



The Weekly Forerunner

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

301 Struthers Liberty Rd

Campbell, OH 44405

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest



MARCH Bulletin Sponsor– In Memory of my ordaining Bishop His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas– AP Andrew Bartek

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, March 9

9:35 AM: Hours

10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Swearing in of new Council / Procession of Icons / Social / Choir Rehearsal / Council Meeting

5:00 PM: Sunday of Orthodoxy Vesper Service @ Archangel Michael Greek Orthodox– Campbell

Monday, March 10

9:00 AM: Lenten Hours / Morning Prayers

Tuesday, March 11

9:00 AM: Lenten Hours / Morning Prayers

Wednesday, March 12

6:00 PM: Pre-Sanctified Liturgy / Social / Lenten talk by Sub-deacon Donald

Thursday, March 13

9:00 AM: Lenten Hours / Morning Prayers

Friday, March 14

6:00 PM: Pre-Sanctified Liturgy / Social / Lenten talk by Sub-deacon Donald

Saturday, March 15

6:00 PM: Vespers

Sunday, March 16

9:35 AM: Hours / Divine Liturgy / Monthly Panachida / Choir Rehearsal / Social

5:00 PM: Local Mission Vespers @ St. John's in Warren, OH

MONTHLY CHARITY FOR 2025

January: **OCMC:** \$900 + \$300 from the church

Total \$1,200

February: **CA Fire Relief:** \$524 + \$300 from the Church

Total \$824

CONFESSIONS

Please make an appointment to come to Confession during the times posted.

Confessions will be heard -

- ♦ before and after Vespers and all Lenten Services (except Pre-Sanctified Liturgy).
- ♦ only be heard before the Pre-sanctified Liturgy.

The last day for confessions will be Lazarus Saturday Pre-Sanctified Liturgy.

PRAYER OF SAINT EPHREM

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power and idle talk. *(Full prostration– If you physically can't, then deep bow)*

But give rather the Spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant. *(Full prostration– If you physically can't, then deep bow)*

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. *(Full prostration– If you physically can't, then deep bow)*

O God, cleanse me a sinner (12 deep bows)

Then:

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power and idle talk. *(No Prostration)*

But give rather the Spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant. *(No Prostration)*

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou, unto ages of ages. Amen. *(Full prostration– If you physically can't, then deep bow)*

Office: 330-755-4931 / Cell: 570-212-8747

<https://www.stjohnthebaptist-campbell.org/>

padrebartek@gmail.com

PLEASE KEEP OUR ELDERS OF THE CHURCH & SHUT-INS IN YOUR PRAYERS

Send a "Thinking of You" card or remember their Birthday with a card. If anyone needs to be added, please contact Fr. Andrew.

Archpastoral Greetings of Archbishop Daniel on the First Day of Great Lent, March 3, 2025

Let us begin the fast with joy! Let us prepare ourselves for spiritual efforts! Let us cleanse our soul and cleanse our flesh! Let us abstain from every passion as we abstain from food! Let us rejoice in the virtues of the Spirit and fulfill them in love, that we all may see the Passion of Christ our God, and rejoice in spirit at the Holy Pascha!

–Vespers, Monday of the First Week of Lent

Beloved Fathers, Sisters, and Brother in the Lord,

As we enter the spirit of prayer and repentance today, please know that I am remembering all of you with love and gratitude. On this first day of the Great Fast, I pray with you and for you that the Lord will grant us all a grace-filled forty days. May our shared Lenten journey bring all of us to also share in the fullness of Christ's joy as we celebrate Pascha, the glorious Feast of Feasts!

With love in the Lord,

+Archbishop Daniel

Archbishop Daniel Visits Diocesan Seminarians at St. Tikhon's Seminary

On Monday, February 24 and Tuesday, February 25, His Eminence Archbishop Daniel of Chicago and the Midwest traveled to St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary in South Canaan, PA to meet with students of the Diocese of the Midwest. His Eminence was joined by Archpriest Herman Kincaid, Chancellor, and Priest Alexander Koranda, Cathedral Dean.

Throughout Monday morning, Archbishop Daniel met with the seminarians and their spouses discussing a range of topics, including seminary life, life in the diocese, and discerning future vocation. After lunch with the student body, the Archbishop met with Archpriest John Parker, Seminary Dean, and Priest Paul Witek, Academic Dean about student formation and other topics of seminary life. Fr. John took the Midwest delegation on a tour of the improvements that have been made to the campus since their last visit. Later that evening, the Archbishop hosted the seminarians and their families for dinner at a local restaurant.

