

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church
Celebrating 125 years witnessing to the Apostolic Faith



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***Holy Assumption Orthodox Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America,
Diocese of the Midwest***

MARCH 24, 2024

FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

EPISTLE: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2

Brethren: When Moses became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge



Restoration of the Holy Icons

of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented – of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect

apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

GOSPEL: John 1:43-51

At that time Jesus went to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

MON. Mar 25	ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS
9:10 AM	HOURS
9:30 AM	DIVINE LITURGY
TUE. Mar 26	Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel; Gen 4:8-15, Prov 5:1-15
WED. Mar 27	Martyr Matrona of Thessalonica; Gen 4:16-26, Prov 5:15-6:3
6:00 PM	PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY, Followed by Lenten soup social
THU. Mar 28	Ven. Hilarion the New, Abbot of Pelekete; Gen 5:1-24, Prov 6:3-20
FRI. Mar 29	Hieromartyr Mark, Bishop of Arethusa; Gen 5:32-6:8, Prov 6:20-7:1
6:00 PM	AKATHIST TO THE PASSION OF CHRIST, Followed by Book Club
SAT. Mar 30	Memorial Saturday , Ven. John Climacus of Sinai; Heb 3:12-16, Mk. 1:35-44
9:30 AM	DIVINE LITURGY
4:00 PM	VESPERS
SUN. Mar 31	2nd SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT – Tone 2 St. Gregory Palamas
9:10 AM	HOURS
9:30 AM	DIVINE LITURGY Followed by Coffee hour



FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Tony Monastra, 2119 Willow Cove Marblehead, OH 43440; Patti Owens, 311 Woodbridge Road, Vermilion, OH 44089; Basil Glovinsky, 1007 Glendale Drive, Port Clinton, OH 43452; Subdeacon Roger Pinta, P.O. Box 39, Middle Bass, OH 43446; Diane Tryon, 109 Joslyn Street, Arcadia, OH 44804; Ed & Irene Vangeloff, 454 Strouse Lane, Sandusky, OH 44870

MARCH CANDLE SPONSORS



Altar Candles: Fr. Peter & Mat. Michelle, For Health and God's Blessings for Barbara Wroblewski, Matushka's mother (**\$50**); **Chandelier:** Available (**\$50**); **Eternal Light & Icon Screen:** Natalie, In loving memory of Aunt Ella & Aunt Anna (**\$25**); **Candles at the Cross:** Laura Kovach, Birthday blessings to Greg and in memory of Russ (**\$20**); **Candles at St. Tikhon Icon:** For Safety and Health of Nicholas, Tikhon, Gleice, & Chloe (**\$20**)



MARCH REPOSED

Michael Elchisko (1909) No date provided; Helen Millie (1910) No date provided; George Danchisen (1912) No date provided; **1-** George Danchisen (2018); **3-** Anna Stoyka (2018); **4-** Andrew Mazur (2001); **6-** Frank Guzy (2002); **6-** Robert Haynal (2022); **8-** Mat. Sonya Tutko (2021); **11-** Ella Mazur (1918); **13-** Richard Michael Benya (1983); **17-** Frank Holodnak (1961); **23-** Eva Pondillo (2001); **23-** Ella Mazurik (1985); **23-** Francis Mitchell (2008); **23-** Barbara Ann Wasylenko (2017); **29-** Todd Pollack (2019); **29-** Carolyn Woodward (2000); **30-** John Rofkar (2019)



VIGILS FOR MARCH 17

Susan Guzy 1 In blessed memory of Matushka Barbara, Godmother Eva and Frances. Vichnaya Pamyat

Laura Kovach 3 For health and/or healing of Marty B., Jim K., Ron R., Diane T., Ruth S., James W., Patti O., Tony M., Hannah S., Barbara D., Pauline O., Margi H., Betty K., Ben F., Mark M., Dana M., Bodhi C., Sharon D., John D., and Karen D. Memory Eternal to Linda Griffith.
Safe travel for family and friends.

