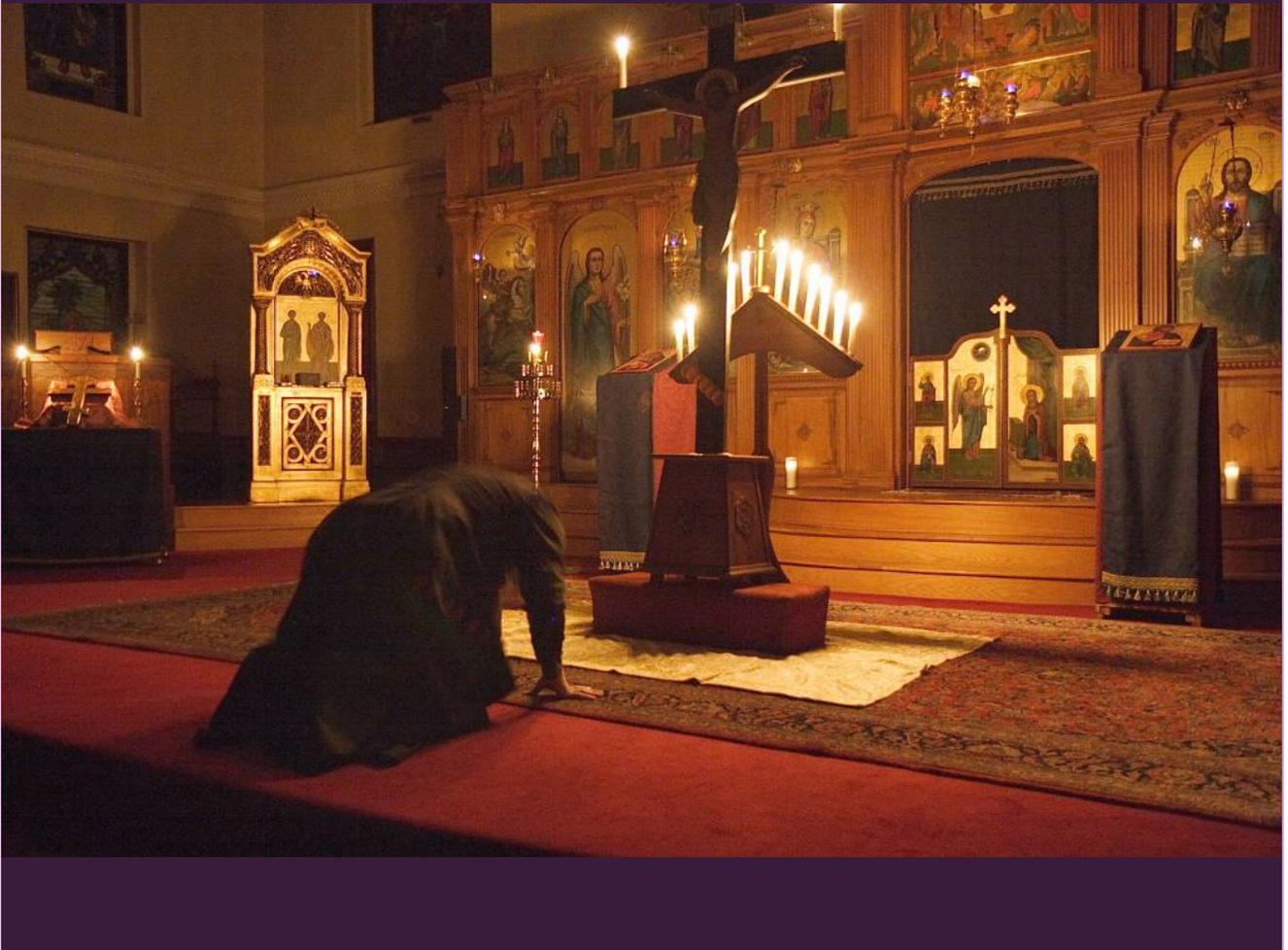
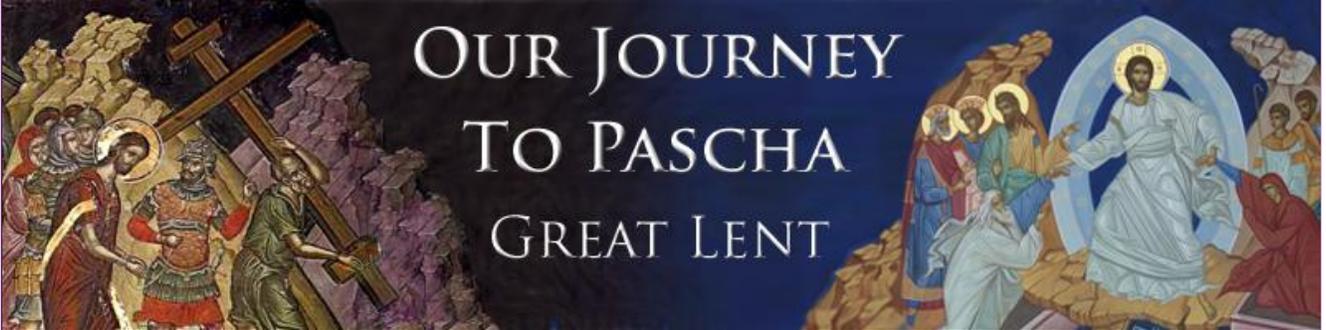


