

Forgiveness Sunday

Cheesefare

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Romans 13:11-14:4

Matthew 6:14-21

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Homily by

Fr. Marc Dunaway

Epistle Reader:
Bradley Forbes

Coffee Hour Hosts:
Saur / Gillquist
Burton

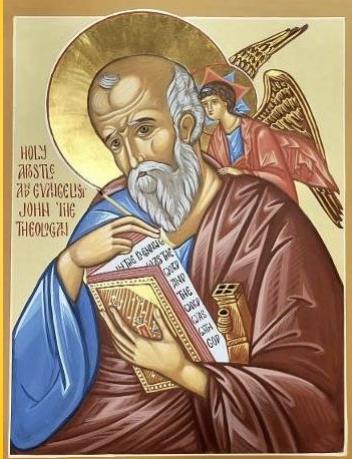
St. John Orthodox Cathedral

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## Weekly Bulletin

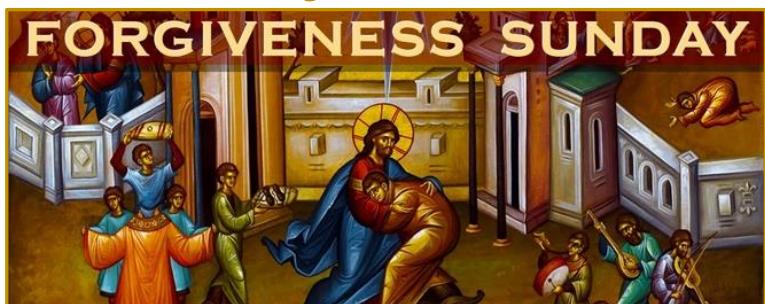
Sunday, February 22, 2026

And the Days Following



*O Apostle John, speaker of Deity, the beloved of Christ our God, hasten to deliver your people powerless in speech, for He on Whose bosom you lean accepts you as an intercessor. Beseech Him, therefore, to disperse the darkness of ignorance and pray for peace and great mercies to be shown upon us.*

### Feast Days and Services



### Forgiveness Sunday Vespers, This Sunday Evening February 22, at 6:15pm

Forgiveness Sunday Vespers brings us into to the journey of Lent. The altar cloths are changed from gold to purple; the lights are dimmed and the music changes. We take this journey as individuals, but also as a community together. After the Vespers service we will ask forgiveness of one another as we have learned and done for many years, and as it is prescribed in the Lenten service books. (Many people say something like the following: "Will you forgive me?" – "Yes, I forgive you, will you forgive me?")

After the forgiveness Sunday service, there will be childcare available for children **two years up to fifth grade**. Two-year-olds and children preschool-age can head downstairs with our babysitters and there will be toys and a few snacks available for them. **Kindergarten through second grade** will participate in a short forgiveness Sunday circle downstairs and then there will be activities provided for them. **Third through fifth grade** will also complete a short forgiveness Sunday circle in the nave and then head downstairs to play bingo afterwards.

When the adult forgiveness Sunday circle is over, **please come and pick up your child downstairs**. We have three wonderful babysitters not from our parish helping with childcare and a big thank you to Mary Curry and Jenni Gillquist for their help! Please contact Cara Fletes with any questions.

## Lent Begins - Clean Monday, February 23, 2026

**The Lenten Fast begins by fasting more strictly this week than the other weeks in Lent.**

**The Lenten Calendar and Fasting Guidelines are on our Website under Bulletins**

This week's schedule is as follows:

- Monday, February 23 (Clean Monday) – Compline & Canon of St. Andrew at 7:15pm
- Tuesday, February 24 – Compline & Canon of St. Andrew at 7:15pm
- Wednesday, February 25 – Presanctified Liturgy at 6:15pm, Soup Supper
- Thursday, February 26 – Compline & Canon of St. Andrew at 7:15pm
- Friday, February 27 – Compline with Akathist Hymn at 7:15pm
- Saturday, February 28 – Great Vespers at 7:15pm
- Sunday, March 1 – Orthodoxy Sunday, Matins at 9:15am, Divine Liturgy at 10am with Procession of Icons

## Parish Events and News

### Lenten Passports

If you have children ages two up to sixth grade, there are Lenten passports available for them beginning on Forgiveness Sunday Vespers in the Narthex. There is a passport (designed by Stephanie Davisson) for children two years old through second grade and a passport for older children third grade through sixth grade. Each Lenten passport will come with a set of stickers so your child can track their journey through the Lenten services. Please contact me with any questions! —Cara Fletes

### Updated Lenten Calendar on Website

There have been a couple of updates to the Lenten Calendar. Here is the [Link](#). There will also be a few copies in the Narthex.