Sandy Martin 2 For the health of Pam, Barb, Kelly, Mike and Randy, Special intentions

Diane Tryon 2 In loving memory of Dad 3/19/21, Special intentions

Natalie Twarek 8 Safe travel for Matushka, In loving memory of my Godmother, Aunt Ella (39 years 3/23), In loving memory of Aunt Anna (birthday 3/23), For the health of Randy, Patrick and Marty, For the health and recovery of Ruth, Pam, Diane, Ron, Rita(Gigi), Jim, Ed, child Ambrielle, and child Ezra, Health and healing for Father's dad Michal and Matushka's mom Barbara, For the health and recovery of For the health of Tony, Bev, Ed, Irene, Father David, Pauline, Judy, Tina, Carole, Gary, Sharon, Tina's dad, Earl, Sonya, Margi & Joe, Betty, Jackie, MaryAnn & Bob, Bodhi, Stella, Jake, Pat, special intentions

PRAYER LIST

Parishioners & Family: Pam / Jim Twarek / Ed Garrity / Patti Owens / Tony Monastra / Barbara Wroblewski / Michal Tomáš / Ruth Sheller / Basil Glovinsky / Dale / Sophie / Jeanne Smith / Carol / David Martin / Fred Soski / Chris Hannon / Subdeacon Roger Pinta / Ed Vangeloff / Irene Vangeloff / Diane Tryon / Sonja Rose / Ron Royhab / James Bargdill / John Beadle / Carole Conaway / Gary Conaway / Sharon Dietrich / Michael Glovinsky / Shirley Gresh / Joseph Habegger / Elaine Hileman / Betty Kovach / Child Stella Miller / William Pipenur / Earl Rindfleisch / Helen Jean Rofkar / George

Royhab / Marianne Royhab / Stephanie Royhab / Kathy Jacob / the child Bodhi Cassell / Gleice, her unborn baby & Chloe / Carol / Debbie & Marco / Nora. **Other Requests:** Michael Heffernan / Michelle / Susanne / Barbara Heffernan / Rita Mumea / Charles Schlett / Kathy Debevits / Maxwell Chaney / Sidharth Bijilani – friend of Subdeacon Roger and Debbie Pinta / Anthony / Archpriest David Lis / Bishop Matthias / Archpriest Emilian & Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan / Ben Franklin / Donald Gresh / Mark Ludvik / Robert Piznar / Mark Masica / Valerie Ritzenthaler / William / Rick Rowe / Chris. **Military:** Craig Cassell / Jake Ellithorpe / Jordon Fulton / Justin Issler / Tikhon / Nicholas / & All Military



READERS LIST

Sunday Mar 24 – Ron
 Sunday Mar 31 – Joe
 Sunday Apr 7 – Natalie
 Sunday Apr 14 – Jake



ATTENDANCE

03/16 Vespers, 12 attending (1 guest); 03/17 Divine Liturgy, 25 attending (3 guests); 03/18 Canon of St. Andrew, 12 attending; 03/19 Canon of St. Andrew, 10 attending; 03/20 Presanctified Liturgy, 14 attending (1 guest); 03/21 Canon of St. Andrew, 15 attending (3 guests); 03/22 Akathist to the Passion of Christ 11 attending



MARCH BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

30 – Bobbie Royhab; **30** – Fred Cassell; **31** – Greg Mazur



CHARITY OF THE MONTH

“Mission Boxes (Danbury Food Pantry)” is the charity we donate to for the month of March.



SUNDAY OFFERING

Sunday, March 17, 2024

Tithe	\$2,180.00
Candles	\$ 51.00
Vigils	\$ 85.00
Donations	\$ 45.00
Holy Day Donation	\$ 157.00
Eternal Light & Icon Screen	\$ 25.00
Total:	\$2,543.00

May the Lord reward you for your financial and spiritual support!