FEBRUARY 2018

KOINONIA

OUR JOURNEY
TO PASCHA
GREAT LENT





FROM OUR ADMINISTRATOR

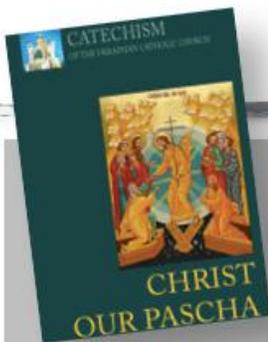
GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!
GLORY FOREVER!

Dear Faithful in Christ,

We are about to embark upon the holy and sacred season of the Great Fast (Lent). This month's newsletter features three important pastoral letters from our hierarchy. The first is a message of encouragement for the Great Fast from our bishops in the United States of America. The second and third pastoral letters are a call to prayer from our patriarch and bishops. The Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church has devoted this year to Liturgy and Prayer. Our bishops are summoning us to deeper prayer, particularly within the context of our families. If you are not accustomed to praying regularly - even daily - in your homes and with your families, perhaps this should become your Lenten resolution. Remember the old saying: "The family that prays together, stays together!" Prayer at home is one of the most effective means of taking the liturgy with us into our daily lives. May God bless you and your families, and may He grant you renewed devotion and vigor for a holy Lent.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Joseph Matlak



Excerpt from *Christ Our Pascha*

In accordance with the tradition of the Holy Fathers, conscience is the most important factor in a person's being. As Abba Dorotheus teaches:

"When God created man, he breathed into him something divine, as it were, a hot and bright spark added to reason, which lit up the mind and showed him the difference between right and wrong. This is called the conscience, which is the law of his nature... it is something divinely implanted in us, as we have said, and it can never be destroyed. It always patiently reminds us of our duties."

Saint Clement of Alexandria teaches: "One's own conscience is best for choosing accurately or shunning. And its firm foundation is a right life." Saint John Chrysostom declares: "God put within our mind a judge so ever - watchful and vigilant - I mean conscience. It is impossible that any judge among men and women should be so indefatigable as our conscience is." (# 751)

GREAT FAST PASTORAL MESSAGE



The light of Your grace has shone upon our souls, O Lord. Behold, this is the favorable time, the season of conversion. Let us turn away from the works of darkness, and let us clothe ourselves with the armor of light, so that crossing the ocean of the fast, we may come to the harbor of the resurrection on the third day with our Lord Jesus Christ the Savior of our souls.

Aposticha, Cheesefare Sunday Vespers

GREAT FAST PASTORAL LETTER OF THE HIERARCHY OF THE U.S.A.

To Our Clergy, Hieromonks, Brothers, Religious Sisters, Seminarians, and Beloved Faithful

During the upcoming days of the Great Fast, it is an opportune time to examine ourselves, to see how we are progressing spiritually, and to beseech our Lord Jesus Christ for the special graces necessary for authentic Christian living.

In the Great Fast our purpose is to become more fully aware of our human condition. It is true that we, through Baptism, have participated in Christ's redemption and in spirit are wholly purified. On the other hand, it is also true that we are still living within the sphere of sinfulness, and that even the redeemed can often fall. The Great Fast is crucial for us because it reminds us of the sense of sin which our contemporary society plays down.

