

## US Ambassador visits Saint Catherine's Representation Church

On Thursday, March 11, 2021, the Honorable John J. Sullivan, U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation, accompanied by his secretary, Mr. Jonathan Brends, made his first visit to Saint Catherine the Great Martyr Church, the representation church of the Orthodox Church in America to the Moscow Patriarchate. Ambassador Sullivan was greeted by Archpriest Daniel Andrejuk, Dean of Saint Catherine's and Representative of the Orthodox Church in America to the Moscow Patriarchate. Father Daniel gave Ambassador Sullivan a tour of the Church and explained to him the work of the Representation Church. Father Daniel was also able to update Ambassador Sullivan on the planned restoration work of Saint Catherine's, which His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia has taken under his personal oversight. Father Daniel and Ambassador Sullivan lit candles before the relics of Saint Herman of Alaska that are present at Saint Catherine's. Father Daniel and Ambassador Sullivan then met further in Father Daniel's office for

### Prayer of St. Ephrem

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power, and idle talk.  
*(Full Prostration)*

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant.  
*(Full Prostration)*

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions, and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. Amen. *(Full Prostration)*



O God, cleanse me, a sinner *(12 times)*.  
And recite prayer one more time. *(Full prostration)*

## Upcoming Virtual Tour of the Holy Land

In anticipation of the coming days of Holy Week and our Lord's Passion, Death, and Resurrection, the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA) will sponsor a virtual tour of holy sites in Jerusalem on Sunday, April 18, 2021 at 7:00pm (EST) via Zoom.

The tour will be led by Archpriest Ilya Gotlinsky, Rector of Dormition of the Virgin Mary Church in Binghamton, New York. Fr. Ilya is the director of Orthodox Tours, an agency providing the opportunity for pilgrimage and travel to Orthodox countries and holy places around the world. Having led many trips to the Holy Land, Fr. Ilya has a wealth of knowledge to share.

To reserve your spot simply, the FOCA requests that a donation (tax deductible) be made on their page at [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com). Once the donation is made, donors will receive a Zoom link via email.

All proceeds will benefit the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America's United Fund — funding youth activities, scholarships, and the charitable outreach of the F.O.C.A.

Register on the Diocesan website

## NEW SUB-COMMITTEES FORM AT COUNCIL MEETING

Six (6) sub-committees have been established to help keep church life organized. Each Council member will chair a Committee. Please pray about which committee you are willing to serve on & contact that Council Member (when info is posted). Council members will also be approaching parishioners to serve on their respective committee. This is an opportunity to give your talents back to the Lord.

**Outreach Committee** (external / internal)

**Fundraising Committee** (all fundraisers)

**Grounds Upkeep Committee**

**Sunshine Committee**

**Church Cleaning Committee**

**Church basement & bathroom Cleaning Committee**

## Practical Advice for Great Lent from the DOM Chancellor

“Let us begin the Fast with joy!”

What is Great Lent? Simply put, it is a season of spiritual renewal, a re-awakening of the life of the soul. It is the time the Holy Fathers call the “Tithe of the Year,” meaning that this 1/10 of our calendar year should be dedicated solely to the rejuvenation of our faith through the services of the Church. Lent is our liturgical journey to Pascha, to the resurrection of Christ whereby we re-affirm our baptismal calling which is nothing less than death to the old self so that Christ, the New Adam, might come alive within us. With this in mind, it is helpful to keep in mind these practical points about Great Lent:

**Scheduling.** Parties, banquets, social visits, family vacations, movies, should be scheduled before and after Great Lent. Do your best to amend your calendar so that you may plan to attend all of the Lenten services – if possible. Make simple changes to your daily schedule if need be so that the extracurricular activities do not interfere with the Lenten season.

**Prayer.** A daily rule of prayer in the morning and evening is a must for all Orthodox Christians. Find a place where you can be alone and “pray to your Father in Heaven in secret.” Pray for help in prayer, “Lord teach us to pray.” Pray for the Holy Spirit Who empowers and perfects all our personal prayer. Know, too, that prayer has many dimensions of experience, bodily, mentally, and from the heart. Be ready to struggle against inattention and coldness of heart. Christ was tempted fiercely in the desert when He prayed and fasted, and the same will happen to you. Once the prayer rule is completed, begin your daily work and activities with the intention to remember God in all you do. Use the Jesus Prayer. Memorize a verse from the psalms.

**Sacramental Life.** Start to pray and meditate on how you will prepare for at least one Confession during Lent. Take the time to really evaluate your behaviors, feelings, intentions, thoughts, values, etc. Do not be afraid to use as your reference point our Lord Jesus Christ and the teachings of the gospel, especially the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chapters 5-7). Along with this, make the commitment to prepare and receive communion as much as possible, not only on

Sunday mornings but also at the Presanctified Divine Liturgy during the week.

**Spiritual Reading.** Choose one book from the Old Testament and one book from the New Testament and read them through during Lent. Find a book that teaches about the life of an Orthodox saint. Once again, time should be set aside to make this a daily discipline, i.e., not done “by whim.”

**Charitable Gifts and Works.** There is always a danger of our faith and spirituality turning into something “selfish.” As a remedy for this the Lord gives us the commandments of alms. Find someone who is in need and help them the best you can on a regular basis. Do not think you will ever “save them” or make their situation any better through your own effort. Little acts of kindness matter. Try to give people what they need (and not necessarily want they want).

**Fasting.** Fasting when done properly is unpleasant for the body, at least at first. Make a firm intention to the Lord that you will do your best. The goal is not to be faithful to an external “rule,” but to humble the flesh so that the soul might be liberated from bondage to base desires. Try not to think too much about what you need to buy or how to cook your food. Make it as simple as you can. Fasting is a necessary means to end, which is to restate the human soul as our most pre-eminent human faculty.

May God bless us with a fruitful 40 days!

“Fasts and vigils, the study of Scripture, renouncing possessions and everything worldly are not in themselves perfection, as we have said; they are its tools. For perfection is not to be found in them; it is acquired through them. It is useless, therefore, to boast of our fasting, vigils, poverty, and reading of Scripture when we have not achieved the love of God and our fellow men.” (St. John Cassian)