Meetings continued throughout the following day, including lunch with His Eminence Archbishop Michael of New York, Rector of St. Tikhon's Seminary.

These travels are apart of the Archbishop's ongoing effort to promote vocations within the diocese and to support institutions of the Orthodox Church in America proving the education and formation.

PRAYER LIST– Updated 2-14

PARISHIONERS: Achilles Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / Helen Colaluca / Joan Cross / Ann Cvercko / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / George Horodnic / Gianna Hryb / Sue Kennedy / Heidi Kuzemchak / Matushka Helen Psinka / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Melanie Yannitto / Marion Zwinski

HIERARCHS & CLERGY: AB Alexander from Dallas / AP James Gleason (Fr.) / AP Michael Rustic / AP Emil Hutyman / Fr. Deacon James Hryb / Fr. Matthew Nyumu & his family & parish

FAMILY & FRIENDS: Mary Ann Bozichovich (Kennedy) / Patty Bozichovich (Vansuch) / Diane Caban (Sirilla) / George Caban (Sirilla) / Donna Chiarelli / Karen Debiec / Paul Demkosky (Fr.) / Trudy Ellmore / Basil Glovinsky (Fr.) / Bruce Harris (Sabol) / Paula Kennedy / Joe Kollar (Fr.) / Andrew LaChard (Jesko) / James Malchisky (Fr.) / Mea Mahan / Mary Mahan / Pauline Meath (Fr.) / Matushka Raisa (Nicoloff) / Teri Petroff (Fr.) / Chris Quotap (Fr.) / Diane Ruff / Julia Shirilla / Bob Smrek (Sirilla) / Emilia Yanitto / Catherine Zile (Fr.) / Brian (Shirilla) / David (Willison) / Drew (Willison) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Ellen (Clark) / Ellen (Kessler) / Johanna (Tusinac) / Joseph (Vansuch) / Karen (Vansuch) / Katherine (Steffaro) / Kathy (Kolesar) / Katie (Garrity) / Paul (Kolesar) / Paula (Voytilla) / Malakai (Kolesar) / Richard (Tusinac)

MILITARY FAMILY & FRIENDS: Cory Deaton (Fr.) / Alena Grabavoy (Fr.) / Liam Garrity (Zelinsky)

MISCELLANEOUS: Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Diocese of Aleppo) & Archbishop John (Archdiocese of Aleppo) still being held captive & Metropolitan Arseny imprisoned / The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers around the world / Those suffering persecution in Syria, Iraq, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and around the world.

Department of Education Seeks Input from DOM Rectors

The Department of Education of the Diocese of the Midwest is distributing a survey to all Parish Rectors to aid the work of this new diocesan ministry. Priest Daniel Greeson, the newly appointed director of the department, is seeking this input to enhance the support and resources available to parishes across the diocese.

“The Church was tasked by God to educate and equip the faithful so that they may come to the knowledge of the fullness of the truth. Because of this glorious task, Archbishop Daniel created the Department of Education to aid local parishes in cultivating a vibrant faith-centered environment for the faithful of all ages to have access to educational classes, resources, activities, and experiences,” reported Fr. Daniel.

To gather the leading educational resources and best practices implemented across the Diocese, and to make them more widely available, the Rector of each parish in the Diocese (or someone blessed by the Rector) is asked to respond to this questionnaire.

For further information or inquiries, contact the Department of Education at education@domoca.org.

Delegation of the Orthodox Church in America Completes International Visits

In the second half of February, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon appointed a delegation to visit three Orthodox autocephalous Churches. These visits—to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, and the Serbian Orthodox Church—were primarily intended to maintain and further develop fraternal relationships.

On February 19, 2025, Archpriest Alessandro Margheritino, Acting Chancellor and Secretary of the Orthodox Church in America, traveled with Archpriest Alexander Rentel, former Chancellor and COO at St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, to Istanbul for a visit to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

While in Constantinople and at the Phanar, the delegation met with hierarchs and members of the Patriarchal Court, including His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Emmanuel of Chalcedon, engaging in discussions on a range of topics, including the relationship between the two Churches, areas of cooperation, the World Council of Churches, and issues concerning Orthodoxy in North America.

On Friday, February 21, the delegation was received in audience by His All-Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew. Fr. Alessandro and Fr. Alexander conveyed the greetings of Metropolitan Tikhon. His All-Holiness and the delegation discussed various topics, including the life of the Church in North America.