The Great Fast calls for repentance. Repentance presumes sin, and sin requires a forgiving God. Our Lord set before us the model of repentance – the parable of the "Prodigal Son" (which rightly should be labelled the "Loving Father"). Although the father in the story was always watching and waiting

for the son's return, nevertheless, the son had to make up his mind to move towards the father to be reconciled. Our Church recommends prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as practical means for our spiritual move in the direction of our Father.

Therefore, we constantly seek God's grace, but we must remember that God's grace does not abolish the freedom of the human will, and therefore human weakness and sinfulness will constantly lead us away from God. And we can return to God only by prayer and doing penance. These activities form a bridge between our sinfulness and the forgiveness whereby God in His mercy comes to meet us. God turns His countenance towards us if we turn ourselves to Him. The Great Fast, with its discipline of prayer, fasting, and alms-giving can be difficult. Our repentant return to the Father in love can make it a joy. The Great Fast should be a time of spiritual joy during which we seek God and renew our lives.

The Great Fast is the traditional annual retreat of our Church, a holy time for reflection on the manner of life, on the evil of sin, and on the salvation granted to us by our Lord Jesus Christ. Such is the disposition in which we must conduct the whole of our life. Let us live this way during the Great Fast while preparing ourselves for the festival of Easter – the annual celebration of our salvation.

We, your bishops, hope and pray that you may be able to renew yourselves during this holy season. Also, let us continue to remember in our prayers and good works all the people of the world who need our help. We especially remember our brothers and sisters of Ukraine in their untiring struggle against unjust aggression.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

+ Stefan Soroka
Metropolitan Archbishop of Philadelphia

+ Paul Chomnycky, OSBM
Eparch of Stamford

+ Benedict Aleksiychuk
Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago

+ Bohdan J. Danylo
Eparch of St. Josaphat in Parma

+ John Bura (*author*)
Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia

+ Andriy Raby
Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia

PASTORAL LETTER ON PRAYER

Patriarch Sviatoslav



PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Pastoral Letter of the Synod of Bishops in 2017 to Clergy, Monastics, and Laity

“Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11: 1)

Very Reverend and Reverend fathers!
Venerable brothers and sisters in monasticism!
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

Having gathered at the Holy Synod in Briukhovychi near L’viv on 3-12 September 2017, we, the bishops of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, focused on the central aspect of the life of the Church, namely, prayer—both personal and communal prayer. We strive to share with you the fruit of our common spiritual reflections.

Although prayer is the natural consequence and manifestation of a person’s faith in God, nevertheless, one must learn to pray, constantly restoring and deepening their ability to communicate with God. The request of the disciples of Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1), is always of relevance to us, because our Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the main teacher of prayer. And today, we as a Church humbly approach Him and repeat the request of the disciples. In the modern world—which, on the one hand, offers a beautiful, unprecedented opportunity to humanity, and, on the other hand, presses on it with an avalanche of information and confuses with pseudo-values and ideologies—this request becomes of particular importance.

From the Gospel, we see that Christ teaches prayer primarily through His own life and example. His relation with the Father is manifested continuously, both in public affairs and in personal and intimate communication with Him. Preaching the Good News about the coming of the Kingdom of God, Jesus often invites His disciples to keep vigil and pray. The Divine Teacher also offers them a verbal example of prayer, the "Our Father," which Christians from the first centuries to this day consider to be the most important and most authoritative. In this prayer of Jesus to the Father, He reveals all truth (cf. Matthew 3:15) about God and man, because this prayer, from the mouth of the Lord Himself, reminds us that God is a loving Father who is close to people in all of their lives' states, needs and difficulties, and it reminds us that a human person is a beloved child of God, called to fulfil the Lord's plan, namely that His name be hallowed, that His kingdom come, and that His will be done (cf. Matthew 6:9-10).

A prerequisite for Christian prayer is our humility before God, the recognition of our inability to communicate with the Creator. In our liturgical services, we reveal this weakness to our God and humbly admit: "Teach us your statutes, because we do not know how to pray as we ought, unless you, Lord, guide us by your Holy Spirit" (Seventh Morning Prayer during Matins). And the Lord, in His mercy, gives us His Holy Spirit, who "searches the hearts of men," "helps us in our weakness," prays with us, and "intercedes for us according to the will of God," as Saint Paul teaches us (cf. Romans 8:26-27). Therefore, every liturgical service and every conversation with God in prayer begins with calling upon the Holy Spirit.

