ's call: "If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow. "This is the heart of our Lenten journey. The Cross teaches us that true life comes through self-denial, and true joy comes through sacrifice. We may struggle with fasting, prayer, and repentance, but the Cross reminds us why we endure: to share in Christ's victory over sin and death. Just as a traveler finds strength when seeing a resting place ahead, so does the Cross refresh our souls in this season of struggle. Let us embrace it with faith, knowing that beyond the Cross lies the Resurrection.

Beloved in Christ, these first three Sundays of Lent guide us in faith, renewal, and perseverance. The Sunday of Orthodoxy calls us to stand firm in the truth. The Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas teaches us the power of prayer and divine grace. The Sunday of the Holy Cross strengthens us to endure the journey ahead. May we continue our Lenten pilgrimage with unwavering hearts, drawing ever closer to the glorious light of Pascha.



This issue:

Pastoral Thoughts

PAGE 01

Epistle Readers

PAGE 02

Parish Council Groups

PAGE 02

Evening Meal Volunteers

PAGE 02

Prospora Makers/Coffee
Social Hosts

PAGE 02

Lives of the Saints

PAGE 03

Church Calendar

PAGE 09

PARISH NEWS

Epistle Readers

Anyone wishing to become an Epistle Reader, Please
Contact Father Michael

Sunday, March 2, 2025: Forgiveness Sunday: Scott Florence

Sunday, March 9, 2025: The Sunday of Orthodoxy:

Kim Eastland

Sunday, March 16, 2025: The Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas:

Harry Coin

Sunday, March 23, 2025: Sunday of the Holy Cross: Mary Rankin

Sunday, March 30, 2025: Sunday of Saint John Climacus: Georgjean

Pitsoulakis

Evening Meal Volunteers

March 26, 2025: Kim Eastland and Carly Lamp

April 23, 2025: Kathy and Kevin Begyn

May 28, 2025: Dennis and Nancy Spurgetis

June 25, 2025: Father Michael, Presbyteria Maria and Patti Kenyon

July 23, 2025: Penny McGimpsey and Angela Spurgetis

August 27, 2025: Mary and Kim Winters and George and Diane Karoules

September 24, 2025: Dena Manta and Alexa Florence

October 22, 2025: Randy and Chris Smith

November 20, 2025: (Thursday) Ted Pitsoulakis and Jimmy Pliakos

December 18, 2025: (Thursday) Deacon Paul and Deaconess Romilie Speed

Anyone interested in taking part in this worthwhile ministry should
contact Mary Winters at 563-726- 2880

Parish Council Sunday Duty Schedule

Sunday, March 2, 2025: Kim Eastland, Mary Kay Eckert, Gus Pappas, and Ted

Pitsoulakis

Sunday, March 9, 2025: Kathy Begyn, Joe Burmeister, Dennis Spurgetis, and Mary

Rankin

Sunday, March 16, 2025: Tom Bakeris, Nick Coin, Mariellen Crosson, and Pete Hadjis

Sunday, March 23, 2025: Kim Eastland, Mary Kay Eckert, Gus Pappas, and Ted

Pitsoulakis

Sunday, March 30, 2025: Kathy Begyn, Joe Burmeister, Dennis Spurgetis, and

Mary Rankin

PROSPHORA MAKERS

Sunday, March 2, 2025:

Adrienne Johnson

Sunday, March 9, 2025: Open

Sunday, March 16, 2025: Open

Sunday, March 23, 2025: Open

Sunday, March 30, 2025: Open

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

Sunday, March 2, 2025: Joe And

Hillary Burmeister

Sunday, March 9, 2025: Elaine

Burmeister

Sunday, March 16, 2025: Jeff and

Elaine Amidon

Sunday, March 23, 2025: John

and Shan Corelis

Sunday, March 30, 2025: Kim

Eastland

PASTORAL NOTES:

- The week of March 3, 2025, the fourth week of the Triodion, is we begin the Lenten Fast. That means Monday through Friday we fast from meat, dairy, fish, wine and oil while on Saturday and Sunday we are allowed to have oil and wine, and still receive Holy Communion on Sunday.
- March 9, 2025: Sunday of Orthodoxy- the faithful are to bring an icon from home to participate in the procession of icons!

