

Third Sunday of the Great Fast

March 24, 2019

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

**THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF
SAINT BASIL THE GREAT**

A Parish of the Eparchy of Saint Josaphat in Parma

1400 Suther Road
Charlotte, North Carolina 28213

Website:
stbasil.weebly.com

Telephone:
980-785-2764

Email:
stbasilcharlotte@gmail.com

Services:

Saturdays
5:00 PM – Vespers

Other Feast Days
(As Announced)

Confessions

Sundays
11:00 AM – Divine Liturgy

6:00 PM – Vespers
7:00 PM – Divine Liturgy

Sundays
Before Divine Liturgy
Until 10:40 AM

Mission Communities:

HOLY CROSS

COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA

Transfiguration Catholic Church
306 N. Pines Road, Blythewood, SC 29016

Website:
colabyzcatholic.weebly.com

2nd Sunday of the Month

5:00 PM – Divine Liturgy

Confessions Until 4:40 PM

4th Sunday of the Month

5:00 PM – Vespers & Catechism

DORMITION

**OF THE
MOTHER OF GOD**

GREENVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA

St. Rafka Maronite Catholic Church
1215 SC-14, Greer, SC 29650

Website:
dormition.weebly.com

Sunday, March 31

5:00 PM – Divine Liturgy

Confessions Until 4:40 PM

ADMINISTRATOR



**Father
Joseph Matlak**

Telephone
980-785-2764

Email
frjosephmatlak@
gmail.com

DEACON



**Deacon
Matthew Hanes**

FEASTS & READINGS FOR THIS WEEK

This Sunday

THIRD SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

Tone 3

**Veneration of the Holy Cross
Fore-Feast of the Annunciation**

Venerable Father Zachary

Holy Father Artemon of Seleucia in Pisidia

Hebrews 4:14-5:6

Mark 8:34-9:1

MONDAY

Annunciation to the Most Holy Theotokos

Blessed Emil Kovch

Hebrews 2:11-18

Luke 1:24-38

TUESDAY

Synaxis of the Holy Archangel Gabriel

Isaiah 25:1-9

Genesis 9:8-17; Proverbs 12:8-22

WEDNESDAY

Holy Mother Matrona of Thessalonica

Isaiah 26:21-27:9

Genesis 9:18-10:1; Proverbs 12:23-13:10

THURSDAY

Venerable Father Hilarion the New

Holy Stephen the Wonderworker

Isaiah 28:14-22

Genesis 10:32-11:9; Proverbs 13:19-14:6

FRIDAY

Venerable Father Mark of Arethusa

Deacon Cyril & Others, Martyrs

Isaiah 29:13-23

Genesis 12:1-7; Proverbs 14:15-26

SATURDAY

All Souls Saturday

Venerable Father John Climacus

Hebrews 6:9-12; 1 Corinthians 15:47-57

Mark 7:31-37; John 5:24-30

Next Sunday

FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

Tone 4

Veneration of St. John Climacus

Venerable Father Hypatius of Gangra

Hebrews 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:9-19

Mark 9:17-31; Matthew 4:25-5:12



Third Sunday of the Great Fast

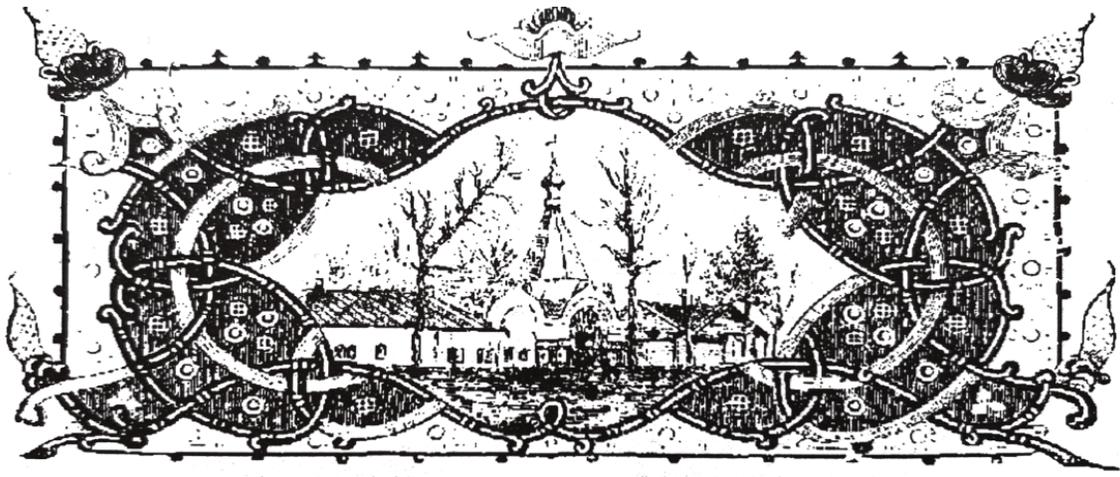
Veneration of the Precious & Life-Giving Cross

In the services for this Sunday, the Holy Church glorifies the holy cross and the fruits of the death of the Savior on the cross. She will carry out the holy cross into the middle of the temple for veneration, and is why the Sunday is called the Veneration of the Cross.

