



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

***The Sunday of the
Honorable and Life-giving
Cross***

***Troparion of the Resurrec-
tion, Tone 3***

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm! He has trampled down death by death! He has become the firstborn of the dead! He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world great mercy!

***Troparion of Annunciation,
Tone 4***

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

***Troparion for the Honora-
ble Cross Tone 1***

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross, preserve Thy habitation.

***The Third Sunday of Great Lent
Tone 3, April 7th, Mk. 8:34-9:1***

On this third Sunday of the Great Fast we celebrate the Veneration of the precious and life-giving Cross. Since during the forty days of the Fast we are also in a way crucified, mortified to the passions, contrite, abased and despondent, the precious and life-giving Cross is offered to us as refreshment and confirmation, calling to mind the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and comforting us. If our God was crucified for our sake, how great should be our effort for His sake, since our afflictions have been assuaged through the Lord's tribulations, and by the commemoration and the hope of the Cross of glory. For as our Savior in ascending the Cross was glorified through dishonor and grief, so should we also endure our sorrows, in order to be glorified with Him.

Also, as those who have traveled a long hard road, weighed down by the labors of their journey, in finding a shady tree, take their ease for a moment and then continue their journey rejuvenated, so now in this time of the Fast, this sorrowful and laborious journey, the Holy Fathers have planted the life-giving Cross, for our relief and refreshment, to encourage and make easier the labors that lie ahead. Or as when there is a royal procession, the king's scepter and banners precede him, and then he then himself appears, radiant and joyous in his victory, causing his subjects to rejoice with him. So then our Lord Jesus Christ, desiring to show His sure victory over death and His glory on the day of the Resurrection, sends His scepter before Himself, the sign of His kingship, the life-giving Cross, to gladden and refresh us, as it greatly fortifies and enables us to be prepared to receive the King with all possible strength, and to praise Him in His radiant victory.

This week lies at the middle of the holy Forty Day Fast. The Fast is like a bitter source because of our contrition and the sadness and sorrow for sin that it brings. And as Moses plunged the branch in the bitter waters of Marah, making them sweet, so God Who has led us through the spiritual Red Sea away from Pharaoh, through the life-giving wood of the precious and life-giving Cross, sweetens the bitterness of the Forty Day Fast, and comforts us as those who were in the wilderness, up until the time when by His Resurrection He will lead us to the spiritual Jerusalem. And since the Cross is called, and indeed is, the Tree of Life, it is the very tree that was planted in the Garden of

Announcements and Activities

Presanctified Liturgy— Wednesday, at 5:15PM, and not the usual 6PM. Fr. Lawrence will be giving a talk in Santa Barbara. Those desiring to receive Holy Communion should say Pre-Communion prayers and fast from food and drink from the time after their lunchtime meal to the reception of Holy Communion at the Presanctified Liturgy.

Great Vespers— Saturday, at 5:30PM.

Divine Liturgy— Sunday, at 10AM.

Coffee Hour— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Diane F. and the Conrads. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by the Nantzes and Sunday. Until PASCHA, on May 5th, no meat, eggs or dairy may be served at Coffee Hours. Keep in mind that that includes byproducts: no MILK chocolate, no sour CREAM, no regular Mayo, etc. There are, of course, vegan substitutes for many of these items, and these are fine. Fish (with a backbone) is permitted twice in Lent: on March 25th, our feast day, and on Palm Sunday (April 28th). Shrimp, clams and other shellfish are permitted to be served, but should be prepared in a vegan manner.

Church School/Adult Ed— April 21st, at 9AM.

Parish Council— next Sunday, after Divine Liturgy and Coffee Hour.

Landscaping Project— As you can see, we finished the landscaping project. We have only to plant plants in the planters. Again, thanks to all who worked this week to lay out the planters and do all other necessary things. As I said last week, we did exceed our budget, so if anyone would like to donate toward the plants we'll be installing you may do so by adding a designated offering by cash, check or electronic transfer. Thank you. .