The delegation attended the Divine Liturgy in the sanctuary of the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. George on the morning of February 22, Memorial Saturday, where they received the Holy Mysteries. They also attended the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 23, at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Cibali in the presence of His All-Holiness.

During their stay, Patriarch Bartholomew extended warm hospitality to the delegation, hosting Fr. Alessandro and Fr. Alexander for lunch on both Friday and Sunday. He also extended an invitation to His Beatitude to visit Constantinople at his convenience. **Con’t Pg 9**

MARCH Candle & Bulletin Sponsors

NOTE: If anything is missing from the Sponsorships please contact Fr. Andrew ASAP

- Bulletin:** In memory of my ordaining Bishop His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas– Given by AP Andrew Bartek
Wine: In memory of sub-deacon William Livosky on the occasion of his 10th Anniversary of repose– Given by Linda Lovosky and family
Incense: In memory of sub-deacon William Livosky on the occasion of his 10th Anniversary of repose– Given by Linda Lovosky and family
Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light: In memory of George Kolesar– Given by Joann Sirilla & Stacy & Vince Donofrio
Altar Candles: In memory of Andrew Cvercko on the occasion of his birthday- Given by Ann Cvercko
Tetrapod Candles: In honor of Reader Mathew Vancuch & in memory of AP Eugene Vansuch- FGiven by Reader Nick and Monica Vansuch
St. Herman Candles: Commemorating all who participate in the maintenance of the church, the teachers, singers and those who participate in social events. Praying for everyone to love one another.
St. Panteleimon Icon Candles: In memory of my Dad James– Given by Deacon James Hryb
Protection Icon Candles: In memory of my mother Darlene– Given by Deacon James Hryb
St. John the Baptist Candles: In Memory of my mother Jean– Given by Matushka Hryb
Flowers: In Memory of my father George on the occasion of his 99th b-day – Given By AP Andrew Bartek

<u>\$50 per month</u>	<u>\$30 per month</u>	<u>\$25 per month</u>
*Wine	*St. Herman candles	Incense
*Bulletin	*St. Panteleimon Icon candles	
*Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light	*Protection Icon candles	Flowers - \$50 for 2 weeks at a time– <i>Updated</i>
*Altar Candles	*St. John the Baptist candles	
*Tetrapod Candles		

MARCH Celebrations *Birthday*

- 2- Lori Batura
- 4- Kaitlyn Kuzemchak
- 6- AP John Steffaro
- 9- Kevin Koval
- 11- Cindy Ferrick
- 14- Reader Matthew Vansuch
- 15- Natalia Simko / Patty Tubic
- 16- Paul Bojan / Claudia Zile / Diana Konik
- 18- Thomas Zelinsky
- 17- Christine Koval
- 20- Gianna Hryb / Jacob Hryb
- 22- Helena Kalantzis
- 24- Anne Jesko
- 25- Ephraimia Andrews
- 28- Tracy Rusnak / Dennis Tubic
- 30- Tom Hull

Anniversary NONE

Names Day

- 4- AB Daniel of Chicago & the Diocese of the mid-west / His Grace Bishop Gerasim of Forth Worth
- 10- Patty Thompson
- 14- His Grace Bishop Benedict of Hartford & New England
- 17- AB Alejo of Mexico City & Mexico / His Grace Bishop Alexis of Sitka & Alaska
- 30- Beth Hull / Elizabeth Willison

SOCIALS FOR MARCH

- March 9 Sisterhood
- March 16 In memory of George Kolesar by Barbara
- March 23 In Memory of Sub-deacon William Livosky by Linda Livosky
- March 30 Altar Society
- NOTE: 'O' Club Kolachi Baking (March 31-April 5)
- NOTE: All socials are to be strict fast during the Great Fast.

LOCAL MISSION TO BE HELD HERE

On Sunday, March 30 the local Clergy Association will be having the vespers here @ 5:00pm. Please plan to attend. There will be a Lenten meal provided by our parish. Further information to follow.

March 2025 Reader Schedule

- March 9– Reader Nick Vansuch
- March 16– Sub-deacon Donald Tamulonis
- March 23– Robert Willison
- March 30– George Horodnic Jr.

