

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton
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Bulletin for Sunday March 15th, 2015

Schedule of Services

March 15th Sunday Veneration of the Precious Cross

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
6:00 p.m. *Pan-Orthodox Vespers, St. John's, Euless*

March 18th Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts, Meal, Life of Antony

March 19th Thursday

6:00 a.m. Matins, Confession
3:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

March 20th Friday

6:00 a.m. Matins, Confession
3:30 p.m. Class: Lenten Themes from the Triodion
5:00 p.m. Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts, Meal, Life of Antony

March 21st Saturday

5:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

March 22nd Fourth Sunday St. John of the Ladder

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
6:00 p.m. *Pan-Orthodox Vespers, St. Peter's, Fort Worth*

Now that we have come, my Christ, to the middle of the time of abstinence, and have reached the veneration of Thy life-giving Cross, falling down before it we call upon Thee: Mighty art Thou, who lovest mankind, and mighty are Thy works, for Thou hast made manifest Thy precious Cross. In fear we venerate it as we cry: Glory to Thy boundless compassion. *Monday Matins of the Fourth Week*

The Third Sunday of Lent is called "The Veneration of the Cross." At the Vigil of that day, after the Great Doxology, the Cross is brought in a solemn procession to the center of the church and remains there for the whole week—with a special rite of veneration following each service. It is noteworthy that the theme of the Cross which dominates the hymnology of that Sunday is developed in terms not of suffering but of victory and joy. . . . The meaning of all this is clear. We are in *Mid-Lent*. On the one hand, the physical and spiritual effort, if it is serious and consistent, begins to be felt, its *(cont. p. 4)*

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission
belongs to the Diocese of the South, Orthodox Church in America

Announcements for March 15

To Our Visitors: Welcome! Please join us after the service for coffee, food, and conversation. If you would, fill out a visitor's card for us and leave it in the basket on the table by the door. We invite you to go first through the food line and join the priest at a table.

To All: Please be aware that Holy Communion is open only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves for worthy participation in the Mystery through prayer, fasting, and a recent confession to a priest (within the last month or so). We should be modestly dressed (so as not to distract others) and present to hear "Blessed is the Kingdom" at the beginning of the Liturgy (in *unusual* circumstances no later than the Gospel reading if we are communing), and not leave until the dismissal at the end.

The Special Offering this week will be for the family of the newly-departed priest, Fr. Matthew Baker, who died in a car accident last Sunday. He leaves behind a wife and six young children.

Temple Wine given for the health and salvation of William and Carolyn.

Many Thanks to all of you who helped make our first time to host a DFW Pan-Orthodox Vespers a resounding success!

Mission Council will meet today. No **Basics** class today.

Synod Meeting: Please pray for the Holy Synod this Monday through Wednesday as they elect a bishop for our diocese.

Classes this Week

Friday, 3:30 Themes in the Triodion & a Command of Christ

Upstairs Repairs: Repairs have been made to the damaged sheetrock, and Mrs. Stevenson's classroom and the bathroom have been repainted. The bathroom sink is not working, so those who use the upstairs bathroom will need to wash their hands in the kitchen upstairs (quietly, during services) or downstairs.

Monastery: Fr. Justin will be visiting the monastery this week until Wednesday afternoon.

The Fast: Fourth Week

We abstain from meat, meat products, dairy, fish, wine (alcohol), oil. If fasting fully according to the norm, we take one meal a day M-F after 3 p.m. or after the Presanctified Liturgy. We join increased prayer and almsgiving to our fasting and cut back on (or cut out) all things that distract us unnecessarily from Christ. Whatever time the Presanctified Liturgy is served, the Eucharistic fast should begin no fewer than six hours before it.

Lenten Almsgiving: This Lent we will collect imperishable goods for our food pantry. The children are collecting books for Cumberland Children's Home. Cash may be put in the alms box for those in need, both inside and outside the parish. We'll take up special offerings for the IOCC as well.