True Christian prayer implicates a meeting with the living God and establishing a personal relationship with Him. This may involve silently listening to the Word of God—which is especially needed during this time of informational noise and consumerist tumult—as well as praise and gratitude, humble supplication and repentance. Sincerity and authenticity are very important elements of this relationship. The personal prayer of a Christian is an encounter of a living, real person with a living God. Before the face of the Creator, a believing person does not deceive or does not put on masks because they do not doubt the kindness and unconditional love of the Lord God.

An intrinsic feature of Christian prayer is the openness of human person to the will of God and the willingness to accept it: "Teach me to do your will, for you are my God" (Psalm 142:10). Therefore, prayer should not be seen as a human endeavor to persuade God to fulfill our desires. Our sensitivity to the voice of God is much more important than our requests, because the Lord knows "what each needs even before they ask or are aware of it" (Fifth Evening Prayer during Vespers).

A Christian is never alone in prayer, they are united with their brothers and sisters in Christ. According to the testimony of Christ, "where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20), prayer is most complete in its communal dimension. Therefore, common family prayer is very important for Christian life and the Divine Liturgy is its summit and source.

Serving God is a dialogical act: the Lord blesses those who bless Him and sanctifies those who trust in Him (cf. Ambo Prayer of the Divine Liturgy). That is why the main liturgical service of the Church is called the "Eucharist" – thanksgiving for all that the Lord has done for us according to His great mercy. The purpose of the Eucharist is not only to change bread and wine, but above all to change us, to unite us with Christ. The ministry of the Eucharist is "for us," so that "all of us, who share in this

one bread and cup, with one another” may be united “into the communion of the one Holy Spirit” (Epiclesis of the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great). Through the Holy Eucharist, “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit” are present in this world. Through the Eucharist, the Church becomes a sacrament of salvation of the world and at the same time is the forerunner of “life of the world to come.”

Prayer is the cooperation of man with God, and therefore it is inextricably linked with the responsibility of each person for their own life, for the life of the Church, and for the whole world. Every Christian who, with an open heart, appeals to the Giver of his life and the Lord in prayer, is called in the same way to build the Church with his own life, and to spread in the world God’s salvific action. We must remember the words of the Apostle James: “Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead” (James 2:17). If our personal and communal prayer is a manifestation of faith, it must, therefore, be reflected in good deeds, in the ministry of service (*diakonia*) in the Church and in society. Then all of life will be a lasting glorification of God through deeds, words, thoughts, intentions, and efforts.

It should be remembered that the cradle and the first school of prayer is the Christian family, which we traditionally call the domestic Church. Therefore, we express our sincere gratitude to our parents and grandparents from whom children and grandchildren hear the words of prayer for the first time in their lives and learn to utter these words of prayer with due attention and awe. Such prayer often establishes the foundation for the Christian upbringing of a child, as well as the beginning of his or her gradual growth in faith and virtues. We call upon all Christian families to continue to diligently foster family prayer, both in the morning and in the evening, and with prayer on their lips to begin work and thank God for their daily bread during meals.

At the same time, we encourage parents, as well as catechists and clergy, to pay significant attention to educating children in prayer, using the rich spiritual heritage of our liturgical tradition when teaching the Christian faith in catechetical schools, in sermons, and during retreats, especially focusing on the liturgical texts in which the Church expresses its faith and the saints share their experience of prayer.

Because priests are the leaders of prayer for parishioners in the parish community, we express our recognition and appreciation to every priest and deacon who are for their faithful examples and teachers of prayer. At the same time, we renew the call to all clergy and pastors about daily perseverance in prayer, both personal and liturgical. Let us remember that the church community, which does not pray, betrays its vocation and deprives its members of the many gifts of God they need in their everyday and spiritual affairs. Our great desire and wish is that, through the zealous cultivation of liturgical and personal prayer, theological educational institutions and institutions for formation within our Church help the Church’s future ministers to gain authentic experience in communicating with the living and merciful God.

We express particular acknowledgement to the consecrated communities, whose main meaning of life is prayer – both personal and liturgical. The service of prayer of monasteries today is more than ever important to our people. Therefore, we urge monks, nuns, and religious to duly perform their liturgical prayer rule in accordance with the prescriptions of our rite. We believe that our monasteries will remain schools of the Church’s prayer for their members and all faithful of the Church.