### Food For Hungry People

**It is time for our Archdiocese yearly focus on Food for Hungry People.**

Pick up your Food for Hungry People Box today and start collecting.

*[Archdiocese Food for Hungry FFHP Bulletin Insert: "The rich man is not one who has much, but one who gives much." —St. John Chrysostom]*

### Soup Suppers Start this Wednesday – February 25

#### Please Bring Bread to Share

With Lent comes our wonderful community tradition of providing soup suppers on Wednesday evenings. We are asking that each family/individual who regularly comes to soup suppers, sign up for one evening to stay a little later and help clean up. We are also asking that everyone clean up their own tables and empty their own trays. (**Ways to Pay:** Give money the night of the Soup Supper Meal / Pay online on our '[donate](#)' page and select the category other 'Lenten soup supper'.)



Costs: Families - \$15.00 per meal // Individuals - \$7.00 / Cooks: Budget per meal – No more than \$100.00  
Please take a moment to sign up on our Sign-Up Genius using this

<https://m.signupgenius.com/#!/showSignUp/805054CAFA922A1FC1-62124416-soup>



**No Atrium This Sunday**

## Explore the Ancient Church's Teaching on Social Justice in the Sermons of Saint Basil of Caesarea with Jonathon Spiegel

Jon Spiegel has worked with Fr. Marc and others in forming the Orthodox-Evangelical Dialogue Saint John's has participated in for three years. Jon loves the early Church Fathers and regularly provides a class and discussion once a month in Palmer. Below is information about his classes for those who might want to attend.

**Next Class - Friday: February 20 - Time: 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm.**

**Location:** In the Conference Room at Turkey Red in Palmer.

**This Winter's Topic: God, Creation, & Basil (**

**Web Page:** <https://theearlychurchfortoday.wordpress.com/>

**2025 Schedule:** <https://theearlychurchfortoday.wordpress.com/schedule/>



### *Coffee Hour This Sunday - Date Group John (4) - Fourth Sunday of the Month*

**Hosts Families: Saur / G & J Gillquist / Burton**

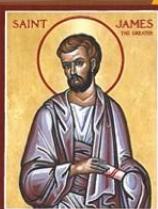
**Snacks:** Alvarez, Arvidson, Barrios, Burton, Cooley, Dougherty, FrM & KhB Dunaway, Forbes, Goetz, Gresset, Haines, Hawi, D & S Ihde, M Johnson, Keener, Kies, Macalino, Mason, Minea, J Northey, Parker, DnJ & D Ray, Schlichting, Sparks, J. Stiehr, I. Temple, Templeton, Van Dyke, Watson, Weaver, VanDewater

**Next Sunday - Group Matthew (1) - March 1 - Hosts: Unser / Davisson / P Gillquist**

**Snacks:** Abel, Amundson, Betson, Clodfelter, Culton, Curry, Dozier, J & B Dunaway, Finkler, G & J Gillquist, H Gillquist, Grasse, G & A Ihde, Haley, Hightower, D & A Jenkins, K & G Jones, Kelly, Klatt, Lamb, Lineer, K & J Medders, Mee, Moffatt, Okuley, Patras, N & M Ray, Sluz, Stallman, Stogsdill, J. Temple, Terrell, Webster

### *St. James House Weekly News*

**St. James Café**  
COFFEE, PASTRIES,  
and COMMUNITY!



Come Sit And Enjoy A Cup Of  
Coffee and Catch Up With Friends

**TUES & THURS**  
 **8 AM - 9 AM**

- Drip Coffee
- Wild Iris Pastries
- Great Conversation

**Saint James House**



**St. James Café**  
Tuesdays and Thursdays  
8-9:30am

## This Friday - Game Night – February 20 – 6-8pm at the St. James House



Clear your schedule ... or cancel something less fun! The Unsers and Lindbloms are hosting a **Game Night** at the St. James House on **Friday, February 20th, from 6-8pm**. There will be chili, cornbread, games, and questionable levels of competitiveness. But no worries, Forgiveness Sunday is right around the corner! Don't like games? No problem. Come eat, laugh, judge the games from the couch, and chat anyway.

