



Protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church

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Celebration of the Holy Mysteries

RECITATION OF THE HOLY ROSARY AND CONFESSIONS: ½ HR BEFORE DIVINE LITURGY

BAPTISM & CHRISMATION / ANNOINTING OF THE SICK / COMMUNION CALLS & VISITATIONS:
CONTACT FR. IHOR TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS

MARRIAGE PREPARATION:
CONTACT FR. IHOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS PRIOR TO SETTING THE ACTUAL WEDDING DATE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN:
CONTACT MRS. CHRISTINA VOGEL AT (603) 686-2092 TO REGISTER YOUR CHILDREN

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE LITURGIES:
SUNDAYS: 10 AM (September thru May) MON THRU SAT: AS NOTED IN WEEKLY BULLETIN
 9 AM (June thru August) HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION: 7 PM

DIVINE LITURGY AND LENTEN SERVICES SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF MARCH 3, 2024

Sunday, March 3rd – Third Sunday of the Great Fast

Divine Liturgy: 10 AM

Propers: Tone 7

Vestments: Bright

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14 – 5:6

Gospel: St. Mark 8:34 – 9:1

Wednesday, March 6th (7 PM): Moleben to the Holy Cross

Friday, March 8th (7 PM): Presanctified Divine Liturgy for the Fourth Friday of Great Lent

Saturday, March 9th (10 AM): For the blessed repose of the soul of **+Alexander** Maksymowych with Panakhyda, offered by the Maksymowych Family

Saturday, March 9th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Divine Liturgy Intentions and Vespers Service Schedule for March and April

Sunday, March 10th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Wednesday, March 13th (7 PM): Moleben to the Holy Cross

Friday, March 15th (7 PM): Presanctified Divine Liturgy for the Fifth Friday of Great Lent

Saturday, March 16th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Sunday, March 17th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Wednesday, March 20th (7 PM): Moleben to the Holy Cross

Friday, March 22nd (7 PM): Presanctified Divine Liturgy for the Sixth Friday of Great Lent

Saturday, March 23rd (7 PM): Vespers Service

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday, March 24th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Holy Wednesday, March 27th (7 PM): Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts

Holy Thursday, March 28th (7 PM): Holy Thursday Vespers and Reading of the Twelve Passion Gospels

Good Friday, March 29th (7 PM): Good Friday Vespers with the Funeral of Jesus Christ and Procession with the Burial Shroud (Plashchanitsya) to the Tomb **with Confessions after Good Friday Services**

Holy Saturday, March 30th (10 AM): Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Holy Saturday, March 30th (5 PM): Blessing of Easter Baskets

Holy Saturday, March 30th (5:30 PM – 6 PM): Confessions

Easter Sunday, March 31st (8:45 AM): Prayer at the Tomb (Nadhrobne)

Easter Sunday, March 31st (9 AM): Resurrection Matins

Easter Sunday, March 31st (10 AM): Divine Liturgy for all Parishioners followed by blessing of Easter Baskets

Easter Monday, April 1st (7 PM): Divine Liturgy for all Parishioners

Easter Tuesday, April 2nd (7 PM): Divine Liturgy for all Parishioners

Saturday, April 6th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Sunday, April 7th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, April 13th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Sunday, April 14th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, April 20th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Sunday, April 21st (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday, April 27th (7 PM): Vespers Service

Sunday, April 28th (10 AM): For all Parishioners

Saturday Services

Fr. Ihor is celebrating Vesper services every Saturday at 7 PM. All parishioners are invited to attend this service. Those who wish to have a Divine Liturgy celebrated for a loved one whether living or deceased or for a private intention are still able to do so. Please request your Divine Liturgy by contacting Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357 or cantor Jaroslaw Maksymowych at (603) 627-2042. Please note that Saturday Divine Liturgies will now be celebrated only at 10 AM (9 AM June thru August) whenever they are requested. If no Divine Liturgy has been requested for a particular Saturday, then none will be celebrated on that day. The Divine Liturgy schedule in the bulletin will only show Divine Liturgies on Saturdays when they have been requested. If the bulletin does not show a Divine Liturgy for a given Saturday, then this means that particular Saturday is available for your request.