MARCH Reposed List

- 1- Anna Rago (1920) ©
- 1- Konstantin Pavchula (1933) ©
- 1- Spiros Psaromatis (1936) ©
- 1- Johnny Basala (1995)
- 2- Gerasimakis Mikes (1930) ©
- 4- Theodora Anos (1963) ©
- 4- Marie Feltovich (2004) ©
- 5- Emily Vasilchek (1970) ©
- 5- Mary Bilchik (1923) ©
- 5- Milan Milasav (1926) ©
- 6- Joseph Libertyn (1989) ©
- 6- Joseph Macala Jr (1993) ©
- 6- Eva Nedostup (1921) ©
- 6- Mike Korfia (1932) ©
- 6- Alexander Tsvetanoff (1949) ©
- 8- Helen Konik (1925) ©
- 8- Olga Sweda (1995) ©
- 9- Rampo Nikoloff (1957) ©
- 9- Stephen Feltovich, Jr. (2015) ©
- 10- David Joseph Wargo (1977) ©
- 10- Mary Durshaw (1980) ©
- 11- John Kostrounis (1924) ©
- 11- Nicholas Sivachko (1934) ©
- 11- Christine James (1959) ©
- 11- Helen Kalafut (1962) ©
- 11- Olga (Dr Nicoloff cousin) 2023
- 12- Metropolitan Nicholas (2011)
- 12- Margaret Krause (2009) ©
- 12- Eli Maystevovich (1951) ©
- 13- George Malchisky Sr (1980)
- 13- Steven Gozur (1993) ©
- 13- Robert Ferdericks (2023)
- 14- Steven Nosik (1987) ©
- 14- Nikita Meris (1933) ©
- 14- John Furin (1933) ©
- 15- Tatianna Muc (1931) ©
- 15- Mary Furin (1996) ©
- 16- Mary Grubich (1931) ©
- 16- Catherine Kovchuiak (1947) ©
- 18- Sub-deacon William Livosky (2015) ©
- 18- Vladimir Conkich (1924) ©
- 18- Still born Sabastinak (1924) ©
- 18- John Furin (1934) ©
- 19- Manthas Geanakakis (1956) ©
- 21- Tai Whitham
- 21- Sava Yovansvich (1920) ©
- 21- Michael Barol (1965) ©
- 22- Matthew Pacak (1969) ©
- 22- Anna Sweesy (2010) ©
- 22- Theodore Boldosh (1931) ©
- 23- John Olesko (1971) ©
- 23- Andrew Zlatfoff, Sr. (1975) ©
- 24- Mary Bolina (1988) ©
- 25- Pani Janette Moriak (1997)
- 25- David Chikerotis (2019)
- 26- Joseph Krause (1998) ©
- 26- Michael Urchak (2005) ©
- 26- Irene Homulos (2005) ©
- 26- Vasili Spirtos (1925) ©
- 26- George Konstaudinidis (1943) ©
- 26- Tony Deligeorge (1957) ©
- 26- Dan Barbus (1958) ©
- 27- Darlene Hryb (2017) ©
- 27- Bogan Bolgar (1927) ©
- 27- Evdokia Vasilika (1932) ©
- 27- George Britven (1957) ©
- 28- Anthony Fojcik (1920) ©
- 28- John Patellis (1926) ©
- 29- Trofin Melnik (1931) ©
- 30- Nicholas Aasta (1921) ©
- 30- George Andras (1999) ©
- 31- Helen Homulas (1974) ©
- 31- James Malli (1925) ©
- 31- Katherine Hamanzi (1946) ©

Strengthening Our Clergy: The Office of Pastoral Life's Commitment to Support and Growth / OPL Leaders Gather at The Orthodox Monastery of the Transfiguration

The well-being of our clergy is essential to the health of the Church. Strong, supported clergy lead vibrant, thriving parishes, creating communities where faith can flourish. The Office of Pastoral Life (OPL) exists to ensure that those who serve the Church—priests, clergy wives, and clergy families—receive the care, resources, and encouragement they need.

On February 18-19, 2025, OPL leaders gathered for an in-person retreat at the Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Elwood City, PA. The retreat was a time for deep reflection, strategic planning, and reaffirming OPL's mission. At the heart of the discussion was a central question: How can we better support our clergy so they

can, in turn, strengthen the Church?

Clarifying the Mission

“Many of our clergy and clergy wives are already gifted in their ministry, but they seek opportunities to grow and become even more effective in their service,” said Fr. Nicholas Solak, Director of the Office of Pastoral Life. “OPL exists to provide those opportunities—through peer learning, financial education, and pastoral resources—so they can continue to strengthen their parishes and the Church as a whole. Strong clergy lead to strong communities, and that is essential for the growth and mission of the Church.”

