



PANAGIA PANTOVASILISSA
HOLY MOTHER QUEEN OF ALL
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
A COMMUNITY FOR ALL

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Lent 2020

Fasting Amidst Uncertainty: A Time to Remember the Things We Tend to Forget



By: Fr. William

As we enter into Great Lent this year, we are doing so in the midst of a period of uncertainty. Indeed, all around us—whether we are speaking about the markets, the media, or medicine—there seems to be panic. It seems as if the world has gone mad with worry over the current coronavirus epidemic. We have seen epic crashes in the stock market. We have seen cases here in Kentucky. And it seems the narrative all around us is one of uncertainty and terror. We find ourselves wondering when calm might be restored... and sometimes we worry that it never will.

My friends, it is at times like this that I find solace in the historical studies I undertook before going to seminary. And we need not look back into the foggy depths of antiquity; indeed, we need only look back to the last decade! In 2008 and 2009, the sky was falling. There had been warning shots across our bow for around a year that the bull market was in trouble, but the indices kept moving along in a holding pattern after a period of record highs. Then things came to a head in the fall of 2008. We became very familiar with the phrase “too big to fail” as companies in the financial sector began to fall like dominoes. Money hemorrhaged out of the markets, and unemployment began to skyrocket. In a few short months, the comfortable existence to which we had grown accustomed was turned on its head. By that winter, we were in a full-blown recession and the atmosphere around us was one of panic and frustration.

In the spring and summer of 2009, things had begun to improve financially, and we might have justly expected a bit of respite. It was at this point that we were hit by the swine flu epidemic. I recall it well, as I first heard about it on a ferry going from Mykonos to Athens. I was travelling as a Teaching Assistant at the time, and while there were more overall cases and the mortality rate was far higher, we had no trouble with restrictions travelling from America to Holland, from

Holland to Greece, from Greece to Turkey, and then running the whole route in reverse! When we returned to the United States, which saw around 59 million cases within a year—far in excess of the pace of the current epidemic—there was little panic. Indeed, things were almost normal. That is not to say that we were avoiding a reasonable degree of worry. It is only to say that we had not entirely taken leave of our reason.

My point is not that we should show a complete lack of concern. Indeed, according to the directives of the Archdiocese, we have put into place basic measures in our own parish to do our part in protecting the most vulnerable among us. My point is that these things we are doing *are* in fact, nothing more than basic measures! While certain things are new, most of the things that have been recommended by the CDC and others in the midst of the current situation are simply things that we should be doing anyway. Cover your cough. Wash your hands thoroughly. Maintain a proper distance from those who appear ill. And if you are ill, yourself, try to protect others by avoiding them. Indeed, while we should be cautious about the coronavirus, we should be far more alarmed that washing one's hands appears to be a new and surprising practice for so many individuals!

Yet this collective reaction should be no surprise to us. It is at times of crisis that we are thoughtful. And when we are thoughtful, we tend to examine our lives and practice the things that we overlook when the world around us appears to be normal. In our spiritual lives, Great Lent serves the same function. Though it is extremely beneficial, the entrance into the Fast *is* a crisis, in a sense, because it upends the “normal” order of our lives. And like all crises, it is a bit scary! There are numerous opportunities to pray, and we find that, at all of them, we are reminded of things that we know we should remember, but that we are tempted to forget. We are sinners. We need to seek and receive the grace and mercy of our Saviour. And we need the support of one another in seeking that mercy. This is discomfiting for us because it reminds us that we are *not* self-sufficient. We cannot pull ourselves up by the bootstraps without invoking an absurdity so paradoxical that it has become proverbial.

