

From the Divine Office for Cheesefare

*O my God and Savior, through Your Cross and Passion, You have led back again those who were banished from Paradise through eating from a tree. At the intercession of Your Mother, give us strength through Your Cross to keep the Fast in holiness, and to worship Your divine Resurrection, the Passover of Salvation. (Orthros)*

*The arena of the virtues has been opened. Let all who wish to struggle for the prize now enter, girding themselves for the noble contest of the Fast. For those who strive lawfully are justly crowned. Taking up the armor of the Cross, let us make war against the Enemy. Let us have as our invincible rampart the Faith, prayer as our breastplate and almsgiving as our helmet. And as our sword, let us use fasting, that cuts away all evil from our heart. If we do this, we shall receive the true crown from Christ, the King of all, at the Day of Judgement. (Orthros)*



**SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE  
FEBRUARY 14, 2021**





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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

### **Antiphon (3rd)**

1: Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; let us shout with joy to God our Savior.

**O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia**

2: Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving and let us joyfully sing psalms to Him.

**Khallisna Ya-Bnallah, Ya Man qama min baynil-amwaat, nahnu muranneemeena Laka.  
Haleloueya.**

3: For God is a great Lord and a great King over all the earth.

**O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia.**

### **Entrance Hymn**

**Priest:** Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ.

**People:** **O Son of God, Who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to you Alleluia!**

### **Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 4, pg. 40)**

The women disciples of the Lord, having learned from the angel the joyful announcement of the resurrection, and having rejected the ancestral sentence, proudly told the apostles: Death is despoiled. Christ God is risen, bestowing to the world great mercy.

### **Troparion of the Dormition (Tone 1, Pg 15)**

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity and in falling asleep, you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life, being the Mother of Life. Through your intercessions, save our souls from death.

### **Kondakion of Cheese Fare (Tone 6)**

O You who guide men toward wisdom, and give them intelligence and understanding, Instructor of the ignorant and Helper of the poor, strengthen and enlighten my heart, O Lord, give me word, O Word of the Father, for behold I will not refrain my lips from crying out to You: O merciful One, have mercy on me who have fallen.

Sleep is also an image of inattention when contrasted to watchfulness. The sentry is awake, alert to any danger. Thus St Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, “*Therefore, let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober...*” (1 Thess 5:7, 8). Sleep and drunkenness are equally devastating to a sentry who is supposedly on watch.

The need for wakefulness was apparently well known to the Christians of St Paul’s day, Writing to the Ephesians, he cites what seems to have been a popular saying, “*Therefore it is said: ‘Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.’ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil*” (Eph 5:14-16). Believers, like sentries, need to be awake to see the dangers to faith in a godless society and distance themselves from them.

### **Light and Darkness**

The images of sleep and night are connected to another set of images, used even longer to contrast the way of God and the ways of this world. We find the image of light in the midst of darkness representing the coming of the Messiah in the Book of Isaiah: “*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light had shined*” (Is 9:2). This passage is quoted in Mt 4:16 as fulfilled when the Lord Jesus began His ministry. And, of course, Jesus is, in His own words, the Light of the world.

### **Casting Off and Putting On**

The final pair of contrasts St Paul uses here is that of old and new garments. We are to “*Cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light*” (Rom 13:12). Armor, of course, suggests a soldier dressed for combat and St Paul develops that aspect of the image in Eph 6:11-18. “*Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*” (v. 11).

Putting-on and taking-off becomes an important rite in the mystery of baptism, where the removal of one’s ordinary garments represents the catechumen’s willingness to die to sin. The new life in Christ is, of course, represented by the white baptismal garment, the “robe of light,” which the newly-baptized puts on.

During this Great Fast, then, we who have put on the robe of light at our baptism are called to put aside any form of physical or emotional self-gratification (what St Paul calls “*revelry and drunkenness... lewdness and lust... strife and envy*”) through fasting, almsgiving and forgiveness. Similarly, by increased prayer and worship during these days, we “put on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The next section of this passage is equally important during the Fast: “*Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to judge another’s servant?*” (Rom 14:3,4) We must be on guard lest our desire to keep the Fast with augmented prayer, fasting and almsgiving push us to judge the observance of others and thus render our own observance barren. As always in the Church, our brethren should be more important than our devotions or other practices. They are, after all, more important to God.

## DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today +Nan Nejaimey (1yr.), Charles & Lena (Esper) Nejaimey, Thomas & Irene (Ryan) Kelly, Katherine (Nejaimey) Kleimer, Judith Nejaimey. Requested by James Nejaimey & family

Feb 21 +Fr. Calvin Goodwin, FSSP. Requested by Tom Syseskey

+Philip, Eva & George Jordan. Requested by Lorna Abdow Malooley

Feb 28 +Josephine Chebib Yanni. Requested by Jeanette Halal & Family

## **This Week's Lenten Services**

**Mon. 2/15 @ 6PM Forgiveness Vespers**

**Wed. 2/17@6PM Presanctified Liturgy**

**Fri. 2/19@6pm Little Compline w/Akathist Hymn**

**Sun 2/21@10AM Sunday of Orthodoxy w/icon procession. Bring an icon from home!**

## **GOD WITH US ONLINE SERIES**

### **DYING TO SIN**

The First Steps in Askesis

Mondays, February 22, March 1 & 8 @ 8 - 9 p.m. ET

Register at [godwithusonline.org](http://godwithusonline.org)

Instructor - Rev. Deacon Thomas Moses

Rev. Deacon Thomas Moses serves as a deacon at Our Lady of the Cedars Melkite Greek Catholic Church in Manchester, NH, where he lives with his wife and daughter. He is a graduate of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary and now works as a full time high school theology teacher at Bishop Guertin High School and a per diem chaplain at St. Joseph Hospital, both in nearby Nashua, NH. Some of his written work can be found on Catholic Exchange.



Great Lent begins tomorrow. Through our prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we reset our lives. These tools of the spiritual life help us soften our hearts, which have often become hardened during the past year. We should view Lent not as a time of sadness and misery but rather as a time of growth; a time of renewal. The Fathers of the Church called Lent the *Springtime of the soul*. Over the 40 days of the Fast, we are called to look at our lives more closely and see where we are falling short; where our attitudes and actions are not building a closer relationship with God and each other. Our prayer, both personal and communal, helps us get closer to God, so this Lent, pray a little more; come to the Lenten services. Our fasting shifts our focus from our bellies to our souls. However, we do not only fast from food, but also from speaking ill of our neighbors. The money we save from our fast from certain foods should be given to the poor. The Eparchy has set up the Shepherd's Care program for that purpose. This Lent, fast a little more and give the savings to the poor. Great Lent is a special time to clean the lamp of our souls so that the Light of Christ shines more brightly for the world to see.

I wish you a blessed and fruitful Great Lent!

## **FINANCIALS**

### January 2021

Income \$7,262

Expenses (\$4,990)

Net \$2,270

### YTD (10.2020-1.2021)

Income \$26,240

Expenses (\$21,665)

Net \$4,584

As you see above, we are running a small surplus for the month and year to date. This is primarily due to several generous donations. We have some large expenditures coming up, especially the repairs to the furnace and exterior doors. This will necessitate dipping into our savings. Thanks to all who have continued to contribute to the church during the pandemic, whether in person or by mail. It costs approximately \$8,000 per month for us to cover our financial obligations. Our contributions are not dues but rather an expression of thanks for all the blessings God has bestowed on us!

## Last Week's Collection

**Regular** \$1,285

**Dividends** \$ 81

**Candles** \$ 20

**Donations** \$ 500

**Total** \$1,886



## Christ Reverses the Fall

TOMORROW IS THE FIRST DAY of the Great Fast , the forty days of preparation for the observances of Great Week and Pascha. On this, the eve of the Fast, our Church always reads these words from St Paul's Epistle to the Romans, "*Now it is high time to awake out of sleep... let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light*" (Rom 13:11, 12).