Fr. Nicholas also emphasized the importance of parishes understanding their role in sustaining clergy well-being. “Clergy don't serve in isolation. They are part of a community, and that community—parish leaders, parishioners, fellow clergy—has a responsibility to care for them. Our goal at OPL is to foster that awareness and provide the tools needed to make it happen.” **Con't Pg 8**

2025 COUNCIL MEMBERS

Nancy Tusinac, President
(Sub-committee Chairman for all social events)
Phone- 724-456-7366

Cindy Ferrick, Treasurer
(Sub-committee Chairman of the Sunshine Club)
Phone 330-531-1119

Joann Sirilla, Financial Secretary
(Sub-committee Chairman on all fundraisers)
Phone 330-881-6775

Sub-deacon Dr. Donald Tamulouis, Vice President
(Sub-committee Chairman on all Maintenance issues). He will be working with Michael Simko
Phone 330-774-8860

Sherrie Fredericks, Secretary
(Sub-committee Chairman on sending articles & pictures of events to the Diocese)
Phone: 330-881-5087

Natalia Simko, Council Member
(Sub-committee Chairman on all Cemetery issues)
Phone- 330-980-3033

David Konik, Council Member
(Sub-committee Chairman on Welcoming Cmte)
Phone: 330-717-6714

David Dionisio, Council Member
(Sub-committee Chairman on all organizational issues in the church (including safety issues)
Phone: 425-241-7825

Maintenance Issues:
Michael Simko - 330-565-0084
Michael Centofanti - 330-544-3518

NEW COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES

You will note, each Council member is in charge of keeping order in their respective areas. If there are any issues in a particular area, please contact the responsible Council member.

They are responsible to find a solution to the reported issue. That may include seeking your or another person's help. This will allow more organized response and avoid one person being burdened with everything.

Sunshine Club – This new club is responsible for sending out birthday, anniversary and get well cards.

MARCH FINANCIALS

Expenses	\$1,576.24
Income	\$3,995.70
TOTAL	\$2,419.46
Weekly Tithe	\$3,792.70
Weekly Candles	\$153.00
Tetrapod Candles	\$50.00
Monthly Charity Collection: Deanery	\$216.00

Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 (Epistle)

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward. And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented –of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

March CHARITY
For the Cleveland Deanery

Beginning of Great Lent 2025

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, beloved children in the Lord,
Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

We read in the life of St. Euthymius the Great that, in the time of the great Palestinian monastic fathers, many of the monks had a practice of retreating into the desert, not just for the forty days of Lent, but for the entire period between Theophany and Palm Sunday. This practice is referenced in the hymns of the Triodion. At Matins on Friday of the Sixth Week—the last of day of Lent—the final troparion of the second canon proclaims: “All who dwell in deserts, in mountains and in caves, draw near and assemble with us, to meet the King and Master with palms in your hands; for he comes to save our souls.”

Such a practice is unthinkable in our time, even for most monastics. Still, this practice holds an important lesson for all Orthodox Christians as we prepare for Great Lent. Namely, that ascetic effort should not be divorced from silence, hesychia, a withdrawal from the tumult of the world.

In fact, the cultivation of silence has a special value in this age of constant noise. Social media platforms capitalize, quite literally, upon our endless “engagement” with one another. Advertising is ubiquitous, invading every nook of our life, sometimes in truly insidious forms. Thanks to smart phones, a barrage of “entertainment”—podcasts, TikTok videos, YouTube Shorts, Spotify playlists, mobile games—is constantly at our fingertips. News outlets try to persuade us to read or watch or listen to the world’s happenings on a 24-hours-a-day basis. Streaming services like Netflix and live-streaming services like Twitch provide us with a nearly endless river of “content.” And the prevailing ideology tells us that self-expressions and making ourselves “heard” are among life’s highest values.

However, if we constantly fill our eyes and minds with soul-numbing entertainment, what room do we leave for the encounter with God? If we constantly fill our ears with the sound of our own voice and opinions and expression, how shall we hear the eternal Word of the Father?

Therefore, I call upon each of us, all the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, to make a Lenten commitment to cultivate silence in our life in some concrete way. I offer here but a few examples, asking each of us to consider adapting the practice of silence to the realities of our own daily life. We might:

*fast from posting on social media, or perhaps fast from using social media entirely, even passively;

*limit our time on the computer by turning it off at dinnertime and not turning it on again till after breakfast the next day;

*make rules around cellphone usage—no entertainment apps, no podcasts or videos.