This uncertainty in our spiritual lives frightens us. And when we are frightened, we are tempted to flee. Yet we find, if we are willing to enter into the life of worship of the Church during Great Lent, if we strive to open our hearts to the grace and mercy of the Master, if we seek to join together with our parish family in seeking solace in our Saviour, that we become stronger through the adversity and discipline of the fast. And in going through this struggle we also remember those practices that would be so beneficial throughout the rest of our lives, were we to observe them: daily prayer and reading of scripture, frequent collective worship in the Church, reserving judgement of others, and being kind and compassionate to those that we meet. Though these practices might be difficult to implement, and though they represent a sometimes painful break from the patterns to which we have become accustomed, we will find that they will, to a great degree, help us to deal with chaos in our spiritual lives, just as basic practices help us to deal with the chaos around us in the world.

Neither the Fast nor the current uncertainty will last, my friends. I can promise you that. As my grandfather was always fond of quoting, “This too shall pass.” And I can also promise you this: That even in the unlikely event that things grow immeasurably worse, it is the sure promise of our faith that they will ultimately get better. For in times of uncertainty, we turn towards Christ, who tells us “In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” In turning towards Christ, and hearing His words, we find it easier to turn toward one another, ready with an outstretched and helping hand. In the midst of uncertainty, may we all be comforted by His love, as well as by our brothers and sisters with whom we dwell together under His protection.

With every prayer for the beloved faithful of our parish family, and seeking the intercession of the Theotokos, for her protection, I remain,

Fr. William

President's Notes

By: Delores Minor

The period of Great Lent gives us many opportunities to reflect, to ask for forgiveness, to partake in confession, and to attend a variety of services. Great Compline on Mondays, Presanctified Liturgy and the Lenten Reading Group on Wednesdays, Salutations to the Theotokos on Fridays, Matins and Liturgy on Sundays - these are all options our church is offering to you!! I ask that you attend at least one service that you may not have attended before. It is a way to understand and grow in your faith and to find a sense of calmness.

In some Christian religions, parishioners choose to give up something during Lent; often it is a food item or giving up TV watching or using social media. Lately I have seen a list suggesting to fast from pessimism and be filled with hope or to fast from worries and trust in God or to fast from pressures and be prayerful. During this Lenten season, I wish you a heartfelt time of prayer and mindfulness and that you find peace in your soul. Our church family is here to worship this time together.

Lenten Worship Schedule

MONDAY

6 PM – Great Compline

This service is a service which is deeply focused on repentance and opening ourselves to the mercy and grace of God. We are sinners, yes, but the image of our Creator within us has not been destroyed; rather, it has been damaged. As Lord of the Powers, He is ever ready to render His aid to those who call upon him. In this service, we do precisely that. At this service we also engage in congregational reading. The faithful who come, themselves, call directly upon our Lord on their own behalf and on behalf of the community.

WEDNESDAY

6 PM – Presanctified Liturgy

This service, which tradition ascribes to Gregory the Dialogist, is a penitential liturgy. Since there is no consecration during the week during Great Lent, the *amos* (lamb) is consecrated instead on the Sunday prior to the Presanctified Liturgy and reserved in the *artophorion* (bread carrier). Thus, this is already the Body of Christ at the beginning of the service, and is ceremonially carried to the Proskomide table, where it is covered in preparation for the entrance, which is much more subdued than the normal entrances.

7 PM – Lenten Adult Study and Potluck

On Wednesday nights, we gather together in a fellowship meal provided from the fruits of our labour, and we learn together about our faith. Please ensure that all dishes are fast appropriate. This year, we will be reading 30 Steps to Heaven, which is a lay-focused adaptation of the Ladder of Divine Ascent by John Climacus.

FRIDAY

4:30 PM – Orthodoxy 101

Due to special requests, we will be holding a special session of Orthodoxy 101 during Great Lent, before the Salutations service. Anyone who is interested in learning about the faith is invited to attend.

6 PM – Salutations and Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos

These services are a series of hymns which praise the Theotokos for the aid she has rendered the faithful throughout history. They were directly inspired by her protection of the city of Constantinople against seemingly insurmountable odds during the last Romano-Persian War. Just as all seemed lost, Our Champion Leader put to flight the countless hordes of Avars and Persians, and her city was preserved to endure for almost a thousand years longer. Today we praise her not only for this victory, but for the countless victories over sin and death that we have won in Christ through her intercession.