The purpose of instituting the Holy Cross in the service on the third Sunday will be revealed as a beautiful comparison by the Holy Church to the tree of life in paradise, the tree which sweetened the bitter waters of Marah, the tree with the canopy of leaves under

whose shade tired travelers seeking the eternal promised land may find coolness and rest. Thus, the Holy Church offers the Holy Cross for spiritual reinforcement to those going through the ascetic effort of the fast, just as food, drink and rest serve as bodily reinforcement. This spiritual reinforcement is given as the representation of the love of God to man for whom the Son of God turned Himself over to death on the cross. It is especially necessary in the middle of our effort because now our ascetic efforts already have lost much of the freshness of its power and however yet cannot hopefully enliven itself for the near and successful ending of our ascetical effort. Having concentrated all that is the most severe and sorrowful in the worship services of the previous weeks, especially during the first, that may both frighten the sinner and apparently touch the hardest of human hearts, now in the middle of the large and difficult arena of the Holy Forty Day Fast the Holy Church offers the Holy Cross for great comfort and encouragement as needed for raising the flagging strength of those fasting. Wherefore nothing can both console, encourage, and inspire the fatigued, or perhaps even the Christian weakened in spirit so much as the presentation of the eternal divine love of the Savior who turned Himself over to the struggle on the cross for the sake of our salvation.

For such a purpose the Holy Church offers the cross on the third Sunday of Great Lent from of old. Many hymns of praise for this Sunday were composed by Joseph and Theodore of the Studite Monastery. Everything in the worship service of this day: the most Holy Cross, solemnly carried from the altar to the middle of the temple, the singing of the stichera for venerating the cross, the Epistle, recounting the suffering of the Savior on the cross as the means of our reconciliation with God, the Gospel, reminding the Christian about everyone's duty to bear their cross in life, following the Crucified One on the cross, - everything that promotes the deep stamp of the cross of Christ on the heart of the believer, as a sign of our salvation, as our mighty, God-given power, saving us on earth and opening to us the entrance to the high place of our fatherland, as the highest and more powerful reinforcement of believers among the ascetics of the Holy Forty Day Fast. If the Lord suffered on a cross for our sake then we also should practice asceticism unceasingly in fasting, prayer and other efforts of piety for His sake, discharging from ourselves and destroying in ourselves all that interferes with these efforts. With the aim of our greater enthusiasm for patience in efforts of piety, the Holy Church on the present day comfortably reminds us beforehand about coming nearer "to the light of the peaceful joy of Pascha", hymning, in the *troparia* of the canon, the holy cross and the suffering of the Savior on it, together with His joyful resurrection and inviting the faithful "with pure mouths" to sing "the song of joyfulness."



The Liturgy of Vespers and the Presanctified Divine Liturgy, Part One – March 2019

Let us recall what was said when we introduced our reflections on the Liturgy of Vespers this past February:

At Vespers, I was created by God, I fell into sin, the Light of Christ (His saving self as well as His acts and His teachings) enters my darkness with a desire to change me forever, and then finally, the Big Question:

Do I choose to give myself permission to engage my life with His life, to submit to His rescue mission? Am I willing to allow my lifestyle to include and embrace His new reality of freedom from darkness to the fullest? If so, then it is at Vespers that I am reassured repeatedly that I can look forward to the fulfillment of some amazing promises which our Lord has made to those who choose to return His love.

On any evening, but especially Saturday evenings, the Liturgy of Vespers points to the fulfillment of promises made by our Lord that we experience fully at any Holy and Divine Liturgy. The truth of these promises is even more highlighted during the evenings of the 40-day Great Fast (a.k.a. "Great Lent", or simply "Lent"). How? Why?

First, we notice that we do not celebrate the Divine Liturgy on Monday through Friday during the Great Fast. Not celebrating means an underlying "sadness" over a lack or loss of something.