CHURCH MONTHLY INCOME AND EXPENSES

Month of FEBRUARY 2024	
Church Donation income was	\$ 7,612.00
Church Operating Expenses totaled	<u>\$ 6,519.68</u>
net gain of	\$ 1,092.32

UP-COMING EVENTS IN OUR PARISH – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Mar 25th ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS (*Monday*)
Mar 30th 2. Memorial Saturday



- Apr 6th** 3. Memorial Saturday
- Apr 13th** 4. Memorial Saturday
- Apr 28th** Palm Sunday
- May 5th** GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA
- Consider sponsoring a Sunday coffee hour following the Divine Liturgy



CLEANING SCHEDULE

- Mar 25, Sandy
- Apr 1, Greg
- Apr 8, Roddie & David
- Apr 15, Natalie



THANK YOU

We would like to express our sincere thank you to Greg for baking small prosphora for all the Presanctified Liturgies this Lent Season. May Our Lord bless and reward him for his time and kindness with His special Blessings!



EASTER SALE – THANK YOU!

We would like to express our sincere thanks to Roddie and Natalie for preparing perohy and all the baked good for sale, and for helping with the orders of our Easter Sale yesterday. The gross income from the sale was **\$1,191.13**. May Our Lord reward you both for your time and energy with good health, peace, and happiness for Many Happy and Blessed Years!



1st Sunday of Great Lent: Sunday of Orthodoxy Commemorated on March 24

The first Sunday of Great Lent is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy because it commemorates the restoration of the Holy Icons and the triumph of the Orthodox Faith against the terrible heresy of the Iconoclasts, i.e. those heretics who refused to honor the Holy Icons. For more than a hundred years the Church was disturbed by the evil doctrine of iconoclasm.

The first Emperor to persecute the Church was Leo the Isaurian, and the last was Theophilos, the spouse of Saint Theodora (February 11), who reigned after her husband's death and re-established Orthodoxy in the time of Patriarch Methodios (June 14). Empress Theodora proclaimed publicly that we do not kiss the Icons as a sign of worship, nor do we honor them as "gods," but as images of their prototypes.

In the year 843, on the first Sunday of the Fast, Saint Theodora and her son, Emperor Michael, venerated the Holy Icons together with the clergy and the people. Since that time this event has been commemorated every year, because it was definitively determined that we do not worship the Icons, but we honor and glorify all the Saints who are depicted on them. We worship only the Triune God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and no one else, neither a Saint, nor an Angel.

Originally, the Holy Prophets Moses, Aaron, and Samuel were commemorated on this Sunday. The Alleluia verses appointed for today's Liturgy reflect this older usage.



Fasting during the Great Lent

World of Orthodoxy

The Great Lent is the longest fasting season of the year for the Orthodox. We all know about the importance of prayer, almsgiving and fasting - the three pillars of Lent. But what are the rules of fasting and are there some things we should not do during this season? Read this article and find out.

The Orthodox rules of fasting

Rather than provide us with laws of fasting, the Orthodox Church provides us with guidelines or what could be called as rules. The Lenten fasting rules are very strict and are mostly followed by monastics. Laity usually keeps the first and the last week of the Great Lent super strictly. However, this depends on the person and their parish.

The rules of Lenten fast are written down in the liturgical book called the Typikon.

The Orthodox Church rules for fasting:

- **Weekdays:** No meat or any animal products, like dairy. No fish (however, invertebrates - seafood with no backbone - are permitted), no wine, no olive oil.
- **Weekends:** Same rules, but oil and wine are permitted.
- There are two feasts that take place during Great Lent - **Annunciation** on March 25th (April 7th) and **Palm Sunday** (the last Sunday before Easter). On those feasts the rules are a bit different: fish, wine and oil are all permitted, regardless of the day of the week.
- **The Holy Week:** monastics eat no meals at all from the Holy Thursday evening until Pascha. Holy Friday is the day of the strictest fast. On Holy Saturday, a little bit of fruit and wine is permitted for sustenance.

The fast is usually broken after the midnight Divine Liturgy on Pascha day.

What fasting is not

Now that we've talked about the rules of fasting, we must understand that there are some actions we should not do while trying to fast.