SATURDAY

6 PM – Great Vespers

This is the service at which we prepare for and welcome the Lord's Day, on the night before we gather together to receive Christ. At the midpoint of the service, when we sing "O Gladsome Light", the Church, which was dimly lit, becomes awash with light. This is the transition from the Sabbath, to the Day of the Lord, on which we shall receive His Body and Blood, thereby sacramentally becoming the Body of Christ. We gather the night before to prepare ourselves.

7 PM – The Sacrament of Confession

The time following the conclusion of Great Vespers will be set aside for those among the faithful who feel burdened and wounded by sin to come to Confession as we prepare to receive our Lord together the following day. If you wish to confess, please plan to be at the Church by the conclusion of Great Vespers (approximately 6:45 PM).

Philoptochos Corner

By: Carolyn Janssen

This month we have a lot of news I'd like to share. Thank you to everyone who attended our 3M and supported our membership drive. It was a great opportunity to get together and just enjoy each other's company. And a big thank you to Pam and Walter Cox for opening their home to us.



The National Philoptochos has asked that local chapters adopt a school. **We have adopted Glendover Elementary School**, which is right up the street from us. The Migrant Education Program at Glendover offers services to migrant families and out of school youth. They also have a large Hispanic and refugee population. The school offers tutoring, online classes, summer school services, clothing, food and information on different services such as legal aid, clothing and food banks etc in the area. This will be an ongoing partnership.

Thank you to Delores who contacted Glendover to ask about their needs. They are as follows:

- Girls and boys underwear – sizes 6-14,
- Jogging and sweat pants also sizes 6-14 in neutral colors,
- Inexpensive earbuds which the students use for Chromebooks
- School Supplies (markers, pencils, crayons etc).

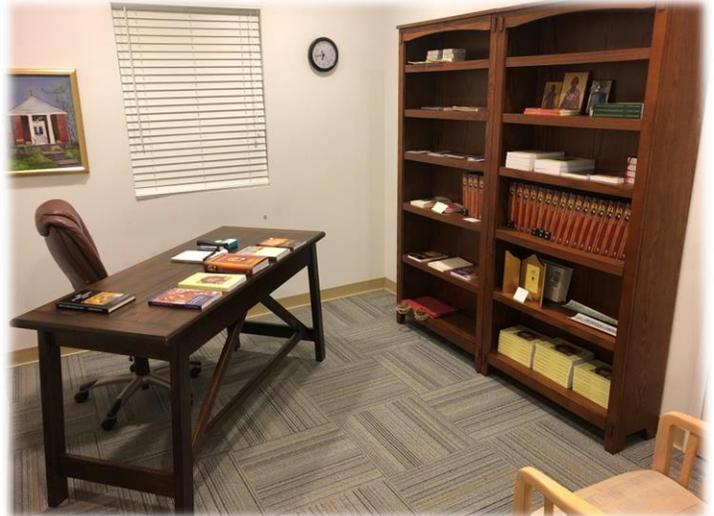
We will be accepting donations to the school on an ongoing basis. The needs may change so I will keep you posted.

We will also be providing a lunch once a month at Nathaniel Mission. This is a wonderful service project for us and Jim Scalos has volunteered to do the cooking beginning on March 3rd for the first Tuesday of every month. Jim will do the cooking but I am hoping that a few people will be willing to take turns volunteering some time to possibly help serve and clean up beginning at noon and staying until the cleanup is done.

Tina Thompson has also asked us to contribute to **NEDA – National Eating Disorders Association**. They are a non-profit in the field of eating disorders, reaching millions of individuals and families through lifesaving programs, resources and support networks. Tina is hosting a walk on April 25th. The first walk was held last year with over 250 walkers and raised \$22,000. I'd love to put together a team. Obesity and eating disorders are a huge and dangerous problem. The health issues and medical costs brought about by poor nutrition affect all of us. Exercise, fresh air, time with friends and to benefit a good cause. I've attached some information and there is a lot more on their website. Most important, I want to thank everyone. The generosity of the members of this parish enables us to share the blessings we enjoy in our lives with others.

