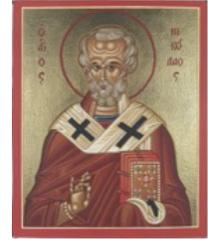


Newsletter of St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church



1160 Bridge Street
Manchester, NH 03104



Father Tom Fitzgerald, Parish Priest

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

The Season of Lent for the Orthodox Church this year begins on February 27th. The season prepares us to observe Holy Week and especially to celebrate anew the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord. This year we will celebrate Easter on April 16th. All churches will observe Easter on this date this year!

Lent is a time of for us to renew and strengthen our relationship with God. Lent is a time to remember our true identity as daughters and sons of God. It is a time to change our priorities so that we fully live as God's friends and co-workers in His world.

The Church has always emphasized the importance three spiritual disciplines for observing the Season of Lent. These are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. These are important disciplines which should be part of our lives during the entire year. During the Season of Lent, a special emphasis is placed on them.

When we pray, we become more conscious of God and His presence! Prayer counters any tendency towards self-centeredness. During Lent, let us renew our commitment to personal prayer and attendance at the Sunday Liturgy!

When we fast, we become more conscious of our dependence on God for all things. Fasting counters any tendency towards self-indulgence. During Lent, let us follow a fasting practice which reminds us of God's blessing and our dependence on Him.

When we give generously to the needy, known as almsgiving, we become more conscious of our responsibilities to others. Almsgiving counters any tendency towards self-righteousness. During Lent, let us demonstrate a greater concern for those who are in need by sharing our blessings.

The season of Lent is an ideal time to take stock of our lives. It is a time to examine our priorities and our values in the light of the teachings of Christ. It is a time to renew our commitment to Our Lord and His Gospel.

May we all have a blessed Lenten Season.

With love in Christ,

Fr. Tom

Newsworthy Notes From St. Nicholas

Pre-Lenten Memorial Service

The Pre-Lenten Memorial Service will be conducted on Sunday, February 26. It is a service devoted to prayer to commemorate the dead. Please bring your memorial cards with the names of your departed relatives and friends you wish to be remembered in our prayers. This is a meaningful opportunity to recall the blessings of other persons in our lives, and to thank God for them.

Sunday of Orthodoxy – March 5

The First Sunday of Lent is known as the Sunday of Orthodoxy. This feast commemorates the affirmation by the Church of the value of icons to depict Christ, Mary and the saints. On this Sunday, our young people will participate in a procession with icons at the conclusion of the Liturgy.

Sunday of the Holy Cross – March 19

The Third Sunday of Lent, March 19th, not only marks the mid-point of the Lenten Season but very importantly, is dedicated to the Holy Cross. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, we will have the procession with the Holy Cross. We will be blessed by it and we should venerate it reverently so that we might receive strength and grace to complete our Fast through the remaining Lenten Season. Flowers are also provided at the end of the liturgy as a reminder of the day that marks the mid-point of the Lenten Season.

Feast of the Annunciation to the Virgin Mary– March 25

The Angel Gabriel came directly to the Virgin Mary and told her that she was going to have a child. Naturally, she was alarmed at first and asked many questions. “Do not be afraid,” said the Archangel Gabriel, “the Lord is with you because God has chosen you among all the women in the world and in history.” The announcement of Christ’s birth is placed on March 25, 9 months before the feast of the Nativity. We, in turn are told to spread the Good News of Christ as well, imitating the faithful example of the Virgin Mary.

Lenten Liturgy

During the Lenten Season, our Sunday Liturgy contains prayers from the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great who lived in the 4th Century. Some of the prayers and hymns are a little different from most other Sundays. These differences help to remind us that we are in the Lenten Season.

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Our Young People and Church School

We want our young people to have opportunities to know, love and serve the Lord as Orthodox Christians. We have a valuable opportunity every Sunday for our young people to participate in the Liturgy, and to have religious formation and instruction. Pamela Tsetseranos serves as our devoted and faithful instructor. Parents have a special responsibility to encourage and help our young people to be present at the Sunday Liturgy and Church School. We look forward to seeing all of our young people on Sunday.



When we come to church on Sunday, it is always a good opportunity to see our relatives and friends. Please remember, however, that others are offering personal prayers in church both before the Liturgy and after it. Let us be respectful of others and save our conversations for the Fellowship Hour.
Thank you!