First of all, it is very important to note that fasting is a very personal action. We should not boast about it or even mention it at all. Here's what the Gospel tells us:

"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:16-18)

Just like with giving alms, when we fast, we must do it in secret. We are not fasting to show others how good we are. We fast because we want to get closer to God by thinking more about Him, not the food.

Which brings us to another point: eating too much "permitted" foods during Lent. Are we really fasting if we eat a huge meal full of rice, seafood and vegetables and go to sleep afterwards, because we are so full? In this case, it would be better to eat a small piece of meat with nothing else on the side, than to feast on "permitted" foods like that.

The point of fasting is to think less about food and more about God; be “hungry” for God and His Word. Feeling slightly physically hungry helps us to get into that headspace. During Lent, our life must become more simple, so the meals we eat must be simple as well. When we fast, it is good to cut back on entertainment and take on good things. The point is to try to concentrate on what’s more important - God and the people around us.

The third point is that fasting alone doesn’t save us or do us any good. **Fasting is not a diet; rather, it is a spiritual exercise that we do to open our hearts to God.** If we fast but always appear irritated and angry because of it - we are not fasting at all. Fasting always goes together with prayer and giving alms - this is something to always remember.

What Lent should be like

The spiritual father of Saint Elisabeth Convent - father Andrey Lemeshonok offered a wonderful and inspiring sermon after the Monday morning service on the first day of Lent. Here are some words from that sermon which may motivate us to keep going with Lent the right way:

- *“It is important how we start the Lent, how we harness our sinful bodies, minds, and feelings. It is about directing it to Christ and absorbing all the spiritual treasures that we have in the Orthodox Church, especially in our Lenten services.”*
- *“Lent is always a battle. Our minds are infected with sin, our hearts are restless, and we have to treat it, spiritualize it.”*
- *“We are living in this world’s rhythm of rush and vanity which do not let us focus on what is truly important. The Holy Fathers say ‘Hurry slowly.’ Even if we are in a rush we must not fuss, we must hurry slowly.”*
- *“We must be attentive. We must get into the rhythm of Lent to really take in the gift of prayer and Lenten service.”*
- *“Lent is such a unique time to lay aside all earthly cares and be left alone with God.”*



Iconoclasm and its Victims. What Happens when the Church Becomes Drawn into Politics? *by Marina Borisova*

What made Byzantine Christians take up arms against one another in the stronghold of the Orthodox world of the eighth – early ninth centuries? What caused an extremely violent civil war between iconoclasts and icon worshippers, fighting with such ferocity that an Ecumenical Council had to be convened to stop the fratricide. The entire church hierarchy, including patriarchs, suffered from this war, almost resulting in the

mid-eighth century in complete prohibition of monasticism, as a “hotbed of obscurantism.”

Iconoclasm, condemned by the seventh Ecumenical Council in 787, arose 60 years earlier under the Byzantine emperor Leo the Isaurian, who banned the veneration of icons. This phenomenon reached its apogee in the reign of Constantine V. Thousands of icons, mosaics, frescoes, statues of saints and altar paintings were destroyed. Icon worshippers were repressed, regardless of their status. The list of victims includes the Patriarchs Herman I and Nikephoros, as well as the anathematized theologian John of Damascus and many others who were scourged, exiled or executed.

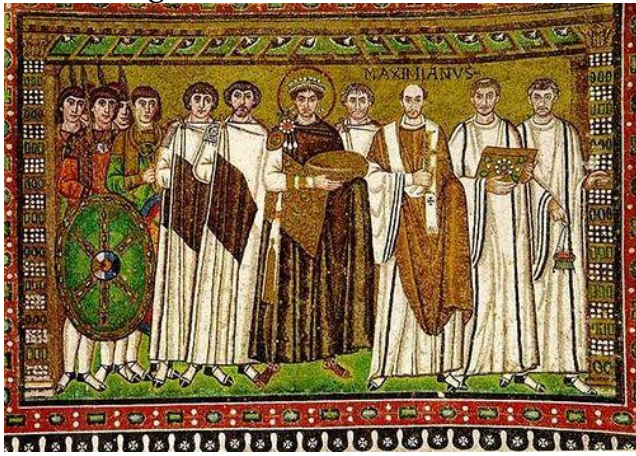
Why were Christians so cruelly persecuted in a Christian country just because they honored their relics?