Суботні Богослужіння

Отець Ігор святкує Вечірню кожної суботи у 7-мі годині вечером. Ласкаво просимо усіх парафіян до участі. Парафіяни які бажають замовити Божественну Літургію в суботу для померших або на особисті інтенції можуть дзвонити до о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357 або до дяка п. Ярослава Максимовича на номер (603) 627-2042. Суботні Божественні Літургії будуть відслужені тільки о годині 10-тій ранком (9-тій ранку з червня по серпень) коли замовлені. Якщо Літургія в певну суботу не буде замовлена, то в цей день не буде жодна відправлена. Порядок Богослужінь в бюлетені покаже тільки ті суботні Служби Божі які є замовлені. Якщо в бюлетені не відображається Божественна Літургія на дану суботу, то це означає, що ця субота доступна на Ваше замовлення.

Liturgical Propers, Readings and Sermon for Sunday

Liturgical Propers for the Third Sunday of the Great Fast

Resurrectional Tropar: Tone 7

By Your Cross You destroyed death. You opened paradise to the thief. The tears of the myrrh-bearing women You wiped away; then You commanded them to tell the apostles the news – that You have risen, O Christ-God, and have shown the world great mercy.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

Tropar for Holy Cross Sunday: Tone 1

Save Your people, O Lord,* and bless Your inheritance.* Grant victory to all God-fearing leaders over Your enemies,* and by the power of your Cross* protect all of us.

...now and always and forever. Amen.

Kondak for the Third Sunday of Lent: Tone 7

No longer does the flaming sword guard the gate of Eden;* for the wood of the Cross has put it out.* The sorrows of hell and the victory of death have been vanquished.* My Savior, standing before those bound by death You said:* “Enter again into Paradise.”

Instead of HOLY GOD, we sing:

+ Khrestu Tvojemu poklonayemosya Vladiko, ee svyateye Voskreseennya, Tvoye slavimo.
+ We bow in worship to Your holy Cross, O Master, and we glorify Your holy Resurrection.
+ Khrestu Tvojemu poklonayemosya Vladiko, ee svyateye Voskreseennya, Tvoye slavimo.
+ Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and always and forever. Amen.
And we glorify Your holy Resurrection.
+ Khrestu Tvojemu poklonayemosya Vladiko, ee svyateye Voskreseennya, Tvoye slavimo.

Prokimen – Tone 6: Save Your people, O Lord; and bless Your inheritance and bless Your inheritance.

VERSE: To You I cry, O Lord my God; do not be deaf to my call.

Prokimen – Tone 6: Save Your people, O Lord; and bless Your inheritance and bless Your inheritance.

ТРЕТЯ НЕДІЛЯ ПОСТУ (ХРЕСТОПОКЛІННА)

Апостол: До Євреїв послання св. апостола Павла читання. (Євр 4:14 – 5:6)

Браття, мавши, отже, великого архиєрея, що вже пройшов небо, Ісуса, Божого Сина, тримаймося твердо віровизнання. Бо ми не маємо такого архиєрея, який не міг би співчувати нашим недугам: Він же ж зазнав усього, подібно як ми, крім гріха. Приступім, отже, з довір'ям до престолу благодаті, щоб отримати милість і знайти благодать на своєчасну поміч.

Кожен бо архиєрей, узятий з-поміж людей, настановляється для людей у справах Божих, щоб приносив дари та жертви за гріхи; що може співчувати нетямущим та введеним в оману, бо й сам він неміччю охоплений, і тому повинен так за людей, як і за себе самого приносити жертви за гріхи. Чести ж цієї ніхто не бере сам собі, лише той, хто покликаний Богом, як Арон. Так і Христос не сам собі присвоїв славу стати архиєреєм, вона бо від Того, який до Нього мовив: "Син мій єси, я сьогодні породив Тебе." Як і на іншому місці каже: "Ти - священник навіки за чином Мелхиседека."

