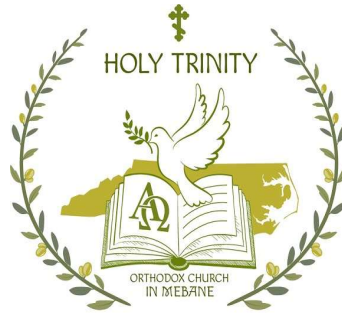


## TRINITY NEWSLETTER



**MARCH 2020, no. 12**

<https://holytrinitymission.com/index.php/ru/>

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**Rector Hieromonk Nikon (Kaskovalov):** [rector@holytrinitymission.com](mailto:rector@holytrinitymission.com)

**Warden (starosta) Andrey Semyanko :** [starosta@holytrinitymission.com](mailto:starosta@holytrinitymission.com)

**Editorial board:** Mila Albers, Irina Balan, Gaiane Bogdanova, Ksniya Eremeeva, Maria Kononov, Natalia Smith: [vestnik-holy-trinity@googlegroups.com](mailto:vestnik-holy-trinity@googlegroups.com)

### **A WORD FROM PRIEST**

Winter is behind — the coldest time of the year — and together with its ending a number of some dear and joyful celebrations for our hearts: a beginning of a new calendar year, the meeting of the Nativity of Christ, the celebration of the Baptism of the Savior and the Meeting of a Newborn Jesus. And now we are meeting spring!

It is very symbolic that at the very beginning of spring the beginning of Great Lent also falls. Just as the spring season is a symbol of awakening for us, so fasting is by no means a certain state of despondency of the spirit. Fasting is a time of special concentration and attention to our soul, when we, inwardly abstracting in Christ from all that is unnecessary and distracting acquire the very mood of a much desired spring-bird resurrection, filling our soul with a melody of light, joy, hope and love.

And very soon, after a little more than forty days, we will enter the genuine Triumph of the World - the Bright Resurrection of Christ. Easter of the Lord. I wish everyone strength and God's help during the fasting on their inner self, preparing to receive the joy of the Gospel message.

### **QUESTIONS TO THE PRIEST**

**Question:** Father Nikon, what is the essence of fasting? Why do we partially refuse food?

**Answer:** First of all, we need to understand that fasting is not an end in itself. And we are not fasting for the sake of fasting, thereby formally fulfilling a certain instruction of the Church. In this case, even the most severe abstinence from food is only a diet that has nothing to do with spiritual life.

Fasting is for us a means of attention to our soul. A time of special focus on our inner, spiritual life.

Understanding that a person is often in a cycle of various activities, concerns and constantly rotates “like a squirrel in a wheel”, often forgetting about the soul, the Church, like a caring mother, offers us periods of special silence. The time when we try to concentrate as much as possible on our spiritual condition and relationship with God. A partial abstinence from food, fussy entertainments and all that usually scatters us, relaxes and distracts is an attached way to pass fasting time, even less worrying about the external and focusing on the internal.

This is the meaning of fasting - to put aside the fuss and excessive care of the temporary every day, turning to the most important. Of course, it is important for us to maintain such a state throughout life. But, according to our humanity, first of all, we'll try to at least start from a special time when the Church strictly reminds us of the most important thing.

## **EVENT OF THE MONTH - THE BEGINNING OF GREAT LENT**

The history of Great Lent is fraught with many mysteries. Until the 3rd century, believers in different Christian Churches prepared differently to celebrate Easter Day. According to the first Christians, the time when Christ was taken from believers began from the moment of death on the cross until the Resurrection, which determined the duration of fasting for 40 hours. Fasting from Good Friday to Easter was an imitation of the forty-day fasting of the Savior.

In the middle of the III century, a six-day fast appears in some local Churches, as a remembrance of the events of Holy Week. At the same time, some Christians considered this feat excessive, and continued to fast for about forty hours. At the beginning of the fifth century, all Local Churches came to the idea of forty-day Lent as tithes of the year, and from that moment the duration of the Holy Pentecost in different Churches varies from 6 to 8 weeks. Since the 4th century, fasting has been set at 7 weeks or 48 days, not counting Easter. The forty-day duration of Lent, accepted by the whole Church, is an imitation of the Savior's post in the wilderness, and the post of the prophet Moses.