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Forgiveness Sunday (March 2)

The Holy Fathers have appointed the commemoration of Adam's exile from the Paradise of delight here, on the eve of the holy Forty-day Fast, demonstrating to us not by simple words, but by actual deeds, how beneficial fasting is for man, and how harmful and destructive are insatiety and the transgressing of the divine commandments. For the first commandment that God gave to man was that of fasting, which the first-fashioned received but did not keep; and not only did they not become gods, as they had imagined, but they lost even that blessed life which they had, and they fell into corruption and death, and transmitted these and innumerable other evils to all of mankind. The God-bearing Fathers set these things before us today, that by bringing to mind what we have fallen from, and what we have suffered because of the insatiety and disobedience of the first-fashioned, we might be diligent to return again to that ancient bliss and glory by means of fasting and obedience to all the divine commands. Taking occasion from today's Gospel (Matt. 6:14-21) to begin the Fast unencumbered by enmity, we also ask forgiveness this day, first from God, then from one another and all creation.

Sunday of Orthodoxy (March 9)

For more than one hundred years the Church of Christ was troubled by the persecution of the Iconoclasts of evil belief, beginning in the reign of Leo the Isaurian (717-741) and ending in the reign of Theophilus (829-842). After Theophilus's death, his widow the Empress Theodora (celebrated Feb. 11), together with the Patriarch Methodius (June 14), established Orthodoxy anew. This ever-memorable Queen venerated the icon of the Mother of God in the presence of the Patriarch Methodius and the other confessors and righteous men, and openly cried out these holy words: "If anyone does not offer relative worship to the holy icons, not adoring them as though they were gods, but venerating them out of love as images of the archetype, let him be anathema." Then with common prayer and fasting during the whole first week of the Forty-day Fast, she asked God's forgiveness for her husband. After this, on the first Sunday of the Fast, she and her son, Michael the Emperor, made a procession with all the clergy and people and restored the holy icons, and again adorned the Church of Christ with them. This is the holy deed that all we the Orthodox commemorate today, and we call this radiant and venerable day the Sunday of Orthodoxy, that is, the triumph of true doctrine over heresy.

Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas (March 16)

This divine Father, who was from Asia Minor, was from childhood reared in the royal court of Constantinople, where he was instructed in both religious and secular wisdom. Later, while still a youth, he left the imperial court and struggled in asceticism on Mount Athos, and in the Skete at Beroea. He spent some time in Thessalonica being treated for an illness that came from his harsh manner of life. He was present in Constantinople at the Council that was convened in 1341 against Barlaam of Calabria, and at the Council of 1347 against Acindynus, who was of like mind with Barlaam; Barlaam and Acindynus claimed that the grace of God is created. At both these Councils, the Saint contended courageously for the true dogmas of the Church of Christ, teaching in particular that divine grace is not created, but is the uncreated energies of God which are poured forth throughout creation: otherwise it would be impossible, if grace were created, for man to have genuine communion with the uncreated God. In 1347 he was appointed Metropolitan of Thessalonica. He tended his flock in an apostolic manner for some twelve years, and wrote many books and treatises on the most exalted doctrines of our Faith; and having lived for a total of sixty-three years, he reposed in the Lord in 1359. His holy relics are kept in the Cathedral of Thessalonica. A full service was composed for his feast day by the Patriarch Philotheus in 1368, when it was established that his feast be celebrated on this day. Since works without right faith avail nothing, we set Orthodoxy of faith as the foundation of all that we accomplish during the Fast, by celebrating the Triumph of Orthodoxy the Sunday before, and the great defender of the teachings of the holy Fathers today.

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS (MARCH 23)

The third Sunday of Lent marks the middle of the Lenten Season. During the early days of the Christian Church, this forty-day Lenten period was the most solemn period of the church year. All Christians maintained a strict fast. Meat, oil and dairy products were strictly forbidden. It was a period of fasting and prayer. Bible reading was accentuated and every Orthodox Christian performed good works of Christian charity. Many attended "religious retreats" at nearby monasteries and monastic communities. This forty-day period soon became known as a period of self-denial, self-sacrifice and repentance. Christians prepared themselves to suffer the agony undergone by our Savior as he was tempted by the devil in the desert and as he suffered and died upon the Cross of salvation. Since this very same Cross has been the symbol of victory of good over evil, life over death and eternal life over extinction, the Fathers of the Church saw fit to observe the third Sunday of Lent (the half-way mark in Lent) as "Adoration Sunday of the Holy Cross of Jesus Christ." By pausing during this Holy period of fasting, we receive courage and reassurance of God's continued grace by viewing the Cross of Christ. The service is similar to the feast day celebration of the "Elevation of the Cross" which is held every September 14th in the Orthodox Church. During today's service, the Cross is carried aloft by the Priest and flowers are distributed after the procession. This is symbolical of the beauty of the Resurrection of our Blessed Lord which we await to celebrate with great anticipation.