Epistle Reading for the Third Sunday of Great Lent (Hebrews 4:14 – 5:6)

Brethren: Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our profession of faith. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weakness, but one who was tempted in every way that we are, yet never sinned. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and favor and to find help in time of need.

Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal patiently with erring sinners, for he himself is beset by weakness and so must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. One does not take this honor on his own initiative, but only when called by God as Aaron was. Even Christ did not glorify Himself with the office of high priest; He received it from the One who said to Him, "You are my Son; today I have begotten You"; just as He says in another place, "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek."

Alleluia: Tone 8

VERSE: Remember the people You long ago made Your own.

Alleluia: Tone 8

VERSE: Also remember God, the eternal King who works salvation.

Alleluia: Tone 8

VERSE: Пом'яни Свою громаду, яку Ти придбав Собі здавна.

Alleluia: Tone 8

VERSE: Бог же Цар наш предвічний, вчинив спасіння посеред землі.

Alleluia: Tone 8

Євангелія: (Мк 8:34 – 9:1)

У той час, Ісус, прикликавши народ разом із своїми учнями, сказав їм: "Коли хтось хоче йти за мною, хай зречеться себе самого, візьме на себе хрест свій і йде слідом за мною. Бо хто хоче спасти свою душу, той її втратить, а хто втратить своє життя мене ради та Євангелія, той її спасе. Що бо людина може дати взамін за власну душу? Хто, отже, буде соромитися мене й моїх слів перед цим родом перелюбним та грішним, того посоромиться і Син Чоловічий, коли прийде у славі Отця свого з святими ангелами." І сказав їм: "Істинно кажу вам: Є деякі з отут присутніх, що не зазнають смерти, аж поки не вздріють Царства Божого, що прийде у могутності."

Gospel Reading for the Third Sunday of Great Lent (St. Mark 8:34 – 9:1)

At that time, Jesus summoned the crowd with His disciples and said to them: "If a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross and follow in my steps. Whoever would preserve his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the Gospel's will preserve it. What profit does a man show who gains the whole world and destroys himself in the process? What can a man offer in exchange for his life! If anyone in this faithless and corrupt age is ashamed of me and My Doctrine, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when

He comes with the holy angels in His Father's glory." He also said to them: "I assure you, among those standing here there are some who will not taste death until they see the reign of God established in power."

SERMON FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

Glory to Jesus Christ! My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

"Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Mk. 8:34), said the Lord to His disciples, calling them unto Him, as we heard today in the Gospel. We too are disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, because we are Christians. We too are called unto the Lord, to this holy temple, to hear His teaching. We stand before the face of the Lord. His gaze is directed at us. Our souls are laid bare before Him; our secret thoughts and hidden feelings are open to Him. He sees all of our intentions; He sees the truth, and the sins we have committed from our youth. He sees our whole life, past, present and future; even what we have not yet done is already written in His book. He knows the hour of our passing into eternity, and gives us His all-holy commandment for our salvation: Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Through living faith, let us lift up the eyes of our mind to the Lord Who is present here with us! Let us open our hearts, rolling back the heavy stone of hardness from its entrance; let us hear, ponder, accept, and assimilate the teaching of our Lord. The Lord pronounced His sentence against this eternal death, which mankind, sick with terrible fallenness, imagines to be life: For whosoever will save his life, cultivating it in the life of fallenness or eternal death, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it (Mk. 8:35).

Placing before our eyes the whole world with all its beauty and charm, the Lord says, for what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? What good is it for man, what has he really acquired if he should come to possess not only some minor thing, but even the entire visible world? This visible world is no more than man's temporary guesthouse! There is no item on the earth, not a single acquirable good that we could call our own. Everything will be taken from us by merciless and inevitable death; and unforeseen circumstances and changes often take them away even before our death. Even our own bodies are cast aside at that sacred step into eternity. Our only true possession and treasure is our soul, and our soul alone. What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? (Mk. 8:37), says the Lord. There is nothing that can recompense the loss of the soul when it is killed by eternal death, which deceitfully calls itself life.