*give up all streaming services for the entirety of Lent, or even give up movies, television, and videos altogether for the holy Forty Days.

Regardless of our other efforts, all of us would benefit from resolving to spend 10 minutes or half an hour in complete silence each day, both for the period of the Fast and beyond. In this regard, I recall the 8th and 9th maxims of Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko: “Practice silence, inner and outer. Sit in silence 20 to 30 minutes each day.” It would behoove all of us to practice such deliberate silence in addition to the time we spend in prayer each day.

This practice of silence will take effort, and we may find that we fall short of our goals. But, as with every ascetic effort, we recognize that we are passionate sinners, weak and erring, and in need of God’s strengthening grace. Despite our failures, we know that Christ receives and rewards authentic struggle. As St. John of the Ladder says, to fall is human, but to remain fallen is proper only to the demons. If we come up short, we repent and try again, and if we keep trying, by God’s grace, we will notice a change in ourselves.

To wit, when we cultivate silence, we weaken our passionate ties to the world. We challenge our tendency to idolize our own words and actions. We become more vigilant, noticing the movements in our mind and soul, helping us to see our own sinfulness and our need for Christ. Perhaps most importantly, when we are still and silent, we allow God to act and to speak.

“Be still, and know I am God,” says the holy Scripture (Ps. 45:10); the Word of God came to the holy prophet Elijah in the silence after the storm, as a still, small voice (1 Kings 19:12). When Christ quieted the winds and waves, saying “Silence, be still,” then the disciples recognized his power (Mk. 4:39). If we, too, wish to encounter his power and his Person, we must practice stillness, allowing him to calm the waves of passion and worldliness that trouble our heart and soul.

The Russian term for a monastic novice is *poslushnik*: the one who obeys, or, more fundamentally, the one who listens. Though we may not be able to retreat into the desert like the great monastic fathers of old, at least we can imitate the novice’s way of life by cultivating a small measure of silence and attention in our lives. In addition to our usual and necessary Lenten efforts in fasting, prayer, almsgiving, this Lent, let us all become novices in spirit, through silence learning to listen to God and to obey his word, in which lies our salvation and his great mercy.

Wishing all of you a soul-saving Forty Days, with my primate blessing and prayers, I remain,

Yours in Christ,

+TIKHON
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

Office: 330-755-4931 / Cell: 570-212-8747

<https://www.stjohnthebaptist-campbell.org/>

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Pastoral Life con't from pg 5

Additionally, OPL is working to unify its many programs under a strong, recognizable identity. Whether through clergy peer learning groups, financial assistance programs, clergy wives support, or retreat opportunities, every initiative shares the same goal: equipping clergy and their families with the tools they need to serve well.

Supporting Clergy Through Key OPL Programs

Two of OPL’s cornerstone programs, Thriving in Ministry and the Financial Health Initiative, are made possible through generous grants from the Lilly Endowment. These programs directly address the unique challenges clergy and their families face, providing essential resources for both spiritual and financial well-being. Thriving in Ministry fosters peer learning groups for clergy and clergy wives, creating spaces where they can share experiences, find encouragement, build skills, and support one another in the joys and struggles of ministry. These relationships help strengthen not only individual clergy families but also the parishes they serve.

The Financial Health Initiative focuses on improving financial literacy and stability for clergy and their families. By offering financial education, resources, and support, this program helps alleviate some of the financial pressures that can weigh heavily on those in parish ministry.

Both of these initiatives are sustained through a grant model that includes a matching funds requirement, reinforcing the idea that clergy well-being is a shared responsibility. Just as clergy dedicate their lives to serving the Church, it is important for the Church to invest in their long-term health—spiritually, emotionally, and financially.

At its core, OPL exists to serve those who serve the Church. The retreat was a reminder that this work is not just about structure and management—it is a shared effort that involves all parts of the Church, working together to support and strengthen our clergy and their families.

To learn more about OPL’s work and how you can support it, visit opl.oca.org/.

