THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

Volume XVII **Number 26**

29 February / 13 March 2016

SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS: CHEESE-FARE SUNDAY *(Tone 8)*

THIS WEEK AT ST ELIZABETH'S

CHEESEFARE SUNDAY *(Tone 8)*

Saturday, 12 March (28 February o.s.)
6:00 PM Vigil Service; Confessions

Sunday, 13 March (29 February o.s.)
9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
11:15 PM Forgiveness Vespers
Trapeza (coffee hour)

Monday, 14 March (1 March o.s.)
6:00 PM Great Compline & Great Canon

Tuesday, 15 March (2 March o.s.)
6:00 PM Great Compline & Great Canon

Wednesday, 16 March (3 March o.s.)
8:15 AM Lenten Hours & Typika
9:30 AM Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
6:00 PM Great Compline & Great Canon

Thursday, 17 March (4 March o.s.)
6:00 PM Great Compline & Great Canon

Friday, 18 March (5 March o.s.)
8:15 AM Lenten Hours & Typika
9:30 AM Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Canon to Great-martyr Theodore
6:00 PM Compline & Akathist to Theotokos

1ST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT *(Tone 5)*
Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy

Saturday, 19 March (6 March o.s.)
6:00 PM Vigil Service; Confessions

Sunday, 20 March (7 March o.s.)
9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy;
Trapeza (coffee hour)
12:30 PM Annual Parish Meeting

FASTING DAYS THIS WEEK

Tomorrow is Pure Monday and the Great Fast begins. Therefore all the days of this week from Monday onwards are fast days. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday are normal fast days, with no fish, wine, or oil permitted. Next Saturday and Sunday, as on all weekends of Great Lent, wine and oil are also allowed.

NAMEDAYS, BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

THIS WEEK

Namedays – 13th (St John Cassian): Cassian O'Beirne;
Birthdays – 13th: Sarah Brangwynne.
Wedding Anniversaries – 16th: Father David & Matushka Faith Straut (1979).

THE REST OF MARCH

Namedays – 23rd (Martyr Vasilissa): Vasilissa Seneko; 30th (St Patrick of Ireland): William Patrick Brien.
Birthdays – 21st: Zydrune Ann Mladineo; 31st: Deacon Steven Barker.
Baptism Anniversaries – 20th: Matushka Faith Straut (1983).
Fallen Asleep in the Lord – 28th: Madeleine & Margaret Hotz.

SCRIPTURE READINGS THIS WEEK

Su	**Cheesefare Sunday: The Sunday of Forgiveness**	
	9thl Matins Gospel: John §65 (20:19-31)	
	Rom. §112 (13:11b-14:4)	Matt. §17 (6:14-21)
FIRST WEEK OF THE GREAT FAST		
1st Monday of Great Lent	*Sixth Hour:* Isaiah 1:1-20	
	Vespers: Genesis 1:1-13 • Proverbs 1:1-20	
1st Tuesday of Great Lent	*Sixth Hour:* Isaiah 1:19-2:3	
	Vespers: Genesis 1:14-23 • Proverbs 1:20-33	
1st Wednesday of Great Lent	*Sixth Hour:* Isaiah 2:3-11	
	Vespers: Genesis 1:24-2:3 • Proverbs 2:1-22	
1st Thursday of Great Lent	*Sixth Hour:* Isaiah 2:11-21	
	Vespers: Genesis 2:4-19 • Proverbs 3:1-18	
1st Friday of Great Lent	*Sixth Hour:* Isaiah 3:1-14	
	Vespers: Genesis 2:20-3:20• Proverbs 3:19-34	
1st Saturday of the Great Fast: St Theodore the Recruit		
1st Saturday	Heb. §303 (1:1-12)	Mark §10 (2:23-3:5)
St Theodore	2 Tim.§292 (2:1-10)	John §52 (15:17-16:2)
1st Sunday of the Great Fast: Sunday of Orthodoxy		
1st Sunday	*10th Matins Gospel:* John §66 (21:1-14)	
	Heb. §329a (11:24-26, 32-12:2a)	John §5 (1:43-51)

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome back to Daylight Savings Time! Those of you who remembered to set your clocks ahead and arrived on time get a star in your crown!

The annual special collection for the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in the Holy Land will be taken at the Sunday Liturgies at St Elizabeth's during the month of March. What we collect will be sent to the Synod of Bishops for the R.E.M. at Palm Sunday. This Palm Sunday collection is a major source of funding for our mission in the Holy Land, and some of us have had occasion to receive their hospitality. Please give generously.