Tithes, Offerings & Attendance: Bringing our tithes and offerings to the temple of God is part of our worship of God, which also supports our efforts to proclaim the fullness of the Gospel of Christ in Denton through the establishment of a permanent Orthodox parish and new missions in Denton County and north Texas. Checks should be made out to St. Maximus Orthodox Church and placed in the basket on the candle table, where there is also a box for alms (those in need) and a box for our building fund.

Last week, we gave \$1509.74 in tithes and offerings; this month we have given \$3428.88; our monthly budget is \$9502 (\$2192 per week). Candles \$50.50; Special offering for family of Fr. Matthew Baker \$620; Renovation fund (drink jar) \$3. Attendance: Liturgy 85, Vigil 33.

Please Pray: the novice Elias, and the novice Svetlana. Pray for Joe Fincher and Olga, for Joanna (Sherri) Hale, for Patricia, Perpetua, and James Lydon. Please pray for former parishioner Natalya Perrin, and for Mary Moses who is out of the country.

From Saint Maximus

In Scripture the virtues are called 'ways'. The greatest of all the virtues is love. That is why St Paul said, 'Now I will show you the best way of all' (1 Cor. 12:31), one that persuades us to scorn material things and value nothing transitory more than what is eternal.

Love of God is opposed to desire, for it persuades the intellect to control itself with regard to sensual pleasures. Love for our neighbor is opposed to anger, for it makes us scorn fame and riches. These are the two pence which our Savior gave to the innkeeper (cf. Luke 10:31), so that he should take care of you. But do not be thoughtless and associate with robbers; otherwise you will be beaten again and left not merely unconscious but dead.

Cleanse your intellect from anger, rancor and shameful thoughts, and you will be able to perceive the indwelling of Christ.

Who enlightened you with faith in the holy, coessential and adorable Trinity? Or who made known to you the incarnate dispensation of one of the Holy Trinity? Who taught you about the inner essences of incorporeal beings, or about the origin and consummation of the visible world, or about the resurrection from the dead and eternal life, or about the glory of the kingdom of heaven and the dreadful judgment? Was it not the grace of Christ dwelling in you, which is

the pledge of the Holy Spirit? What is greater than this grace? What is more noble than this wisdom and knowledge? What is more lofty than these promises? But if we are lazy and negligent, and if we do not cleanse ourselves from the passions which defile us, blinding our intellect and so preventing us from seeing the inner nature of these realities more clearly than the sun, let us blame ourselves and not deny the indwelling of grace. *400 Chapters on Love, 4.74-77*

(continued from page 1) burden becomes more burdensome, our fatigue more evident. We need help and encouragement. On the other hand, having endured this fatigue, having climbed the mountain up to this point, we begin to see the end of our pilgrimage, and the rays of Pascha grow in their intensity. Let us our self-crucifixion, our experience, limited as it is, of Christ's commandment heard in the Gospel lesson of that Sunday: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." But we cannot take up our cross and follow Christ unless we have *His Cross* which He took up in order to save us. It is His Cross, not ours, that saves us. It is His Cross that gives not only meaning but also power to others. This is explained to us in the *synaxarion* [reading at Matins] of the Sunday of the Cross. . . Thus, refreshed and reassured, we begin the second part of Lent. . . . The emphasis now shifts from us, from our repentance and effort, to the events which took place "for our sake and for our salvation." *Fr. Alexander Schmemmann, Great Lent*

Troparia and Kontakia for Sunday, March 15

Resurrectional Troparion, tone 7

By Thy Cross Thou didst destroy death. / To the thief Thou didst open Paradise. / For the myrrh-bearers Thou didst change their lamentation into joy. / And Thou didst command Thine Apostles, O Christ God, / to proclaim that Thou art risen, / granting unto the world great mercy.

Sunday of the Cross, Troparion, tone 1

O Lord, save Thy people / and bless Thine inheritance. / Grant victory to Orthodox Christians / over the enemy; / and by Thy Cross / preserve Thine estate.

Kontakion of the Third Sunday of Lent, tone 7

The fiery sword no longer guardeth the gate of Eden, / for in a strange and glorious way / the wood of the Cross hath quenched its flames. / The sting of death and the victory of hell are now destroyed, / for Thou art come, O my Savior, / crying unto those in hell: / "Return again to Paradise."