Check out Our Bookstore!

With new items coming in each month, our Bookstore is finally up and running. We have a variety of devotional items and spiritual reading available. Whether you are looking for a book to give a friend, some stickers for the kids, or a prayer rope, we have you covered!



FiftyUp

By: Jim Hangis and Kitty Koniali

"We are Seenagers (Senior teenagers).

*We have everything that we wanted as a teenager,
only 50 years later.*

We don't have to go to school or work.

We get an allowance every month.

We have our own pad.

We don't have a curfew.

We have a driver's license and our own car.

We have ID that gets us into the wine store.

*The people we hang around with are not scared of anything;
they have been blessed to live this long, why be scared?*

And we don't have acne.

Life is Good!



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Spring General Assembly

In February, we held our Spring General Assembly. Many thanks to the Parish Council who organized it, as well as to the 42 parishioners in good standing who participated, as well as to everyone who attended (especially the youth!). It is always a blessing to see so many people invested in the spiritual governance and growth of our Church!



Apokreatiko Glendi

Our thanks go out to the ladies of our local Philoptochos Chapter for hosting our Apokreatiko Glendi to benefit our Sunday Church School. A wonderful time was had by all!



March 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Forgiveness Sunday 9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy 6:00 PM – Forgiveness Vespers	2 Clean Monday: Lent Begins 6:00 PM – Great Compline	3	4 5:45 PM – Presanctified Liturgy 7:00 PM – Reading Group	5	6 4:30 PM – Orthodoxy 101 (Open House) 6:00 PM – Salutations to the Theotokos	7 3 rd Saturday of Souls 9:00 AM – Matins, Liturgy, and Memorials
8 Sunday of Orthodoxy 9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy 12:00 – Philoptochos Board Meeting 6:00 PM – Pan-Orthodox Vespers (Louisville, KY)	9 6:00 PM – Great Compline	10 6:30 PM – Y'ALL Dinner 7:00 PM – Parish Council Meeting	11 5:45 PM – Presanctified Liturgy 7:00 PM – Reading Group	12	13 4:30 PM – Orthodoxy 101 (Open House) 6:00 PM – Salutations to the Theotokos	14 6:00 PM – Great Vespers 6:45 PM – Confession
15 9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy	16 6:00 PM – Great Compline	17	18 5:45 PM – Presanctified Liturgy 7:00 PM – Reading Group	19	20 4:30 PM – Orthodoxy 101 (Open House) 6:00 PM – Salutations to the Theotokos	21 6:00 PM – Great Vespers 6:45 PM – Confession
22 9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy	23 6:00 PM – Great Compline	24 Eve of the Annunciation	25 Annunciation 9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy 5:45 PM – Presanctified Liturgy 7:00 PM – Reading Group	26	27 4:30 PM – Orthodoxy 101 (Open House) 6:00 PM – Salutations to the Theotokos	28 6:00 PM – Great Vespers 6:45 PM – Confession
29 9:00 AM – Matins and Liturgy	30 6:00 PM – Great Compline	31				

Parish Ministries and Organizations

Altar Servers: Fr. William, Joel Scott, Michael Knierim
Adult Education: Fr. William, Elizabeth Smith
Cantors: Chrisi Karounos, Nick Douglas, Chris Covington
Choir: Helen Pantazakos
GOYA: Sarah Nash, Mandy Xenos, Emily Wines
FiftyUp: Jim Hangis
Philoptochos: Carolyn Janssen
Sunday Church School: Delores Minor
Y'ALL: Angela Brown

Parish Council

President: Delores Minor
Vice President: Vlad Radulescu
Secretary: Peter Sawaya
Treasurer: Dennis Karounos
Members: Ronald Adkins, Virgil Cornea, Crist Creona, Nick Douglas, Ken Kiriacopoulos, Daniela Moga, Joel Scott