Second, we notice that on those same Lenten days, mostly either a Wednesday or a Friday, it is possible to create a "new liturgy" by combining Vespers with the distribution and communion of the gifts of bread and wine "previously sanctified, previously consecrated" at a Sunday Divine Liturgy. This new service, unique to the Great Fast, is called "the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts". It is a joyful, satisfying, sustaining, or "bright" experience to partake of the Most-Holy Body and Precious Blood of Our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Thus, Great Lent is often called a "bright sadness" or a "joyful sorrow".

As to the first part, our sadness: not having a consecration of the bread and wine means that there is no celebration. It is a way of acknowledging the effects of the sin of Adam and Eve and our inheritance of those effects. We lose communion with God, with the joys of Paradise, with life, itself. God commanded Adam to fast (Gen. 2:16), but he did not obey God's command (the Latin words from which we get the English "to obey" mean literally "to listen carefully to"). Because of their "disobedience" (listening carelessly), Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and lost the life of blessedness (happiness-delight), natural knowledge of God, and communion with God, for which they were created. Both they -- and their descendants -- became heirs of death and corruption. The Great Fast encourages us to consider the benefits of fasting, as well as the consequences of disobedience and listening carelessly. We recall our fallen state by not celebrating the action of bread becoming His Body and the wine becoming His Blood. This deprivation is to motivate us to come to our senses, to desire change, to repent.

At Forgiveness Vespers on the evening of Cheese-fare Sunday, the Sunday of Forgiveness, we are invited to begin cleansing ourselves of evil through praying, fasting and works of charity/mercy. We acquire virtues and the skills of “obeying” (listening carefully to) God, so that we can benefit from the forgiveness and healing that the Son of God offers us. During the Great Fast, postponing the celebration, we are given a daily dose of readings from Genesis and Proverbs to give us a chance to learn how to listen carefully so that we may understand the history of our salvation, obey God and live virtuously.

Let us now look at the structure of the service and see how it relates to what we have learned so far. The first part of the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is like a daily Vespers Liturgy, and the theme and the prayers of both are virtually identical.

Vespers is introduced by Psalm 103/104 to remind us that we were created in blessed happiness and that our God is a God of order. His creation, including us, was great, wondrous and marvelous. On Saturdays, Vespers begins with the Holy Doors opened and the all the candles are lit, lights turned on.

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord, my God, You are great indeed. ... How manifold are Your works, O Lord, in wisdom You wrought them all.

After our fall into sin, disorder prevails. The main lights in church are either dimmed or put out completely. The Holy Doors are closed, and the priest removes his phelonion. The psalmist sings: “There is nowhere to run, no one to care for my soul” (Ps. 140/141). Our Lord Himself explains that the evil one is “the ruler of this world” (John 14:30), as did the holy chief apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 4:4).

At daily Vespers the Psalm Readings that follow Psalm 103/104 vary in monasteries, but they are most often omitted in parishes, except on Saturday evenings or certain feasts when we sing Psalms One to Eight, in abbreviated form, commonly nicknamed “Blessed is the man”. The selected verses are to remind us that even amidst the darkness of this world and this age, we still need to choose the Good (cf. Deuteronomy 30:15-20, 11: 26-28).

Blessed is the man who has not walked in the counsel of the wicked. (1:1)

That “man” is first and foremost our Lord, the second Adam, who ran His rescue mission after the first Adam failed to walk in righteousness.

Serve the Lord with fear, exalt in Him with trembling. ... Blessed are those who trust in Him. (2:11)

Those Big Questions mentioned earlier are sounding off in the background: Do I submit to His rescue mission? Do I trust Him enough to change my lifestyle to match the freedom from darkness?

A positive desire to repent on our part is not enough for the task at hand. Our Lord summarized it when He said, “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41). Even the psalmist from of old knew this: “Arise, O Lord, save me, my God! ... Salvation-Deliverance is of the Lord! Upon Your People Your blessing.” (3:7,8)

To highlight the cause of our sadness, the first part, which is symbolized during Vespers by turning off the lights, taking off some vestments, and during Lent by giving up of the consecration of bread and wine, is not enough. Something else is needed. There is a second part, a need to highlight the source of our brightness, our joy, our sense of completion that can only be found in communion with God. And so, the second part of Vespers (or of the Presanctified) is to be our guide.

We will continue reflecting upon the meaning of the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts (which is also Vespers) in the March 2019 installment. In the meantime, if your parish has already restored the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, you are encouraged to attend. You can also learn how to pray Vespers at home. It is a beautiful, peaceful service that will help you to be a better Christian and prepare you, so that your Life in Christ will be more holy and rewarding.

