

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

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SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGEMENT: MEATFARE SUNDAY (*Tone 3*)

SERVICES THIS WEEK

MEATFARE SUNDAY (*Tone 3*)

Sunday of the Dread Judgment

Saturday, 10 February (28 January, o.s.)

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 11 February (29 January, o.s.)

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy;
Trapeza (coffee hour)
12:30 AM Parish Council Meeting

MEETING OF THE LORD

Wednesday, 14 February (1 February, o.s.)

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Thursday, 15 February (2 February, o.s.)

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy;
Blessing of Candles

CHEESEFARE SUNDAY (*Tone 3*)

Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise

Saturday, 17 February (4 February, o.s.)

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 18 February (5 February, o.s.)

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy
11:15 AM Forgiveness Vespers;
Trapeza (coffee hour)

FASTING DAYS THIS WEEK

The third pre-lenten week of the Triodion, the week beginning with the Monday after Meatfare Sunday and ending with Cheesefare Sunday, is called the 'Week of Cheesefare.' During this week meat is forbidden, but eggs, cheese and other dairy products may be eaten on all days, including Wednesday and Friday.



SCRIPTURE READINGS Week of 11 February

<i>Su</i>	Meatfare Sunday: The Sunday of the Last Judgement	
	<i>Resurrectional Matins Gospel:</i>	
	1 Cor. §140 (8:8-9:2)	Matt. §106 (25:31-46)
	36TH WEEK after PENTECOST (Cheesefare Week)	
<i>M</i>	3 John §76 (1:1-14)	Luke §96 (19:29-40; 22:7-39)
<i>Tu</i>	Jude §77 (1-10)	Luke §109 (22:39-42, 45b-23:1)
<i>W</i>	6th Hour: Joel 2:12-26 Vespers: Joel 3:12-21	No Liturgy
<i>Th</i>	Jude §78 ((1:11-25)	Luke §110 (23:2-34, 44-56)
<i>F</i>	6th Hour: Zachariah 8:7-17 Vespers: Zachariah 8:19-23	No Liturgy
<i>Sa</i>	Cheesefare Saturday: Commemoration of Holy Ascetics	
	Rom. §115 (14:19-23;16:25-27)	Matt. §16 (6:1-13)
	Gal. §213 (5:22-6:2)	Matt. §43 (11:27-30)
<i>Su</i>	Cheesefare Sunday: The Sunday of Forgiveness	
	<i>Resurrectional Matins Gospel:</i>	
	Rom. §112 (13:11b-14:4)	Matt. §17 (6:14-21)

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Many thanks to the Komleski family who provided *kolyva* (sweetened boiled wheat) for the Memorial Services for Meatfare Soul Saturday.

A special collection for Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, New York, has been mandated by our Metropolitan and the Synod of Bishops of ROCOR on the Sunday nearest the Feast of the Three Hierarchs: 12 February, n.s. A special collection will be taken at St Elizabeth's during the Sundays of February. This collection will help the Orthodox Theological Seminary of our Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to continue to educate the future clergy of our Church in a spirit of fidelity to Orthodox Tradition in a monastic setting. Funds are needed to pay faculty, provide scholarships to students, maintain facilities, and expand programming. Holy Trinity Seminary now conducts instruction in the English language and is moving forward to with plans to institute a Master of Divinity (MDiv) program. Please give generously.

If your home has not yet been blessed this year, please arrange a time *this week* with Father when he can come to bless it *before* the Great Fast begins.

The Prayer of St Ephraim the Syrian is said in the church services and in private prayer on Wednesday and Friday of this Cheesefare Week, as well as on the weekdays of Great Lent. It is a striking characteristic of Lenten services. It is said usually with three prostrations to the ground, twelve bows, and a final prostration:

O Lord and Master of my life, a spirit of idleness, despondency, lust of power, and idle talking give me not. *Prostration.*

But rather a spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love bestow on me Thy servant. *Prostration.*

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own failings, and not to condemn my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen. *Prostration.*

O God, cleanse me a sinner. *Twelve times with a reverence (bow from the waist) at each.*

Then once more: O Lord and Master of my life...*(the entire prayer) with a single prostration at the end.*

The Feast of the Meeting of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ (2 / 15 February) is one of the Twelve Great Feasts of the Church. It commemorates the Presentation of our Saviour in the Temple as a forty-day-old child and the purification according to the Mosaic Law of His Immaculate Mother after His birth. The faithful should attend as many of the services for the Feast as they are able.

The Blessing of Candles is performed on the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in some Orthodox traditions, including that of the Russian Church. This custom is also found in the Western Church. It undoubtedly comes from the reference to Christ 'the Light to enlighten the Gentiles' in the Song of St Symeon first uttered at the time of the Saviour's Presentation in the Temple. Blessed Candles are brought home by the Faithful and kept with reverence in the Icon Corner. They are lit as a supplication to Christ for help or protection, as during a storm or in time of family dissension.

Request Forms for Blessed Candle are in the back of the church. These forms help ensure that a sufficient number of candles will be blessed so that no one is disappointed on the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord. Please fill out the form with your family name, the number of blessed candles that you are requesting, and amount of your donation, and leave them at the candle desk with your donation. The blessed beeswax candles are the larger size candle offered the candle desk, so your donation should reflect this. The Blessed Candle Request Forms can be filled out any time prior to the Divine Liturgy on the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord (15 February, n.s.). Your blessed candles may be picked up any time after the Blessing of the Candles. Your candles will be reserved for you even if you are unable to attend the Liturgy on the Feast.

The Feast of the Meeting is celebrated for a variable number of days, from a single day to a full eight days, depending on when the Great Fast begins. (To determine the number of days of the Feast in any given year, an annual calendar should be consulted. This year the *Apodosi* of the Feast is Sunday, 18 February, n.s.) The troparion and kontakion of the Meeting are chanted or read at all the services of the Church on each of the days of the festal period. To celebrate the Feast at home, the troparion of the Feast (*'Rejoice, thou who art full of grace,*

O Virgin Theotokos ...') can be sung instead of the 'Our Father' before meals, while the kontakion of the Feast (*'Thou Who didst sanctify the Virgin's womb by Thy birth ...'*) can be sung instead of the usual thanksgiving troparion after each meal. It would also be most appropriate to sing the troparion and kontakion of the Feast at the end of our morning and evening prayers at home.

Father can provide written excuses for absence or lateness for students attending Liturgy for a Great Feast. Just let him know you need it in advance.

Concerning Confession and Holy Communion: Those who have been to Confession in the past two weeks may receive Holy Communion at the Liturgy on the Feast of the Meeting (15 February, n.s.), provided that no serious sin has been committed which would require another Confession and that the other usual preparations for Holy Communion are observed (i.e. attendance of the Vigil Service the evening before Holy Communion, reading the Pre-Communion Prayers, and the forgiveness of others). Likewise, those who have been to Confession for the Feast of the Meeting may receive Holy Communion at the Liturgy the following two weeks under the same conditions.

Next Sunday is Forgiveness Sunday. Forgiveness Vespers will be immediately after the Divine Liturgy. Please plan to 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. The service is not very long, and it is very beautiful.

LOOKING AHEAD

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.

There will be a blessing of Crosses at St Elizabeth's at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy on the Third Sunday of Great Lent: the Veneration of the Precious and Life-giving Cross. Because this day is dedicated to our veneration of the Holy Cross, it is a very appropriate day for the sanctification of Crosses, both those worn around the neck and those hung on walls. If you have crosses 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 Third Sunday of the Fast.