ATTENDANCE: A Comparison - MARCH	2024	2025
1st Week		
Vespers	8	8
Liturgy	67 / 44	50 / 30
Forgiveness Vesper	34	43
Canon– Monday	17	26
Canon Tuesday	25	16
Canon Wednesday	18	
Canon Thursday	22	
Pre-SAncTified	29 / 18	
2nd Week		
Vespers	11	
Orthodox Liturgy	60 / 37	
Wed. Pre-Sanctified	32 / 23	
Fri. Pre-Sanctified	32 / 18	
3rd Week		
Wed. Pre-Sanctified	38 / 24	
Fri. Pre-Sanctified	23 / 16	
Vespers	17	
St. Gregory Liturgy	64 / 47	
Wed. Pre-Sanctified	38 / 24	
Fri. Pre-Sanctified	23 / 16	
4th Week		
Vespers	19	
Cross Liturgy	70 / 55	
Wed. Pre-Sanctified	37 / 25	
Fri. Pre-Sanctified	25 / 15	
Soul Sat. Akathist	13	
5th week		
Vespers	10	
St. John Liturgy	70 / 55	
Wed. Pre-Sanctified	28 / 20	
Full Canon	13	
Fri. Akathist	30	

John 1:43-51 (Gospel)

The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.” Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!” Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

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Delegation con't from pg 3

On Monday, February 24, Fr. Alexander returned to the United States, while Fr. Alessandro traveled to Sofia, Bulgaria. Joining him in Sofia was His Grace Bishop Gerasim of Fort Worth and Auxiliary to the Diocese of the South, who had traveled from Texas.

His Grace and Fr. Alessandro visited key sites in Sofia, including the Cathedral of St. Alexander Nevsky.

On Tuesday, February 25, the delegation was received in audience by His Holiness Patriarch Daniil at the Patriarchal Palace. They conveyed greetings from His Beatitude and congratulations on His Holiness' election last summer. Having served in the United States as an auxiliary bishop, Patriarch Daniil is well acquainted with the Orthodox landscape in North America. Their discussion covered topics of common interest, world Orthodoxy, opportunities for cooperation, a potential future pilgrimage, and the crisis in Ukraine. Patriarch Daniil also spoke about the challenges and opportunities facing the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. Both the Patriarch and the delegation affirmed the importance of continued cooperation and common prayer for peace and unity in the Church. The delegation presented gifts to His Holiness on behalf of His Beatitude, and in return, Patriarch Daniil presented books on the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and its saints to His Grace and Fr. Alessandro.

On Wednesday, February 26, Bishop Gerasim and Fr. Alessandro traveled to Belgrade for the third and final visit of the delegation. They were warmly welcomed at Nikola Tesla Airport by Patriarchal Vicar Bishop Dositeji and hosted at a hotel near St. Sava Cathedral.

That evening, His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije hosted the delegation for dinner at the parish house of St. Sava Cathedral. Present at the gathering were several hierarchs and clergy of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Serbian dignitaries, as well as His Eminence Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, and Archpriest Nikolay Balashov, vice-chairman of DECR, who were concluding their visit to Serbia. The presence of both delegations provided an opportunity for greetings and discussions on shared concerns.

The following day, Bishop Gerasim and Fr. Alessandro visited the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. Michael and the Patriarchal Museum before being received in audience by His Holiness at the Patriarchal Palace. Patriarch Porfirije warmly welcomed the delegation and asked to convey his own greetings to Metropolitan Tikhon. Their discussion covered topics including the work and life of the Orthodox Church in America, pan-Orthodox cooperation in North America, the Assembly of Bishops, world Orthodoxy, the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the importance of unity in the Church, and the crisis in Ukraine. They also discussed the possibility of a future visit by His

Beatitude to Serbia and a meeting between His Holiness and His Beatitude in Washington, D.C., when travel to America can be arranged.

On behalf of His Beatitude, the delegation presented His Holiness with a palitza depicting St. Olga of Alaska. They also discussed the life of Matushka Olga and her upcoming canonization in June. Fr. Alessandro presented Patriarch Porfirije with a copy of the new translation of the Psalter, published jointly by St. Tikhon's Monastery Press and St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, as well as a copy of new English translation of *The Journal of Joy* by Nicolae Steinhardt.

On Friday, Bishop Gerasim and Fr. Alessandro were accompanied by His Grace Bishop Hilarion of Novi Brda, on a guided tour of St. Sava Cathedral, where they admired its magnificent Byzantine-style architecture adorned with 17,000 square meters of gold mosaic. They visited the cathedral crypt and prayed at the tomb of the late Patriarch Irinej. Bishop Hilarion then led the delegation to Vavedenje Monastery, where they toured the monastery church, cemetery, and enjoyed the hospitality of the monastic community. Later, they visited Rakovica Monastery, where they explored the main church, the resting place of the late Patriarch Pavle, and the museum dedicated to him.

