

PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED FOR ...

The health and salvation of –

Abducted Bishops Paul & John	Pauline
Hieroschemamonk Ambrose	Ann
Archpriest Eugene	Stefan
Priest James	John
Priest John	Vivian
Subdeacon Peter	Jung Sook
Reader Aleksei	Thomas
Monk Philaret	Cheyenne
Matushka Mary	Nancy
Matushka Mary Sara	Randall
Andrea	Rose
Virginia • Thomas	Don
Justina	Norma
John • Euphrosynos	Nancy
John	James
Catechumen Rebecca	
Catechumen Jennifer	

The repose and salvation of –

Ion (March 18)

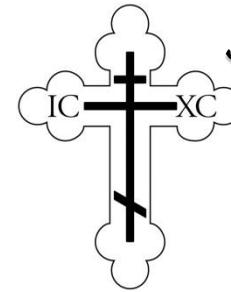
Please let Father know if there are any names you would like added to the list.

**This Friday, April 7, 6:00 PM – Patronal
Presanctified Liturgy for the Repose of St Tikhon
& Lenten Potluck with fish**

**This Saturday, April 8, 9:30 AM –
Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday**

**This Saturday, April 8, 5:30 PM –
All-Night Vigil for Palm Sunday**

*A mission parish under the omophorion of His Eminence Benjamin,
Archbishop of San Francisco and the Diocese of the West,
Orthodox Church in America*



**ST TIKHON ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

Sunday, April 2, 2017

Sunday of St Mary of Egypt



The funeral of St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

Sunday Hours & Divine Liturgy at 9:10 AM, followed by agape potluck
Other services as announced

Rev. Alexander Vallens, *Rector*

priest@sttikhonparker.org

(303) 305-8443

19035 East Plaza Drive, Parker, Colorado 80134

www.sttikhonparker.org

Taking it Seriously

It is always easier to reduce something spiritual to something formal rather than search for the spiritual behind the formal. We can say without any exaggeration that although Lent is still “observed”, it has lost much of its impact on our lives, has ceased to be that bath of repentance and renewal which it is meant to be in the liturgical and spiritual teaching of the Church. But then, can we rediscover it; make it again a spiritual power in the daily reality of our existence? The answer to this question depends primarily, and I would say almost exclusively, on whether or not we are willing to take Lent seriously. However, new or different the conditions in which we live today, however real the difficulties and obstacles erected by our modern world, none of them is an absolute obstacle, none of them makes Lent “impossible.” The real root of the progressive loss by Lent of its impact on our lives lies deeper. It is our conscious or unconscious reduction of religion to the superficial nominalism and symbolism which is precisely the way to by-pass and to “explain away” the seriousness of religion’s demands on our lives, religion’s demand for commitment and effort. This reduction, we must add, is in a way peculiar to Orthodoxy. Western Christians, Catholics or Protestants, when faced with what they consider as “impossible” would rather change religion itself, “adjust” it to new conditions and thus make it “practicable.” Quite recently, for example, we have seen the Roman Church first reduce fasting to a bare minimum and then practically dispose of it altogether. With just and righteous indignation, we denounce such an “adjustment” as a betrayal of Christian tradition and as minimizing Christian faith. And indeed, it is the truth and the glory of Orthodoxy that it does not “adjust” itself to and compromise with the lower standards, that it does not make Christianity “easy”. It is the glory of Orthodoxy, but certainly not of us Orthodox people. Not today, not even yesterday, but long ago we have found a way to reconcile the absolute demands of the Church and our human weakness, and this not only without “losing face” but with additional reasons for self-righteousness and good conscience. The method consists of fulfilling these demands symbolically, and symbolic nominalism permeates today our whole religious life. Thus, for example, we would not even think of revising our liturgy and its monastic regulations—God forbid! —we will simply keep calling a one-hour service an “All-Night Vigil” and proudly explain that it is the same service the monks of the Lavra of St. Sabbas served in the 9th century.

In regard to Lent, instead of asking fundamental questions—“What is fasting?” or “What is Lent?”—we satisfy ourselves with Lenten symbolism. In church magazines and bulletins appear recipes for “delicious Lenten dishes,” and a parish might even raise some additional money by means of a well-advertised “tasty Lenten dinner”. So much in our churches is explained symbolically as interesting, colorful, and amusing customs and traditions, as something which connects us not so much with God and a new life in Him but with the past and the customs of our forefathers, that it becomes increasingly difficult to discern behind this religious folklore the utter seriousness of religion. Let me stress that there is nothing wrong in the various customs themselves. When they appeared they were the means and the expressions of a society taking religion seriously; they were not symbols, but life itself. What happened, however, was that as life changed and became less and less shaped by religion in its totality, a few customs survived as symbols of a way of life no longer lived. And what survived was that which on the one hand is most colorful and on the other hand the least difficult. The spiritual danger here is that little by little one begins to understand religion itself as a system of symbols and customs rather than to understand the latter as a challenge to spiritual renewal and effort. More effort goes into preparing Lenten dishes or Easter baskets than into fasting and participation in the spiritual reality of Easter. This means that as long as customs and traditions are not connected again with the total religious worldview which produced them, as long as symbols are not taken seriously, the Church will remain disconnected from life and have no power over life. Instead of symbolizing our “rich heritage”, we must start integrating it into our real life.

from Great Lent, by Protopresbyter Alexander Schmemmann

Also this week: *Ven. Nikita the Confessor (April 3); Ven. Joseph the Hymnographer (April 4); Martyrs Agathopodes the Deacon, Theodulus the Reader, and those with them, at Thessalonica (April 5); St Eutychius, Pat. of Constantinople (April 6); REPOSE OF ST TIKHON, PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA, ENLIGHTENER OF NORTH AMERICA (April 7); LAZARUS SATURDAY (April 8).*

*** LENTEN FAST MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY; WINE AND OIL ALLOWED ON WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY; WINE, OIL, AND FISH ALLOWED ON FRIDAY; WINE, OIL, AND CAVIAR ALLOWED ON SATURDAY ***

Epistles: Hebrews 9:11-14 (Sunday) / Galatians 3:23-29 (Saint)

Gospels: Mark 10:32-45 (Sunday) / Luke 7:36-50 (Saint)

Troparion – Tone 8 (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend from on *high*, O Merciful One! /
Thou didst accept the *three*-day burial to free us from our sufferings! ///
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: glory to Thee!

Troparion – Tone 8 (St. Mary)

In thee, O Mother, *was* preserved unimpaired that which is according to God’s image, /
For thou hast taken up the Cross and followed Christ. /
By thine actions thou hast *taught* us to despise the flesh, for it passes away, /
But to care for the soul, which *is* a thing immortal; ///
And so thy spirit, holy Mary, rejoices with the angels.

Kontakion – Tone 3 (St. Mary)

Once thou wast defiled with *every* impurity, /
But today through repentance thou hast become the Bride of Christ. /
Desiring the life of the angels, /
Thou hast cast down the demons with the weapons of the Cross: ///
Therefore, O glorious Mary, thou wast made a bride of the Kingdom.