Today, on the Third Sunday of the Great Fast, the midpoint of our Lenten journey, we place the Holy Cross front and center because it has a central place not only during Lent, but also in our daily lives. We make upon ourselves the sign of the Cross in the name of the Holy Trinity every time we pray, every time we enter the Church, and every time we venerate an icon or participate in the Holy Liturgy. In everything we do we take the Cross with us for protection and salvation. The Cross has the power to transfigure our lives, because by accepting the cross as a sign of our salvation, we also accept Christ Who suffered and died upon it. The cross becomes therefore the main symbol of our Christian faith. The cross is the true compass that

points toward the only essential cardinal point in our lives: Upwards! Sailing on the sea of life in the motherly ship of the Church, the Cross is the lighthouse that shows us the way home, to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Today, following the Divine Liturgy here in church, we will perform the veneration of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross. Let us remember that the Cross is the image and victory banner of Christ's incomprehensible accomplishment: the Lord alone has achieved victory, in defiance of the entire world, by fulfilling the will of His Heavenly Father. But every Christian cross—both that which we wear around our neck and that which lies before us in the middle of the church—also takes on the image of the accomplishment of the countless host of faithful disciples of Christ. In monastic cells and in prisons, in suffering and in victory, in apostolic preaching around the world and in the modest daily labors of lay people unknown to the world, they have borne their cross by fulfilling God's commandments in our world which is filled with wickedness and sin.

Today's Gospel reading concludes with these words: Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels (Mark 8:38). Christ will be ashamed of those people who, having within themselves the image of the immortal God and possessing the ability to attain His likeness, could not comprehend that to which they were foreordained. They have traded the gifts of God for that which is small and perishable. Let us never be ashamed to show ourselves to be Christians! And recalling everything that we have thought and spoken about today, as we pass by the church crowned with the cross, let us never neglect the precious opportunity to draw strength from and to venerate all that is holy, great, and live-giving in the saving image of the Lord's Cross. Amen.

ПРОПОВІДЬ НА ТРЕТЮ НЕДІЛЮ ВЕЛИКОГО ПОСТУ

Слава Ісусу Христу! Дорогі в Христі браття і сестри!

Святий Великий піст має різні окреслення. Частіше його називають як духовну подорож, прощу до таємниці Христового Воскресіння. Коли хтось вирушає у далеку подорож, то старається належно приготуватися до неї. Однак навіть найкраще приготування не запевнює нас сили на цілу подорож. Тому під час подорожі прочанин все таки зупиняється один або другий раз, щоб відпочити, відновити, зміцнити свої сили і могли впевнено йти дорогою до мети.

Третя неділя посту, хрестопоклінна, це вже властиво половина дороги Великого посту, духовної подорожі до таїнства Пасхи Христової: хресних страждань і славного воскресіння Ісуса. Церква виставляє святий хрест в середині посту з подвійною метою: найперше хоче пригадати нам основну мету посту – зустріч з Воскреслим Христом, переможцем смерті і джерелом життя і як джерело духовної сили, яка пливе з жертвовної любові Ісуса Христа, виявленої нам Його стражданнями на хресному дереві.

Починаючи з середини Великого посту – хрестопоклонної неділі, у Євангелії цієї та наступних неділь ми побачимо зростання радикальності вимог Ісуса Христа до своїх апостолів, щодо умов спасіння, а також до нас – Його учнів. Це вказує на важливість події, до якої зближаємося й

готуємося під час посту - Пасхи. Ці вимоги впливають із її важливості для нас. У третю неділю Великого посту Христос звернеться до апостолів і людей, які йшли за Ним, словами: „Коли хто хоче йти за мною, хай зречеться себе самого, візьме на себе хрест свій та йде слідом за мною” (Мр 8,34). А вже незабаром Спаситель скаже апостолам, що через їхню слабку віру, вони не змогли вигнати з хлопця злого духа. А трохи пізніше питає їх, чи готові вони прийняти Його хрищення та пити Його чашу: розділити долю Учителя, все переживати разом з Ним - радість і терпіння.