## *News From Our Antiochian Archdiocese*



Lenten Letter from Metropolitan Saba: [Lenten Letter Link](#)

His Eminence  
The Most Reverend  
Metropolitan SABA



Archbishop of New York  
and Metropolitan of  
All North America

**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE  
OF NORTH AMERICA**

Prot. no.: 073/2026

### Great Lent 2026

Beloved in the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America,

By the grace of God, we welcome the season of holy Lent—this blessed time which the Church has appointed for us as an opportunity for renewal, repentance, and a sincere return to the depths of the heart, where we encounter our Lord in an atmosphere of stillness and clarity. This helps us to reorder our priorities and to realign our lives with our pursuit of the true life that is in Christ. It is a time to remember:

- That fasting, as we have received it from the living Tradition of the Church, is not an end in itself, nor is it merely abstaining from certain foods. Rather, it is a comprehensive spiritual journey whose aim is the liberation of the inner person and the reordering of our relationship with God, with ourselves, and with others.
- That we fast not to humiliate or punish the body, but so that the body may become obedient to the spirit. We fast because we ourselves are in need of fasting; through it, we grow spiritually and humanly, our inner depths are healed, and our hearts are enlarged to receive the grace of God. God does not need our fasting, but He rejoices in our return to Him with a humble heart.
- That we were created for the heavenly Kingdom, and fasting helps awaken this deep longing within us. It purifies our spiritual vision so that we may view our lives in the light of eternity. For this reason, the Church calls us to live Lent within its communal framework—not as an individual effort or a selective choice, but as an experience lived by the community of believers across the generations, and walked by the saints as a path toward true freedom.

*"The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11: 26)*

358 Mountain Road, Englewood, NJ 07631-5238  
(201) 871-1355 T Archdiocese@antiochian.org (201) 871-7954 F

Lenten letter from Patriarch John: [Lenten Letter Link](#)

By the mercy of God Almighty

John X

Patriarch of Antioch and All the East

to

My brothers, Pastors of the Holy Church of Antioch,

My sons and daughters, everywhere across this Apostolic See:

Dear brothers and beloved spiritual children,

At the threshold of the holy Forty Days, the Church stands with us. Through the preparatory Sundays that precede Great Lent, she calls us to become a bridal chamber for the heavenly Bridegroom, Christ our God. At the threshold of this Forty-Day Lent, the Church stands with us and reminds us that God wants us to be a chamber adorned with the humility of the Publican, the repentance of the Prodigal Son, with care for our brother in humanity, and with longing for the Paradise that was lost through pride and arrogance.

With the preparatory Sundays that precede Great Lent, the Church guides our steps and calls us to cast off the pride of the Pharisee and to imitate the humility of the Publican in the Gospel parable. She calls us to knock at the door of God's compassion with the modesty of the Publican and with his confession of sin, not with the insolence of the Pharisee who exalted himself even before God.

In the same spirit, she leads us to contemplate the parable of the Prodigal Son who departed from God and lived in sin. Yet the bitterness of sin restored within him the sweetness of living in his Heavenly Father's house. His Father, in turn, opened to him the arms of compassion.

From these two Gospel parables, she then leads us to hear the voice of the Judge on this Sunday: "For I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; I was naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came

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## *Notes and Pictures from Parishioners*



### **Bridal Shower for Alyssa Espino Saint James House – Sunday, March 1st at 4pm All Are Welcome!**

In preparation for the matrimony of Jacob Goetz and Alyssa Espino there will be a bridal shower hosted at Saint James House on March 1 at 4pm. There will be games and crafts. Food will consist of Lenten friendly snacks; anyone is welcome to bring a dish.

Please RSVP, send questions to (909) 848-0480 or emailing [ejanetworks@gmail.com](mailto:ejanetworks@gmail.com)

Here is the [Link](#) to the Registry

## Dates to Remember

### 'Moms with Little Ones' Reading Group - Wednesdays 10am

We will meet at the St. James House. If you have any questions, contact Natasha Haines at 907-351-4942.



Men's Book Club

### Men's Book Club - Wednesdays 7-8pm

The Men's Book Club will be reading *The Lenten Spring* by Fr. Thomas Hopko throughout Great Lent. The book contains 40 devotional reflections—one for each day of Lent. Participants will read the reflections on their own and gather weekly to discuss the previous week's readings together.

Due to Presanctified Liturgy, we will meet on **Thursdays from 7:00–8:00 PM** at the **St. James House**, beginning **March 5**. There will be no meeting during the first week of Lent, as services are held each evening.

*The Lenten Spring* is available for purchase on Amazon or through St. Vladimir's Seminary Press. A free version is also available on [Archive.org](#).

Our first meeting will be **Thursday, March 5**, when we will discuss the first 11 reflections. Even if you have not completed the readings, you are warmly encouraged to attend.

For questions, please contact **Sam Lowry** at (616) 928-5181.