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy— who are ill.** **Jonathan**— ill. **Reposed Barbara Ranjo.** . **Laure**— battling Cancer. **Paul**— ill **Ralph**—ill **Archpriest Lawrence**, from Canada, progressive eye disease. **Tsige Roman**— our beloved Tsige reposed on December 3rd. Please keep praying for her homeland of Ethiopia. **Brian**— ill.. **Jonathan**— ill. **Katia**— sister of Shkbarra's . **Patrick**, reposed. **Heather Mary**— uncommon fatigue **Dr. Joseph**— personal needs. **Lance**— special request for prayers. **Christian**— prayers for upcoming surgery. Mike Meko's Mother-in-law, Larissa's newly-reposed husband **Raphael**. Departed **Matushka Priscilla** and **Newly-departed, George. Luci F. recovering from surgery.** **Newly- Departed Marylyn**; ill, **Diane**, ill, **Colin. John Truman**—lightheadedness and a recent fall. **Daniel** reposed, Tom and Amy, who lost their son. **Nicholas, the father of a friend.** **Rose Marie**— Rachel's mother, cancer. **Barbara H.**—recovering from a fall. **Claude (Moses)**- in need of housing. **Eleni**— aftermath of a stroke. **Sharon. Baby Archie.** **Phil-covid.** **Reposed Makhoul. Marius and Lucia.** (aka **Darrell** and **Laura Beth**) health issues. **Todd**, cancer and wife Anna

Eden. So it is fitting that the Holy Fathers have planted the Tree of the Cross in the middle of the Forty Day Fast to commemorate both Adam's tasting of its sweet fruit and of its being taken from us in favor of the Tree of the Cross, tasting of which we shall in no way die, but will have even greater life.

(Taken from the *Synaxarion for the third Sunday of Lent, the Cross*)

From the Lives of the Saints... ST. Tikhon of Moscow, Apostle to America, April 7

One horror, among many, that ST TIKHON of Moscow endured during the Russian Revolution, but lived through it with inspired faith

Among the many horrors endured by Tikhon, he was put on trial to testify regarding 18 of his fellow clergymen, pronounced guilty for refusing to sell the instruments of the eucharist so the proceeds could help the poor. The times were indeed terrible, as famine and related illnesses killed as many as five million in Russia and cannibalism was not uncommon. Tikhon had insisted that, while land and buildings and other non-sacred church property could be sold, those items sacred to the altar could not. He reminded the accusers that the Church would willingly donate money for the value of the instruments, but the government authorities refused the money. The Bolsheviks assured him his 18 men would be executed. According to an eye-witness, "The elder cast a kind and loving glance at the ministers of the altar and said clearly and firmly: 'I have always said, both to the investigative authorities and to all the people, that in this I alone am guilty. These are merely my army of Christ, which is obediently carrying out the orders of the leader given it by God.' . . . Here the voice of the Patriarch rose and was audible in all corners of the immense hall; and he himself seemed to grow when, turning to the accused, he raised his hand and blessed them, loudly and distinctly saying: 'I bless the faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ to suffer and die for Him.

Patriarch TIKHON'S advice to his flock...

The enemies of the Church seize rule over her property by force of death-dealing weapons; but you, rise to oppose them with the strength of your faith, with your own nationwide outcry which would stop those senseless people and would show them that they have no right to call themselves protagonists of the people's welfare . . . for they are directly against the conscience of the people. "And if it should be necessary to suffer on behalf of the cause of Christ, we invite you, beloved children of the Church, to suffer along with us in accordance with the words of the holy apostle: 'Who shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?'" (Rom. 8:35). ". . . Join, voluntarily, not by force, the ranks of spiritual fighters, who will oppose the external violence with the force of their genuine spirituality; we then positively affirm that the enemies of the Church of Christ shall be shamed and shall be dispersed by the might of the cross of Christ, for the promise of the divine cross-bearer is immutable: 'I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'" (Matt. 16:18). — Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Jan. 19, 1918.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, Compiled and written by ST. Nikolai Velimirovic

"There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives" (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)