Сьогодні Животворчий Хрест Господній лежить посеред нашого храмів, він надихає та підбадьорює нас. Втішені ним, ми вступаємо у другу половину Великого посту, ми починаємо бачити кінець нашої подорожі, сяйво пасхальної радості стає яскравішим. Характерно, що у богослужбових піснеспівах сьогоднішньої неділі більше говорилось не про хресні страждання Спасителя, а про радість Його Воскресіння, про перемогу над смертю: «Хресту Твоєму поклоняємся, Владико, і святе Воскресіння Твоє славим» – такими словами супроводжувався чин поклоніння Хресту. Церква тим самим надихає та укріплює вірних, котрі сягнули середини Великого посту, у подальшому подвизі і показує кінець нашої мандрівки – Світле Христове Воскресіння.

Дивлячись на святий хрест, бачимо на ньому Ісуса, не лише розп'ятого, прибитого до дерева, а Ісуса, котрий з любові до нас пожертвував своє життя, щоб дарувати нам життя вічне. Розпростерті руки Спасителя на хресті, це запрошення до всіх людей прийти до Нього, довіритися в Його батьківські обійми. Цей жест жертвовної любові Христа до нас запрошує нас жертвувати Йому нашу любов, наш хрест і наші терпіння, щире і відкрите серце, повне духа довір'я Його любові і милосердю на хресті.

Роздуми про хрест Господній і жертву Ісуса на ньому тісно переплітаються із подіями київського майдану, котрі ще досить свіжі у нашій пам'яті. Перед нашими очима проходять ці страшні і трагічні події 20 лютого, коли більше сотні молодих людей стали на захист правди і справедливості, і не побоялися прийняти смерть, віддати своє молоде життя, за прикладом Христа, щоб захистити нашу людську гідність, правду і справедливість, щоб вибороти нам краще, щасливе і мирне майбутнє. Їхня смерть, цієї небесної сотні, стала чудовим прикладом наслідування Христа і його науки: „Немає більшої любові за ту, коли хто душу свою кладе за друзів своїх” (Ів. 15, 13).

В Одкровенні ап. Іоанна говориться, як він бачив на небі багато людей, одягнених у білі одежі. Він запитав в ангела, котрий його супроводжував: хто це такі? І той відповів: це ті, котрі випили на землі чашу великих скорбот і котрі вимили свої одежі в Крові Агнця. І тепер вони в цих одежах ходять за Агнцем, куди б Він не пішов. Вони оспівують Його ім'я і вже не пам'ятають скорбот за ту радість, котрою насолоджуються. Якщо хочемо Божого щастя для себе через Його любов, мир у житті, маємо поставити Ісуса в центрі свого життя. Нами мають керувати слова Його науки, а не людські погляди, вірування, згода з Божою волею, а не власні погляди, бажання. Цим маємо виконати пропозицію Христа: „Хто хоче йти за мною, хай зречеться себе самого”. Надія та довіря Христові ніколи не розчарують нас, про що запевняє нас святий Павло: „Надія ж не засоромить, бо любов Бога влита в серця наші Святим Духом, що нам даний” (Рм 5,5). Там, де панує Божа любов, там завжди є надія на перемогу та успіх. Амінь.

Hymn to the Mother of God: Toboyu raduyet'sya, Blahodatnaya, vsyaka tvar, anhel's'kiy sobor ee choloveches'kiy reed, osvyashchenniy Khrame ee rayu slovesniy, Deewstvenna pokhvalo, shcho eez neyee Boh voplotiwsya ee mladentsem staw, pered veekami sushchiy Boh nash. Lono bo Tvoye prestolom sotvoriw ee utrobu Tvoyu prostoreeshoyu nebes uchiniw. Toboyu raduyet'sya, Blahodatnaya, vsyaka tvar, slava Tobee.

Hymn to the Mother of God: All creation praises you, for you are full of grace. The angelic choirs and all the races of men, sing of you the glorious temple of the Lord, the mystical paradise, and the glory of all virgins from whom the eternal God was born a Child. Your body became a throne, and your womb was more spacious than heaven. All creation praises you, for you are full of grace. Glory to you!