Today is Forgiveness Sunday. Forgiveness Vespers will be immediately after the Divine Liturgy. Please remain in church for this beautiful service, the first liturgical service of Great Lent. This Vespers service is called Forgiveness Vespers because there is a rite of mutual forgiveness at the conclusion of the service. This is our opportunity to ask each other's forgiveness for any offence that we may have committed knowingly or unknowingly over the past year, and so to begin Great Lent with a clean slate. Those that cannot kneel or make prostrations should not feel obliged to do so; those that can should.

The Prayer of St Ephraim the Syrian is said on weekdays of Great Lent at all services and in private prayer. It is a striking characteristic of Lenten services. It is said usually with three prostrations to the ground, twelve bows, and a final prostration.

The Service of the Great Canon will be served on the first four weekday evenings of Great Lent at 6 o'clock. This is the Service of Great Compline with the Great Canon of Repentance composed by St Andrew of Crete, an Archbishop and hymnographer who died in the 8th Century. This Canon, a masterpiece of Orthodox hymnography, recounts incidents and personalities throughout the whole of Biblical history, weaving the theme of repentance throughout. On each of the four evenings, a quarter of the Canon is chanted. Participating in these moving services is a most important way to begin the Fast.

The Presanctified Liturgy will be served this week on Wednesday and Friday. The Orthodox Church traditionally ascribes the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts to St Gregory the Great, Pope of Old Rome. St Gregory is usually referred to in the Eastern Church as 'the Dialogist,' because he is the author of a book entitled, *The Dialogues*, a very soul-profiting work. The Presanctified Liturgy is actually not a full celebration of the Divine Liturgy in which the Gifts of bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ, but a Lenten Vespers Service with a communion of the Faithful from the reserved Body and Blood of Christ consecrated at the full Liturgy the previous Sunday. There are several ceremonies performed at the Liturgy of the Presanctified that are quite unique, to which the faithful look forward to participating in each year.

This Saturday is the Saturday of St Theodore. On this day we remember how the Great-martyr Theodore Tyro appeared in a dream to Archbishop Eudoxios of Constantinople to warn him that the Emperor Julian the Apostate intended to defile all the foods in the market with blood from idolatrous sacrifices so that the Christians would have no choice but to participate in idolatry by partaking of this food. St Theodore instructed the Archbishop to tell the faithful to boil wheat *(kolyva)*, which they already had on hand, and eat this alone. Thus the faithful were saved from Julian's plot. At the end of the Presanctified Liturgy on Friday morning, a supplicatory canon to the Saint is chanted and *kolyva* is blessed and distributed to the faithful as a remembrance of the miracle of St Theodore.

We need a donation of *kolyva* (sweetened boiled wheat) for the Saturday of St Theodore. If you can make the *kolyva* and bring it to church for Friday morning, please speak to Father.

The Service of the Akathist to the Theotokos will be served at St Elizabeth's on the first five Friday evenings of Great Lent at 6 o'clock. This is the Service of Small Compline with a canon and the Akathist chanted to the Most-Holy Mother of God. Come sing the praises of the Panagia at this beautiful service!

No non-lenten foods are served at parish functions during the Great Fast. Nothing with meat, dairy products, or eggs is permitted on a fast day. Fish may be eaten only on the Feasts of the Annunciation and Palm Sunday. If in doubt as to what foods are permitted on a particular day, please consult Father.

There will be a blessing of Icons at St Elizabeth's at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on the First Sunday of Great Lent: the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy. Because this day is a celebration of the victory of the Orthodox Faith over the heresy of Iconoclasm, it is a very appropriate day for the sanctification of icons. If you have icons at home that have not yet been blessed, please bring them to church as soon as possible so that they can be placed in the altar to begin the process of sanctification that will be complete after the prayers of blessing on the First Sunday of the Fast.

St Elizabeth's Annual Meeting will be held on the third Sunday of March. The Rector, Church Warden, and Treasurer will present year-in-review reports for the past year. Planning for the current year will also take place. Parishioner concerns will be heard. All voting members of the Parish are asked to attend.

Those attending the Annual Meeting are asked to bring a dish of food for the meal that will precede the Meeting. Please let Matushka know what you plan to bring.

St Elizabeth's needs pussy willows for Palm Sunday, which is six Sundays from today. If you have some, or can obtain any, please speak to Father.