During ancient times in many far away lands the warring Kings, after winning victory on the fields of battle, would invariably dispatch a messenger back to the capital of the country in great haste to inform the people of the great victory and also of the coming triumphant return of the victorious King to the city. In so doing, the people were given the opportunity to prepare a giant celebration and reception for their leader. In the same way the Church, during the Service of the Adoration of the Holy Cross, has brought forward the Cross of Jesus Christ to remind us of the coming victory of Jesus Christ over death and evil. We are given reassurance of the greatest battle and the most significant victory in all human history - the victory of Jesus Christ over death. The Easter hymn tells us of this victory: "Christ has risen from the dead, by death trampling upon death and bestowing life to those in the tombs." This is the message which the mother Church wishes to convey today. The Cross of Jesus Christ has been our symbol of victory for 2000 years. Never lose sight of this - it is ours to share if we but take up arms against the forces of evil that surround us in a materialistic world and labor side by side for a better today and a finer tomorrow for all mankind.

THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS (MARCH 25)

Six months after John the Forerunner's conception, the Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth, a town of Galilee, unto Mary the Virgin, who had come forth from the Temple a mature maiden (see Nov. 21). According to the tradition handed down by the Fathers, she had been betrothed to Joseph four months. On coming to Joseph's house, the Archangel declared: "Rejoice, thou Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." After some consideration, and turmoil of soul, and fear because of this greeting, the Virgin, when she had finally obtained full assurance concerning God's unsearchable condescension and the ineffable dispensation that was to take place through her, and believing that all things are possible to the Most High, answered in humility: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it unto me according to thy word." And at this, the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her all-blameless womb, and the Son and Word of God, Who existed before the ages, was conceived past speech and understanding, and became flesh in her immaculate body (Luke 1:26-38). Bearing in her womb the Uncontainable One, the blessed Virgin went with haste from Nazareth to the hill country of Judea, where Zacharias had his dwelling; for she desired to find Elizabeth her kinswoman and rejoice together with her, because, as she had learned from the Archangel, Elizabeth had conceived in her old age. Furthermore, she wished to tell her of the great things that the Mighty One had been well pleased to bring to pass in her, and she greeted Elizabeth and drew nigh to her. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, she felt her six month-old babe, Saint John the Baptist, prophesied of the dawning of the spiritual Sun. Immediately, the aged Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and recognized her as the Mother of her Lord, and with a great voice blessed her and the Fruit that she held within herself. The Virgin also, moved by a supernatural rejoicing in the spirit, glorified her God and Savior, saying: "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," and the rest, as the divine Luke hath recorded (1:39-55)

Small act.



Big impact.

St. George Greek Orthodox Church

Sunday, March 16

11:30am - 1:30pm

Gold Room

**To book your appointment, contact Harry Coin
at hgcoin@gmail.com, call (800) 747-5401, or
scan the QR code.**

Last Date to donate: 1/19/25



2025 Saint George Pascha Potluck Dinner

Come join us following AGAPE Vespers for a wonderful Lamb dinner provided by St. George Greek Orthodox Church.

Everyone brings something along with them and we share in the truest sense of Christians.



Good Music

Fun fellowship

Foods from all around the world.

Join us for the Saint George Greek Orthodox Church annual

PASCHA POTLUCK DINNER



SAINT GEORGE FEAST DAY CELEBRATION



On Tuesday, April 22, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., we will celebrate Great Vespers for the feast of Saint George.

THE TROPHYBEARER
Following Great Vespers will be a coffee reception

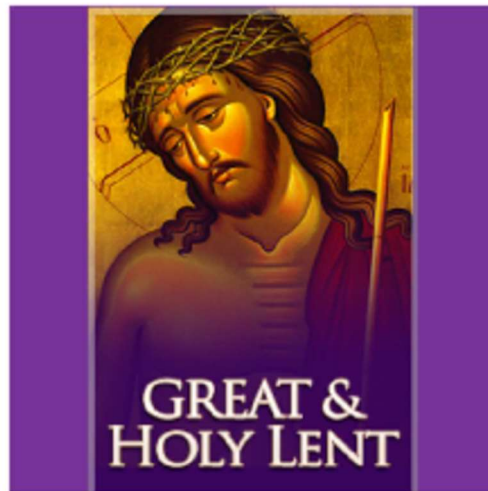
Then, on Wednesday, April 23, 2023, we will celebrate the feast day of The Great Martyr George the Trophybearer with Orthros at 8:30 a.m. and Divine Liturgy at 9:30 a.m.