We want to emphasize that, as shepherds of the Church, we sincerely respect and appreciate the manifestations of prayerful piety of our laity. In particular, we mean prayer fraternities, movements, and communities, which, under the guidance of experienced clergymen, we encourage all faithful to participate in. We especially want to note the practice of pilgrimages to holy places, which the Lord generously granted to Ukraine. Pilgrimage to holy places with proper spiritual accompaniment becomes a very important school of prayer for the faithful of our Church. The prayer of God's journeying people reflects the mission of the Church – to always enter into the salvific presence of God. The Lord God constantly comes for our sake and for our salvation, and the Church always comes to meet her immortal Bridegroom. In this sense, every Christian is a pilgrim, a living witness of God's salvific coming to this world.

Over the past few years, our people have faced difficult challenges. These difficult and tragic circumstances have revealed the unprecedented power of the spirit of our people, a force that derives from prayer and trust in God. At the most difficult times, many of the faithful of our Church did not cease to pray and keep vigil. Thanks to the enduring support of prayer, sacrifice, and dedication of many of our priests, monastics, and lay people, we overcome great difficulty every day and move forward. Prayer is the power of our people and the source of salvation; therefore, we call upon everyone to continue to persevere in prayer with the words of the Apostle Paul: "Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer... Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them" (Romans 12:11-12, 14).

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! The Lord blessed our Church with the freedom to pray, which we did not always have. At the same time, He gave us life – space and time to meet and communicate with Him. Let us use this gift!

As was said in the beginning, the Holy Spirit teaches us to pray. Let us pray, let us keep vigil, let us listen to His Word in the silence of our hearts and in our communities. He speaks and comes to us to be with us personally in the new year, with our families, with our communities and with our people. Let us rejoice in this mystery and live in peace!

May the blessing of the Lord be upon you!

On behalf of the Synod of Bishops of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

+ SVIATOSLAV

Given in Kyiv at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ,
on the day (Julian Calendar) of our Holy Hierarch and Father Nicholas,
Archbishop of Myra in Lycia, Wonderworker,
19 December A.D. 2017

PASTORAL LETTER FROM OUR BISHOPS

Call to Prayer In Our Families



PASTORAL LETTER "CALL TO PRAYER IN OUR FAMILIES"

To Our Clergy, Hieromonks, Brothers, Religious Sisters, Seminarians, and Beloved Faithful

The Lord, who loves every human being in the world, gifted each one of us with a unique and unrepeatable life. When we contemplate our life, then we see how much effort we expend in order to feel happy. In this materialistic world, each one of us associates his/her happiness with one thing or another. All of us achieve something, however nothing satisfies us, and again, we apply immense effort to obtain and achieve the next perception of "happiness".

This is the way the rest of our entire life could pass us by. The problem is that we identify ourselves with our body and aspire to attain happiness on the physical level. However, the human being is comprised not only of a body, because there is also a soul. That is why, Saint Augustine, reflecting on this understanding of our nature, says: "My heart is restless until it finds its rest in the Lord". Our dwelling with the Lord, our prayer, fills us with the understanding as to how and what we should do, what to avoid, and how to build relationships with people. In this manner, we begin to be ever more aware of what God really wants of us in this case or in a different situation. The quality of our prayer may be seen from the way we are afterwards. Our prayer puts an imprint on our entire life!

We can frequently think that conversation with God, which is prayer, is a useless waste of time. The reason might also be that we ourselves do not completely understand how important it is for us to abide with our Creator. We are materialistic because we live in this materialistic world. Throughout life, we devote much time to everyday matters or concerns, although we see how little time we spend in prayer. Very often, owing to a lack of prayer, we stumble upon a mistaken conviction and make the incorrect choice. We can be certain that the root of all our negative conditions, problems, and crisis is the same — neglect of prayer. From personal experience, each one of us knows that, when we are “watchful” about prayer, then everything else also goes well, in harmony and uniformity with God.

Exactly for this reason we call upon all Christian families to nurture shared morning and evening prayer in the family circle. Especially we encourage you to gather together and pray as a family in your homes at 9:00 o’clock in the evening (regardless of time zones). We should pray, each one for their needs: for the family as well as the parish, for the eparchy and the entire Church, for peace in Ukraine and USA, for vocations and other intentions. Therefore, let us begin this year with prayer together, with reflection on God’s Word, in selfless service to one another and with trust in God! ...

We also encourage our pastors to facilitate weekly or periodic prayer meetings with the faithful. It can be an opportunity to share experiences about prayer and to grow in our faith. The Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church can serve as an excellent source for learning and reflection on our faith. Excerpts read during the prayer meetings and before or after our worship gatherings may facilitate greater insight into the power of faith in our daily life.