To highlight the cause of our sadness, the first part, which is symbolized during Vespers by turning off the lights, taking off some vestments, and during Lent by giving up of the consecration of bread and wine, is not enough. Something else is needed. There is a second part, a need to highlight the source of our brightness, our joy, our sense of completion that can only be found in communion with God. And so, the second part of Vespers (or of the Presanctified) is to be our guide.

We will continue reflecting upon the meaning of the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts (which is also Vespers) in the March 2019 installment. In the meantime, if your parish has already restored the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, you are encouraged to attend. You can also learn how to pray Vespers at home. It is a beautiful, peaceful service that will help you to be a better Christian and prepare you, so that your Life in Christ will be more holy and rewarding.

Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Wednesday, 7:00 PM

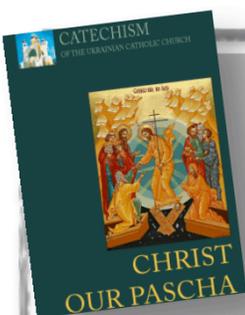
Confessions Available Beforehand



Excerpt from *Christ Our Pascha*

The Visible and Invisible World

Angels, the heavenly incorporeal beings (spirits) “have their being by the will of the Father, [they] are brought into being by the work of the Son, and are perfected by the presence of the Spirit.” God, as the highest Intelligence, fashioned the angelic intellects. We made them partakers of his inexpressible glory and formed their incorruptible essence. The angels are beacons, who reflect the Light of God. Since they have received eternal life from the Origin of Life, and because they contemplate eternal Glory in Wisdom, they are like mirrors filled with light. (#114)





EVANGELIZATION

Last June, clergy and lay delegates of the Eparchy of St. Josaphat gathered for a convention entitled *Planting Crosses: Evangelization and Mission in the USA*. The conference focused on parish renewal and how to establish new missions in regions of the Eparchy where our Church has not yet been established.

There is a desire in our Eparchy to continue our growth. However, in order to grow, our parishes need to learn how to move from “maintenance” to “mission” - by nurturing a culture that is missionary, by forming the faithful, and by welcoming others to join us.

During the Convention, delegates developed specific proposals and directives for evangelization and mission activities in the life of our parishes and Eparchy. Now, during this Great Fast, the bishop has called for our parishes to meet and discuss these proposals and directives.

The goal is to revitalize all of our parish communities through evangelization and outreach initiatives. We are called to awaken among the faithful the experience of hearing and responding to the *Kerygma* of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to inspire them to serve and discern their gifts and charisms, and to support mission activities in the local parishes, so that we may go forth and spread the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ.

ST. BASIL THE GREAT PARISH, CHARLOTTE WILL MEET ON SUNDAY, APRIL 7

The session will be divided into two parts:

- “Count Your Blessings”

How do we already fulfill our mission of evangelization as individuals and as a parish community?

- “Dare to Dream”

Imagine what might be possible to better fulfill our mission as the Church in the area of evangelization & mission activities?



Note:

Mystery of Penance (Confession) Available Upon Request

Wednesday, April 17

**7:00 PM – Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
*w/ The Mystery of Holy Anointing***

Thursday, April 18

7:00 PM – Vespers *w/* Divine Liturgy

Friday, April 19

10:00 AM – Matins of the Lord's Passion (*"Twelve Gospels"*)

6:00 PM – Vespers *w/* Burial of the Lord's Shroud *In the Main Church*

Saturday, April 20

10:00 AM – Jerusalem Matins (*Lamentations over the Holy Shroud*)

5:00 PM – Vespers *w/* Divine Liturgy (*Old Testament Prophecies*)

10:00 PM – Paschal Matins

Paschal Divine Liturgy

Blessing of Easter Baskets



Nota:

Misterio de la penitencia (confesión) disponible a pedido

Miercoles 17 de abril

**7:00 PM – Divina Liturgia de los Dones Presanctificados
Con Santa Unción De Los Enfermos**

Tueves 18 de abril

7:00 PM – Vísperas con Divina Liturgia

Viernes 19 de abril

10:00 AM – Maitines de la Pasión del Señor ("Doce Evangelios")

6:00 PM – Vísperas con Entierro del Sudario del Señor *Iglesia Principal*

Sábado 20 de abril

10:00 AM – Maitines de Jerusalén (*Lamentaciones Sobre La Sábana Santa*)

5:00 PM – Vísperas con Divina Liturgia (*Profecías Del Antiguo Testamento*)

10:00 PM – Maitines Pascuales

Divina Liturgia Pascual

Bendición De Las Canastas De Pascua