The underlying reasons are not so much ecclesiastical as political.

Under Justinian II, the clergy in Byzantium held the highest government positions (including the Minister of Finance), which inevitably turned it into some kind of a political party, and not a popular one. Naturally, their political opponents put forward an anti-clerical program, insisting on the “secularity” of the state and, where possible, the “secularization” of the Church. The monastics were viewed in this context as the main enemies of this new secular movement, since they were the force capable of providing the most stubborn resistance.

Discord and Vacillation

In those days, an average Byzantine citizen was a pious person, strictly observing the church traditions that the iconoclasts proudly ignored. Suddenly a person spending a night praying in church was considered unreliable, while carousing, swearing and profanity became common courtesy, as well as shaving one’s beard. Deviating from the tradition, the iconoclast emperors fighting the veneration of icons wanted to reduce the visible presence of Christianity in society to a minimum, without formally renouncing it.



Emperor Justinian with retinue. Mosaic in the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna. Before 547

Rude pagan veneration of images was actually alien to the fathers of the Church. When Constantia, the half-sister of Emperor Constantine the Great, asked the church historian Eusebius of Caesarea where one could find a depiction of the bodily image of Christ, he replied that every Christian should carry His true image in his heart. Serenus, Bishop of Marseilles, in 598, seeing his flock literally deifying icons, tore them off the walls and threw them out of the church, causing a great confusion among people.

When the news of this incident reached Pope Gregory the Great, he sent Serenus a message in which ... he praised him for his zeal, albeit excessive. At the same time, he commanded Serenus to “calm down the confusion” produced in the congregation and to return the icons, “serving instead of books for illiterate people,” into the church. He also told him to teach his people to properly honor icons.

Clearly, such excesses were disturbing, although often they were caused by frank childlike faith. Saint Theodore the Studite once actually praised a nobleman who chose an icon of the Great Martyr Demetrius as a godfather to his son.

However, the very rite of the Church was often grossly distorted, as the veneration of icons was becoming similar to idolatry. Therefore, in the East, there were bishops like Serenus of Marseilles, who believed that neither faith nor the veneration of saints would suffer from the abolition of icons. Moreover, they believed that such a practice would bring the church rite closer to the ideal of worshipping God in spirit and in truth.

Persecution of Monastics

The icon-worshippers’ main opponents were the politicians who took up arms against them and blamed the ignorance of the people on the “clerical” regime. They were no longer content with “cancelling” icons. Instead, they started



Execution of monks (miniature image from the Chronicle of John Skylitzes, early 13th century)

talking about the secularization of all church property.

In the 60s of the eighth century, monks and entire monasteries began to be persecuted as the alleged hotbeds of icon veneration and powerhouses of the clergy. The situation escalated almost to the complete abolition of monasticism. The iconoclasts acted harshly, forcing the monks to dress in bright clothes and to get married. Those who refused to obey were blinded and exiled, or sometimes even executed. Monasteries were confiscated, used as barracks for soldiers, or simply destroyed.

In provinces, such persecutions were initiated by the authorities, while in the capital they were driven by the instigated crowd.

Echoes of Iconoclasm

In 787, the Seventh Ecumenical Council restored icon veneration, but iconoclasm flourished for another 56 years. Defeated on ecclesiastical grounds, it remained in force for political reasons. Some hierarchs perceived the restoration of icon veneration as a restoration of their own social influence. This resulted in another “clash of interest,” and the iconoclast party prevailed once again under Emperor Leo V, crowned in 813.

However, it had far fewer supporters this time. Besides, the moods of the elites were changing.

In 842, a Council was convened in Constantinople, through the efforts of Empress Theodora, completely restoring the veneration of icons throughout the empire. In memory of this event, we celebrate the Triumph of Orthodoxy every year on the first Sunday of Great Lent.