Immediately following Divine Liturgy a Luncheon Buffet for all those in attendance.

All are invited to join us in celebration of the Great Martyr George.

Come and enjoy a day of celebration honoring our Great Saint.





Lenten Schedule 2025

Cheese fare Sunday

5:00 p.m. Forgiveness Vespers

Great Compline

@ Saint George 6:00 p.m.: Monday, March 3, 2025

@ Assumption 6:00 p.m.: Monday, March 10, 2025, March 17, 2025, and Monday, March 31, 2025

Presanctified Liturgy on Wednesdays

March 12, 2025: 6:00 p.m. at Saint George

March 19, 2025: 5:30 p.m. at Assumption

March 26, 2025: 6:00 p.m. at Saint George

April 3, 2025: 5:30 p.m. at Assumption

Monday, March 24, 2025:

6:00 p.m. Great Vespers for the Annunciation @ Assumption

Tuesday, March 25, 2025:

The Annunciation of the Theotokos:

8:00 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at Assumption

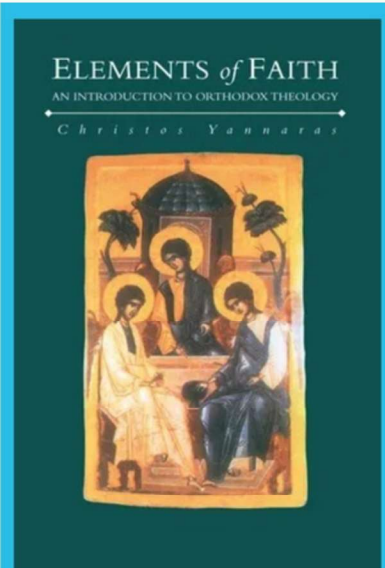
Salutations on Fridays at 7:00 p.m.

March 8, 15, 22, 29 and April 4.

Saturdays of Souls: March 1 & 8:

8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy.

**Let's explore:
Elements of
the Faith: An
Introduction to
the Orthodox
Theology by
Christos
Yannaras.**



Every Thursday at 7 PM .
Join us either in person (in our parish
library) or via zoom

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 2nd Saturday of Souls Fasting from Meat Only 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy
2 Forgiveness Sunday "Cheese-fare" Sunday Fasting from Meat Only 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion 5:00 p.m. Forgiveness Vespers	3 Clean Monday Great Lent Begins 6:00 P.M. Great Compline	4 Fast Day	5 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy	6 Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Book Study: Elements of Faith: An Introduction to Orthodox Theology by Christos Yannaras (join us either in person (in our parish library) or via zoom.	7 Fast Day 7:00 p.m. 1st Salutations	8 3rd Saturday of Souls Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy
9 1st Sunday of Lent Sunday of Orthodoxy Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes follow Holy Communion	10 Fast Day 6:00 P.M. Great Compline @ Assumption	11 Fast Day	12 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 5:30 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ Assumption	13 Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Book Study: Elements of Faith: An Introduction to Orthodox Theology by Christos Yannaras (join us either in person (in our parish library) or via zoom.	14 Fast Day 9:00 a.m. Women's Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 7:00 p.m. 2nd Salutations	15 Oil and Wine Allowed
16 2nd Sunday of Lent Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes follow Holy Communion Blood Drive following the Divine Liturgy	17 Fast Day 6:00 P.M. Great Compline @ Assumption	18 Fast Day	19 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 6:00 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy	20 Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Book Study: Elements of Faith: An Introduction to Orthodox Theology by Christos Yannaras (join us either in person (in our parish library) or via zoom.	21 Fast Day 7:00 p.m. 3rd Salutations	22 Oil and Wine Allowed
23 3rd Sunday of Lent Sunday of the Holy Cross Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes follow Holy Communion	24 Fast Day	25 The Annunciation of the Theotokos Fish, Oil and Wine allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy at Assumption	26 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum Evening Meal 5:30 p.m. Presanctified Divine Liturgy @ Assumption	27 Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Book Study: Elements of Faith: An Introduction to Orthodox Theology by Christos Yannaras (join us either in person (in our parish library) or via zoom.	28 Fast Day 7:00 p.m. 4th Salutations	29 Oil and Wine Allowed
30 4th Sunday of Lent Sunday of Saint John Climacus Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes follow Holy Communion	31 Fast Day 6:00 P.M. Great Compline @ Assumption					