Communion Verse: Хвалить Господа з небес, хвалить Його на висотах. Нехай світло лиця Твого, Господи, засяє над нами. Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest. Let the light of Your face, Lord, shine upon us. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Parish Announcements

We Welcome You!

If you are visiting our church today, our parish family is delighted to welcome you here! Thank you and God bless you for visiting with us today! We welcome all our visitors and guests who worship at our parish. We invite families and individuals who wish to become members to register by calling Fr. Ihor at (860) 617-6357.

Вітаємо Вас!

Якщо Ви відвідуєте нашу церкву сьогодні, наша парафіяльна громада рада вітати Вас тут! Щире спасибі Вам, і нехай Бог благословить Вас за Ваші відвідини з нами сьогодні! Ми запрошуємо сім'ї та осіб, які бажають стати членами, зареєструватися у нас по телефоні о. Ігоря на номер (860) 617-6357.

Please Pray for our Sick and Homebound Parishioners, Family Members and Friends

Fr. Ihor Papka, Fr. Zbigniew Brzezicki, Stephen Atamanchuk, Oleh and Valentina Babski, Michaelle Baker, Rick Barr, Marylou Blaisdell, Tracy Crews, Carmel Horangic, Josephine Housty, Christine Kolagji, Helen Kucman, Martha and Ray Majkut, Karen and Jaroslaw Maksymowych, Jean Mandych, Sherri Martel, Katherine Masso, Jennifer McMillan, Katharine McNaughton, Jackie Morales, Lauren Morales, Jonathan Morales, Tanya and Ronald Morales, Elizabeth Mozina, Dean and Terri Nilson, Alan Pasicznyk, Lina Puciw, Billie Sheesley, Derek Stanley, Pauline Stanley, John Terninko, Elisha Wallace, Cindy Wilson, Dr. Mark Windt, Lenora Zelenski. Please contact Fr. Ihor if you would like to add a friend or loved one to this prayer list.

2023 Donation Letters

Please pick up your donation letter at the back of the church, which summarizes how much you donated to our parish during 2023. If you do not see an envelope with your name on it, please ask a Trustee. Thank you.

March Birthdays

The following parishioners are celebrating a birthday or wedding anniversary this month:

March 12 – Jonathan M.

March 13 – Nicole and Nick H. (wedding anniversary)

March 16 – Iryna M.

March 19 – Ronald M.

March 25 – Max B.

March 26 – Jonathan M.

Our parish community wishes Fr. Ihor and this month's birthday celebrants peace, joy, love and good health on their special day as well as throughout the coming year. May our dear Lord grant all of you many more healthy, happy and blessed years. Happy Anniversary, Happy Birthday and На Многая літа! (Na Mnohaya Lita!).

February, 2024 Financial Summary

Total Income from February Donations: \$6,175.00

Total Expenditures for February: \$4,615.00

Surplus for February: \$1,560.00

Average attendance in February: 42

Thank you and God bless you for your generous support of our parish

Lenten Regulations 2024

By the threefold discipline of fasting, prayer and almsgiving, the Church keeps the Great Fast/Lent, which begins this year on Monday, February 12th and lasts through Holy Saturday, March 30th. The following Great Fast/Lenten regulations apply, in general, to all Ukrainian Catholics of the Stamford Eparchy between the ages of 14 to 60:

- **Abstinence from meat and dairy products is to be observed on the first day of Lent, February 12th, and on Good Friday, March 29th.**
- **Abstinence from meat is to be observed on all Fridays of the Great Fast and on Holy Saturday.**
- Abstinence from meat is encouraged on all Wednesdays of the Great Fast.
- The following are exempt from abstinence: 1) convalescents who are returning to their strength; 2) the poor who live on alms; 3) the sick and the frail; 4) pregnant women and women who are nursing their children; 5) persons who perform hard physical labor.
- Meat is to be understood as including not only the flesh, but also those parts of warm-blooded animals that cannot be rendered, i.e. melted down, including but not limited to organ meats, blood, etc. Meat gravy or soup made from meat and any other food containing meat is also included in this prohibition.
- Dairy products are to be understood as comprising of products derived from mammals and birds, but not regarded as meat, including but not limited to cheese, lard, butter, milk, eggs, cream, etc.
- **Eucharistic Fast: A fast of one hour from food (prior to the service starting time) should be kept by those receiving the Holy Eucharist at the evening celebration of the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts as well as at all Divine Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil the Great. NOTE: This Eucharistic fast applies throughout the entire Liturgical year not just during the Great Fast/Lent.**