In our lectionary, the Epistle to the Romans is read during the first weeks after Pentecost. Why is this section appointed for this Sunday? ... because "*the day is at hand.*" The Great Fast begins this evening with "Forgiveness Vespers." We have the opportunity to be untied from "our attachment to the things of this present world," to "*cast off the works of darkness, and ... put on the armor of light*" (v. 13), through the observances of the Fast.

Appropriate as these words may be on this day, we know that they were not written with the Fast in mind; there was no Great Fast in St Paul's day. To what was he referring?

Commentators believe that St Paul's sense of urgency derived from the portentous events in the Roman Empire of his day. The persecution of the Church had begun. Jewish unrest was intensifying and a full-scale revolt would be mounted in a few short years, bringing about the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. Many Jews believed that the Messiah would be coming soon; many Christians believed that He (Jesus) would be returning soon. The "Day of the Lord" was at hand. For St Paul, this critical time in the history of the Church and the Jewish nation demanded that Christians focus their attention on the fundamental truth of their existence: they had a unique relationship to God in Christ. Everyone in the world was related to God as the work of His hands; Christians, however, were related to Him as His adopted children, God "*having predestined us to adoption as sons*" (Eph 1:5) in order to make present throughout the world the Gospel of salvation in Christ. It is this reality which should define a Christian's way of life at this time.

St John Chrysostom, commenting on this passage, says that St Paul "... puts the Resurrection close at hand. For, as time advances, he means, the season of our present life is wasting away, and the life to come approaches. If, then, you are prepared, and have done all that He has commanded, that day is salvation for you; but if you are not ready, it is not so." That is not some kind of threat for Chrysostom: "It is not to alarm them that he exhorts them in this way, but out of kindness, in order to untie them from their attachment to the things of this present world" (Homily on Romans).

Most of us are quite happy to be attached to the things of this present world and resist parting from them. It is not unusual to find older people, who have moved from a family home to smaller quarters, trying to cram all "their things" into one or two rooms. Few are those who come to realize that, as the saying goes, "what you own, owns you." For St Paul, our "things" are not something to hold on to, but to leave behind happily, because what waits us is so far superior.

### Wakefulness and Sleep

St Paul uses a number of contrasting examples in his epistles to represent the difference between the ways of believers and those of non-believers. Christians are told to be awake rather than to sleep, for "*the night is far spent, the day is at hand*" (v.12).

In the ancient world, sleep was frequently an image of death. As a descent into unconsciousness, sleep foreshadows the end of life. Because it is temporary, however, sleep is also an image pointing to the resurrection. At Christ's resurrection, we are told in the Gospel, "*the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised*" (Mt 27:52). To be asleep is, in effect, to be dead.

### Prokimenon

**Reader:** Sing praise to our God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

**People:** Sing praise to our God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

**Verse:** All you peoples, clap your hands! Shout to God with cries of gladness.

**People:** Sing praise to our God, sing praise! Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

**Reader:** Sing praise to our God, sing praise!

**People:** Sing praise to our King, sing praise!

**Epistle:** Rom. 13:11-14; 14:1-4

### Alleluia Verses

In You, O Lord, I have hoped: let me never be put to shame. In Your justice, save me and deliver me.

**Verse:** Be for me a protecting God, a sheltering house to save me.

**Gospel:** Mt. 6:14-21, Sunday of Cheese-Fare

### Special Petitions for the Ecumenic Prayer (Inserted after the third petition)

- For all your people who have proven positive with the coronavirus, that they may be restored to full health and offer you their praise and thanksgiving, we pray to you, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For all those who have died as a result of the coronavirus that they may be granted rest with the Saints and the mercy of God in the Heavenly Kingdom, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For doctors, nurses, and all in health care, risking their lives to minister to those afflicted with the coronavirus, that they remain safe, and in good health as they serve others, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For all your people in Lebanon who were hurt during the disastrous explosion, that they may be restored to full health, and for those who died that they may be granted rest among the Saints, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.
- For peace throughout the Middle East, especially in Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, and Iraq, we pray to You, Lord, hear us and have mercy.