Already in the 4th – 5th centuries, the Church considered Lent obligatory for all Christians. In the rules of Ecumenical Councils and in the texts of the Holy Fathers, we can find a reference to the fact that a Christian who did not observe Lent could be excommunicated for some time. In one of the sermons of St. John Chrysostom, it is said that by the 4th century the Holy Four-Tenth changed the habitual way of life of Constantinople: “Today there is no noise, screaming, or cutting meat, or running chefs; all this has ceased, and our city now resembles an honest, modest and chaste wife”

## GREAT LENT'S CALENDAR

Holy Pentecost, that is, Forty-day fasting;

- Beginning of Great Lent - March 2 (Monday);
- **During the first four days of the first week of Great Lent (from Monday to Thursday, March 2 - March 5), the Great (Penitent) canon of Andrei Kritsky is read at the evening service - the evening service with the Canon begins in our church at 18.30 p.m.**
- The 1<sup>st</sup> week of Lent: The Triumph of Orthodoxy - March 8;
- The 2nd week of Lent: St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop. Thessaloniki (Solunsky) - March 15;
- The 3rd week of =Lent: Holy Cross (Mark 8: 34-9: 1) - March 22;
- The 4th week of Lent: Rev. John Climacus (VI century) - March 29;
- Saint Mary of Egypt, (reading the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, in full, with reading the life of St. Mary of Egypt) - April 2;
- Praise to the Most Holy Theotokos: Saturday of Akathist - April 4;
- Week 5th Lent: Rev. Mary of Egypt (VI c.) - April 5;
- The 6th week of Lent, the week of yours Palm Branches: April 6 - April 11;
- On Friday the week of April, April 10 - the end of the Holy Pentecost, that is, Forty-day fasting;

Saturday of Lazarus: Remembering the resurrection of Jesus Christ the righteous Lazarus (John 11: 1-45) - April 11;

Palm Sunday, Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem (John 12: 1-18) - April 12;

Holy Week; a week of especially strict fasting and inner concentration on one's soul. Formally, it is not a part of Great Lent, but is a special week preceding Easter - from April 12 to April 18;

**Feast of Holidays and the Triumph of Celebrations - EASTER! The bright Resurrection of Christ! - April 19th.**



### PRAYER OF EPHREM SIRIN

a repentant prayer drawn up in the 4th century Rev. Ephraim the Syrian (Syrian), which is read at the services of Lent, because during this period the Christian must make special efforts to transform his life. But this can only be achieved with the help of God (John 15: 5). Therefore, we pray to Him for forgiveness, we ask for help in those petitions, which are outlined in the text of the prayer of St. Ephraim:

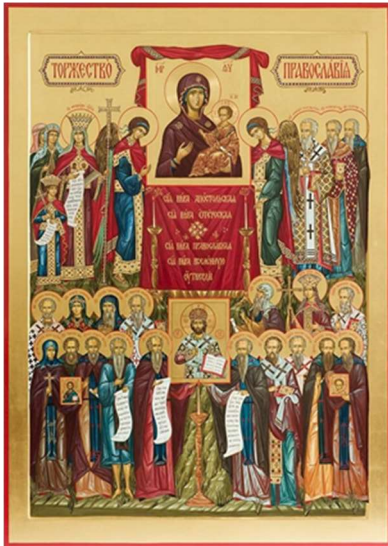
**O Lord and Master of my life!**

**Take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, lust of power, and idle talk.**

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

**Yea, Lord and King! Grant me to see my own errors and not to judge my brother, for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.**

## **HOLIDAYS OF THE MONTH**



### **THE TRIUMPH OF THE ORTHODOXY MARCH 8TH**

Triumph of Orthodoxy is celebrated on the first Sunday of Great Lent. It is the celebration of the victory of the iconodules over the iconoclasts by the decision of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. Therefore, the service is to commemorate the restoration of icons for use in services and private devotional life of Christians.

The Triumph of Orthodoxy was established in Greece in the 9th century, in memory of the final victory over the enemies of Orthodoxy - the iconoclasts. The doctrine of the veneration of icons, based on Holy Scripture and approved by the custom of the first Christians, until the VIII century remained untouched. But the iconoclastic heresy that appeared in Greece itself spread throughout many countries. The church of God was persecuted more than from the Gentiles.

For more than 100 years, the tears and innocent blood of the truly Orthodox have been pouring, who fought for the right to depict on the icons of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Mother of God and saints, and also pray to them in front of the icons. These Orthodox were imprisoned, tortured and executed. Honest icons and relics of saints were burned.