### Women's Reading Group - Thursdays at 10am

We meet at 10am at the Senior Center Meeting Room, in the HUD building on the second floor. Hope to see you there! —Ann Patras

### Birthdays This Week

February 27 - Owen Kies

February 27 - Katya Mee

M A N Y

February 27 - Jim Patras

March 1 - Noah Curry

Y E A R S !



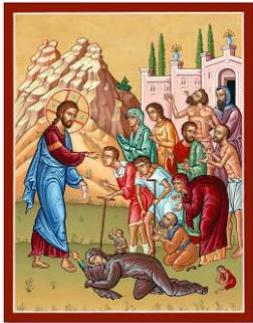
### Anniversaries this Week

Fr. Marc & Kh. Betsy - February 25, 1984

Jim & Ann Patras - February 25, 1989

M A N Y Y E A R S !





## Remembering in Prayer...

Mary Greene

Jay Keener

Zoie (Oksana's Mom)

Krya & Skylynn Lineer

Arlo Northey

Jan Northey

Gwyn Jones

Jennifer Stogsdill

We continue to pray for all those suffering in Ukraine  
and for all those suffering in Israel and Gaza, for a quick end to  
war and for peace

## Remembering Those Who Have Fallen Asleep This Month



- Dn. Christian Timothy Sorensen - February 23, 2000
- Helen Primis - March 14, 1999
- Clyde Clarence Jones - March 29, 2002

M E M O R Y   E T E R N A L !

## Clare House Meal - 4th Saturday of Each Month

For the Month of **March** – our scheduled meal that we provide Clare House is:  
**Saturday, March 28**. Contact Cara Fletes to see how you can help.



## Summer Day Camp Announcement

It's only February and already we are thinking about St. John Day Camp! We are planning to hold a day camp for children ages 2 -12 on June 3rd, 4th and 5th. There will also be a campout the night of June 5. Registration paperwork and more information to follow! This year, we are focusing on Saints of Alaska. We hope your children can attend!

## Announcements from Nicole Unser

### Inkwell Locals:

Hello everyone, our monthly Inkwell Locals meeting will be this Sunday February 22 at 2pm at the St. James House. Inkwell is a creative gathering for both men and women similar to the Inklings group of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien. We meet to spur each other along in our creative endeavors and find community in our creative callings. If you're wondering if this group is for you, feel free to catch me at church, shoot me an email at [nicole@nicoleunser.com](mailto:nicole@nicoleunser.com), or text/call me at 509-362-1685. We'd love to have you there!

### Song by Nicole to Share:

I have had the privilege of writing a song in honor of Bruce and the Johnson Family. Thank you to everyone who helped pitch in their memories to make this song possible. With Monica's blessing I invite you to watch the video here: [Choose Your Pain - Bruce's Song](#). Also, we know that grief comes in waves, so you might find this prayer helpful: [A Prayer for Missing Someone](#). "

## THE SYNAXARION

### Forgiveness Sunday – 4<sup>th</sup> PreLent



On February 22, in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the Seven Martyrs uncovered at the Gate of Eugenios in Constantinople; and Martyr Anthusa and her twelve servants.

On this day, we commemorate the exile of the first created Adam, from the Paradise of delight.

#### *Verses*

*Let the world, today along with ages past, mourn bitterly.  
As by giving in to sweet desires, it has fallen along with  
mankind.*

It is the Sunday of Forgiveness, known also as Cheese Fare Sunday. Today's lesson from the Holy Gospel teaches us about forgiveness and fasting, and how both are crucial to our own return to Paradise. The divine Fathers also set the remembrance of Adam's exile from Paradise on this day, at the beginning of Great Lent, to show us by word and deed how great the benefit is that man gains from fasting and repenting; and, on the contrary, how great the harm is that comes from destructive gluttony and from disobedience to the divine commandments. The sin of gluttony resulted in Adam and Eve's banishment from Paradise, because they disobeyed God by eating from the tree which He had forbidden. The Church reminds us of this event, to encourage us to return to that ancient glory and primeval happiness, by means of fasting and obedience to God and His commandments.

By Your indescribable compassion, O Christ our God, make us worthy of the Paradise of delight and have mercy on us, for You alone are the Lover of mankind. Amen.

#### Bulletin Announcement Guidelines

Send announcements to church email address: [cathedral@stjohnalaska.org](mailto:cathedral@stjohnalaska.org) Have announcements submitted by Thursday or at very latest Friday 9am. If you have any questions regarding announcements – contact Maris Kelly at the church office. 907-696-2002.

#### Saint John Orthodox Cathedral

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• Diocesan Website: <http://www.antiochianladiocese.org>

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese

Pastor: Fr. Marc Dunaway • Assistant Priest: Fr. Robert Polson