On Saturday, March 1, the delegation returned to the United States.

1st Sunday of Great Lent: Sunday of Orthodoxy / Commemorated on March 9

The first Sunday of Great Lent is called the Sunday of Orthodoxy because it commemorates the restoration of the Holy Icons and the triumph of the Orthodox Faith against the terrible heresy of the Iconoclasts, i.e. those heretics who refused to honor the Holy Icons. For more than a hundred years the Church was disturbed by the evil doctrine of iconoclasm.

The first Emperor to persecute the Church was Leo the Isaurian, and the last was Theophilus, the spouse of Saint Theodora (February 11), who reigned after her husband's death and re-established Orthodoxy in the time of Patriarch Methodios (June 14). Empress Theodora proclaimed publicly that we do not kiss the Icons as a sign of worship, nor do we honor them as "gods," but as images of their prototypes.

In the year 843, on the first Sunday of the Fast, Saint Theodora and her son, Emperor Michael, venerated the Holy Icons together with the clergy and the people. Since that time this event has been commemorated every year, because it was definitively determined that we do not worship the Icons, but we honor and glorify all the Saints who are depicted on them. We worship only the Triune God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and no one else, neither a Saint, nor an Angel.

Originally, the Holy Prophets Moses, Aaron, and Samuel were commemorated on this Sunday. The Alleluia verses appointed for today's Liturgy reflect this older usage.

Great and Holy Tuesday

At Matins: Matthew 22: 15-23, 39. Condemnation of Pharisees, i.e. of the blind and hypocritical religion, of those who think they are the leaders of man and the light of the world, but who in fact “shut up the Kingdom of heaven to men.”

At the Presanctified Liturgy: Matthew 24: 36-26, 2. The End again and the parables of the End: the ten wise virgins who had enough oil in their lamps and the ten foolish ones who were not admitted to the bridal banquet; the parable of ten talents “. . . Therefore be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.” And, finally the Last Judgment.

3. These Gospel lessons are explained and elaborated in the hymnology of these days: the stichiras and the triodia (short canons of three odes each sung at Matins). One warning, one exhortation runs through all of them: the end and the judgment are approaching, let us prepare for them:

“Behold, O my soul, the Master has conferred on thee a talent Receive the gift with fear; Lend to him who gave; distribute to the poor And acquire for thyself thy Lord as thy Friend; That when He shall come in glory, Thou mayest stand on His right hand And hear His blessed voice: Enter, my servant, into the joy of thy Lord.” (Tuesday Matins)

4. Throughout the whole Lent the two books of the Old Testament read at Vespers were Genesis and Proverbs. With the beginning of Holy Week they are replaced by Exodus and Job. Exodus is the story of Israel’s liberation from Egyptian slavery, of their Passover. It prepares us for the understanding of Christ’s exodus to His Father, of His fulfillment of the whole history of salvation. Job, the Sufferer, is the Old Testament icon of Christ. This reading announces the great mystery of Christ’s sufferings, obedience and sacrifice.

5. The liturgical structure of these three days is still of the Lenten type. It includes, therefore, the prayer of Saint Ephrem the Syrian with prostrations, the augmented reading of the Psalter, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts and the Lenten liturgical chant. We are still in the time of repentance, for repentance alone makes us partakers of the Pascha of Our Lord, opens to us the doors of the Paschal banquet. And then, on Great and Holy Wednesday, as the last Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is about to be completed, after the Holy Gifts have been removed from the altar, the priest reads for the last time the Prayer of Saint Ephrem. At this moment, the preparation comes to an end. The Lord summons us now to His Last Supper.

by THE VERY REV. ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN

40 DAY REMEMBRANCE

March 9 – Aleksandra & Olivia Ter & all those who lost their lives in the Washington, DC & Philadelphia plane crashes
March 23– George Kolesar

Great and Holy Wednesday Commemorated on April 16

On Great and Holy Wednesday, the hymns of the Bridegroom Service remind us of the sinful woman who poured precious ointment on Christ’s head at Simon the leper’s house (Mt. 26:7).

The disciples complained about the wasteful extravagance, for the myrrh could have been sold and the money given to the poor. On this same day Judas agreed to betray the Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Because the betrayal took place on Wednesday, Orthodox Christians fast on most Wednesdays during the year.

On the other hand, the Savior declared that the woman’s actions would be remembered wherever the Gospel is preached (Mt. 26:13), for she had anointed Him in preparation for His burial (Mt. 26:12).