After the VII Ecumenical Council (787), which secured the veneration of icons, the weakening of persecution began, but only in the middle of the 9th century. were released from prison and the icon worshipers were returned to their former posts, and the iconoclasts were invited either to abandon their error, or to stop the church service. The loving queen Theodora declared: "He who does not honor the image of our Lord, His Most Holy Mother and all the saints, be damned!"

Methodius, elected by the Patriarch of Constantinople, established a special festive service at that time. Orthodoxy was solemnly restored to service in the St. Sophia Cathedral in Constantinople on the first Sunday of Lent, which fell on 843 February 1943. So, there was a celebration and a special rank called the Triumph of Orthodoxy.

## **PARISH LIFE**

During the Great Pentecost, after each Sunday Liturgy, “Lenten Conversations” with Father Nikon will be held in the church. The priest will tell us about the current aspects of spiritual life and answer the accumulated questions.

Also, there will be various services on weekdays, the detailed schedule of which can be found on our Facebook page or on the parish website:

[facebook.com/russian.church](https://www.facebook.com/russian.church)

<http://holytrinitymission.com>

## **NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On February 23rd the annual General Parish Meeting was held.

The following topics were discussed:

1. The budget.
2. Election of the Warden (Starosta).
3. Election of Treasurer.
4. Election of Parish Council.
5. Election of the Audit Commission and Trustees of the Parish.

Based on the voting results, the following is a list of new appointments:

Warden (Starosta): Andrey Semyanko.

Treasurer: Mila Albers.

Parish Council: starosta, treasurer, head sister and three parishioners Ilya Krutov, Alexey Slinkin, Anatoly Ponomarenko.

Revision Commission: Lyudmila Trofimova, Irina Balan, Ruslan Shevchuk.

Trustees of the Parish: Lydia Aybar, David Bradshaw, Michael Stewart, Rodion Kornienko.

## **ST. TATIANA SISTERHOOD**

On March 1<sup>st</sup> the annual meeting of the Sisterhood was held. The following main topics were discussed:

1. Election of Head Sister and Sisterhood council
2. Plans for 2020
3. Charity work and deed of mercy
4. Church and grounds cleaning
5. Schedule of Sisterhood meetings for 2020
6. Church shop management

Based on the results of the voting, a list of new appointments is provided:

Elder Sister: Gaiane Bogdanova

Secretary: Natalia Smith

Treasurer: Mila Albers

Sister mistress: Natalya Selezneva

Festivals: Maria Kononova

Church Shop Manager: Maria Kornienko

**First clean up date – March 20<sup>th</sup>, please come and help us clean the Church and garden.**

**Next Sisterhood meeting is planned for May 10<sup>th</sup>**

The full report will be published in the April issue.

The Sisterhood membership application can be obtained at the church shop or at: [sisterhood@holymission.com](mailto:sisterhood@holymission.com)

## **PRAYER REQUESTS**

For those who are ill: Olga, Lyudmila, Mikhail, Evgueni and Natalia

## **SACRAMENTS**

In February, one Sacrament of Baptism was performed. We sincerely congratulate the baby Nicholas, his parents and the entire Holy Church with the advent of yet another Christian born “of the water and the Spirit” (John 3; 5).

## **SPECIAL THANKS**

We thank all the brothers and sisters in Christ who donate to the temple, who bring and donate icons, books and other items for sale in the church shop.

Special thanks to everyone who, one way or another - in word, deed, prayer - took part in preparing for participation in the annual Russian Festival in Apex, made efforts to make our participation possible and successful.

## **PHOTO OF THE MONTH**

Russian Festival in Apex, February 8<sup>th</sup> 2020



## OUR PARISHIONERS RECOMMEND



**34TH INTERNATIONAL  
FESTIVAL OF RALEIGH**

**Jim Graham Building and Expo Center  
NC State Fairgrounds**

**Friday, March 6: 10am to 10pm**  
**Saturday, March 7: 10am to 10pm**  
**Sunday, March 8: 11am to 6pm**



A group of activists, including several of our parishioners, will represent Russia at the International Festival of Raleigh. The theme of the Festival is Renaissance and Renewal. The Russian exposition will be dedicated to the era of Peter the Great. This is a wonderful educational and cultural event for the whole family. Please come to support out cultural exhibit.

<https://internationalfocus.org/festival/>

## REQUEST FOR HELP

Our parish will appreciate any unmercenary donation.

Your contribution at any level will make a significant impact.

You may donate online through our website, using the “Donate” button, or you may make checks payable to Holy Trinity Orthodox Church and send them to the address 6803 US 70, Mebane, NC 27302.

May the Lord bless your generosity!