Moleben to the Holy Cross

Deacon Jon is celebrating the Moleben to the Holy Cross each Wednesday of Great Lent at 7 PM. Please join him for this beautiful service.

Lenten Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy

Fr. Ihor is celebrating the Divine Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts each Friday during Great Lent at 7 PM. Please join him as we journey through the season of Lent.

Sorokousty – Lenten Memorial Services for the Deceased

Fr. Ihor is also celebrating Sorokousty on the Fridays of Great Lent, which are memorial services for the deceased. If you would like to have your loved ones who have passed into eternity remembered at these services, please provide their names to Fr. Ihor or to the cantor, Jaroslaw Maksymowych. Sorokousty services are held each Friday of Lent after the 7 PM Pre-Sanctified Divine Liturgy.

Weekly Reflection:

Learning about our Catholic Faith – Exhausting the “Soil” of Mercy

“Sir, leave it for this year also, and I shall cultivate the ground around it and fertilize it; it may bear fruit in the future. If not you can cut it down.” Luke 13:8–9

Every gardener knows that good fruit is, in part, dependent upon the presence of good soil. But other factors are also important in the production of good fruit. The plant must be free of disease, receive water and sun, be planted in a warm environment, be properly pruned, and have enough space to grow. When all factors are present, good fruit is guaranteed.

So it is with our lives. The soil in which we are to be planted is the mercy of God. And this soil is the richest soil attainable for the production of the virtues in our lives. God also produces the sun, the rain, and the warmth that is needed for our growth. But, analogously speaking, we must allow ourselves to be pruned. We must also allow the soil to be fertilized and cultivated in a variety of ways. Though Jesus is the Gardener of our lives, it’s also fair to say that we are the gardeners in the sense that we must cooperate with our Lord, relying upon the supernatural resources of the Creator to ensure the healthy growth of our spiritual lives so that the good fruit of virtue may be born in our lives.

The passage above is the conclusion to the Parable of the Fig Tree. Just prior to this passage, the owner of the vineyard, God the Father, ordered that the barren fig tree be cut down so that it will no longer exhaust the soil. But our merciful Lord, sent on His mission from the Father to till the soil of our lives, seeks to offer one more chance and the Father obliges out of love. This life is that “year” by which our Lord works fervently to cultivate the soil around us. We must cooperate through daily prayer, fidelity to His commandments, acts of loving sacrifice and surrender to His providence. In the end, if we allow our Lord to do all He desires, our lives will bear good fruit.

But on the flip side, make no mistake about the fact that, if our lives do not bear good fruit, we will be “cut down.” Bearing good fruit is not an option, it is a must. It is a clear indication of our spiritual health and it will become the measure of our eternal reward or eternal death. Do not be intimidated by such sharp language coming from our Lord. He spoke it in love so that we will know the serious duty we have to bear good fruit in our lives.

Reflect, today, upon the outward signs of your inward spiritual health. Do you see the virtues sprouting forth from your life? Are you aware of the work God desires to do in your soul so as to cultivate it and fertilize it with grace and mercy? Say “Yes” to Him this day and allow that grace to produce an abundance of good fruit.

Let us pray: *My virtuous Lord, I invite You into my soul to cultivate it and fertilize it with Your grace. Please prune my sins and help me to sink my roots deeply into the nourishment of Your mercy. I am sorry for the ways that I have failed to bear fruit in my life. I now entrust myself to You so that Your care will remedy all my ills and weaknesses. Jesus, I trust in You. Amen.*