Your hierarchy of the Ukrainian Catholic Church join in solidarity with you with our fervent and steadfast prayers offered for all. Let us gather in our families at home, and in our parish and eparchial families for shared prayer. We love you and we pray for you.

+ Stefan Soroka
Metropolitan Archbishop of Philadelphia

+ Paul Chomnycky, OSBM
Eparch of Stamford

+ Benedict Aleksiychuk (*author*)
Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago

+ Bohdan J. Danylo
Eparch of St. Josaphat in Parma

+John Bura
Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia

+Andriy Rabi
Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia

DAILY PRAYERS FOR FAMILIES



+ In the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. *(Three Times)*

Glory be to You, our God; glory be to You!

Heavenly King, Advocate, Spirit of Truth, who are everywhere present and fill all things. Treasury of Blessings, Bestower of Life, come and dwell within us, cleanse us of all that defiles us, and, O Good One, save our souls.

+ Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, have mercy on us. *(Three Times)*

+ Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and ever. Amen.

Trinity Most Holy, have mercy on us. Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord. Pardon our transgressions, O Master. Look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One, for the sake of Your Name.

Lord, have mercy! *(Three Times)*

+ Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and ever. Amen.

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Hail Mother of God and Virgin, Mary full of grace, the Lord is with Thee. Blessed art thou, among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb; for thou hast given birth to Christ, the Savior and Redeemer of our souls.

+ In the Name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. *(Three Times)*

LITURGY OF THE HOURS

DIVINE OFFICE

OF THE BYZANTINE SLAVONIC RITE

**HOROLOGION - OCTOECHOS
TRIODION - MENAION**

**ENGLISH TRANSLATION
AVAILABLE NOW**

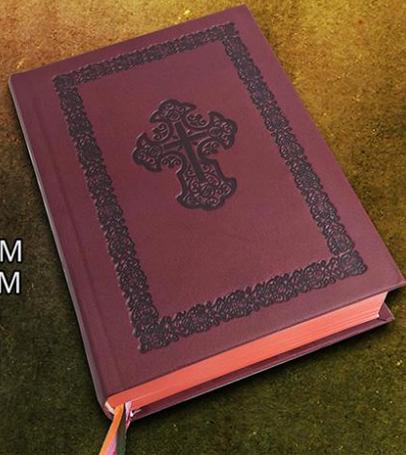
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FROM THE
CONGREGATION FOR THE
EASTERN CHURCHES:

“Where such practice of celebrating the Divine Praises with the people has diminished, if not completely disappeared, the ancient tradition should be restored without delay, so as not to deprive the faithful of a privileged source of prayer, nourished by treasures of authentic doctrine.... Calling upon the time when the Divine Praises were upheld with special care in the East, not only by the monastic communities, but also by the parishes, the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches reminds us of the obligation – often easily forgotten or abandoned – to celebrate them in the cathedrals, parishes, rectoral churches, religious communities and seminaries.”

- Instruction for Applying the Liturgical Principles of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches

CELEBRATE THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS

At Saint Basil the Great Mission in Charlotte, North Carolina

Saturdays:

VESPERS at 5pm

Eves of Feast Days:

VESPERS at 5:30pm

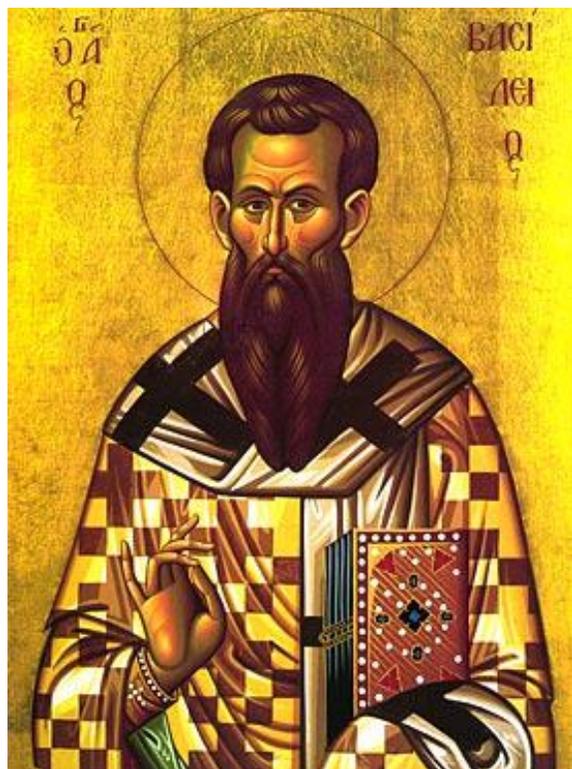
Before the Divine Liturgy

Fulfills the Sunday and Holy Day observance for Eastern Catholics

SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

БОГОСЛУЖІННЯ SERVICIOS LITÚRGICOS

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA



SAINT BASIL THE GREAT MISSION

1400 Suther Road, Charlotte, NC 28213

(980) 785-2764

stbasil.weebly.com

SATURDAY

5:00pm: VESPERS

SUNDAY

10:00am: CONFESSIONS

11:00am: DIVINE LITURGY

SABADO

5:00pm: VISPERAS

DOMINGO

10:00am: CONFESIONES

11:00am: SANTA MISA

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, THE DIVINE SERVICES ARE CELEBRATED IN ENGLISH.

BI-LINGUAL LITURGICAL BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE.

YOU MAY GO TO CONFESSION IN ENGLISH OR SPANISH.

A MENOS QUE SE INDIQUE LO CONTRARIO, ESTES SERVICIOS LITÚRGICOS SON CELEBRADOS EN INGLÉS.

LIBROS LITÚRGICOS BILINGÜES ESTÁN DISPONIBLES.

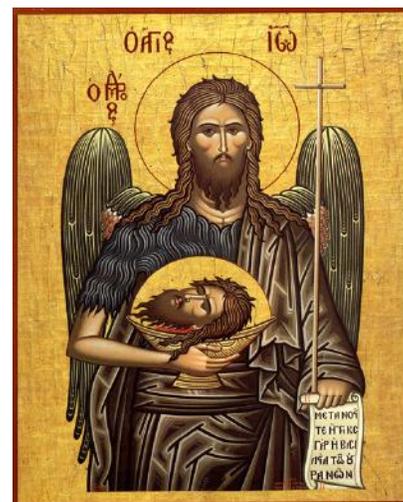
SE PUEDE CONFESAR EN INGLÉS O ESPAÑOL.

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST MISSION (Ukrainian Language Ministry)

Charlotte Catholic High School
7702 Pineville-Matthews Road
Pineville, NC 28226

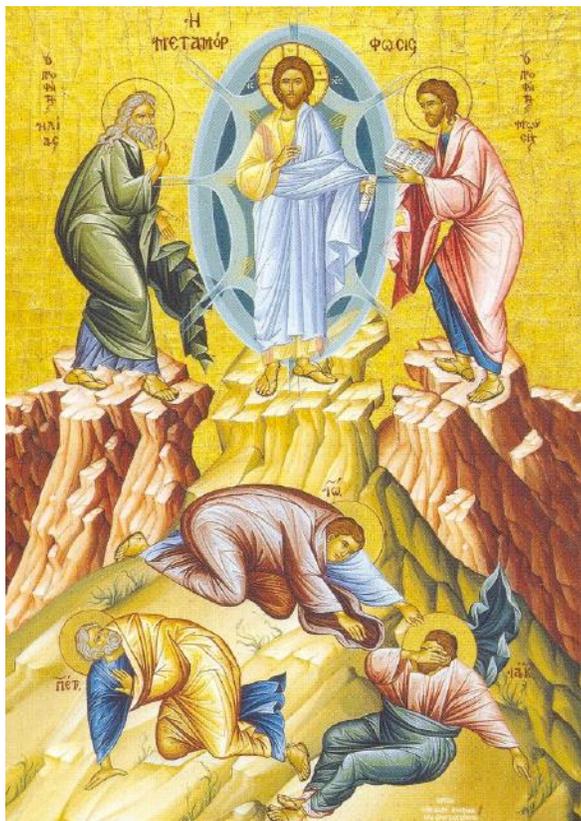
THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH

3:00pm: DIVINE LITURGY (Ukrainian)



SCHEDULE OF DIVINE SERVICES

SOUTH CAROLINA



COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

TRANSFIGURATION CATHOLIC CHURCH

306 N Pines Road

Blythewood, SC 29016

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

5:00pm: DIVINE LITURGY

Confessions Upon Request

GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

SAINT RAFKA MARONITE CATHOLIC CHURCH

1215 SC-14,

Greer, SC 29650

STAY TUNED...

