

**PARISH BULLETIN**  
**ST. MARK ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
**MARCH 8, 2020 TO APRIL 18, 2020**

**St. Mark Orthodox Church**  
**P.O. BOX 71130 400 West Hamlin Road**  
**Rochester Hills, MI**  
**48307**

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Visit our parish website at <http://stmarkrochester.org>

**PRAYER LIST UPDATES**

**Newly Departed: Eugene** – Gerry Wenson’s brother; **Spencer** – Morrish’s friend’s son; **Nikola** – Fr. Andrew’s friend’s father; **Marcus** – Gerry Bokas’ brother; **Lawrence** – Amy Wassell’s brother in law; **Gary** – Morrish friend; **Nadia** – Raouf Ibrahim’s sister; **Paul** – Gialanella family friend

**OTHER PRAYERS**

**Jennifer** – Julie Kozlowski’s cousin, on life support; **Sonia, Matthew and newborn preemie Jack** – Kuprianiak daughter and family; **Brian** – Bill Herman’s co-worker, lung cancer; **Nadia** – Raouf Ibrahim’s sister, failing, hospitalized; **Larissa Robertson** – recovering from knee surgery; **Nancy Herman** – recovering from shoulder surgery; **Vanka** – Yavornitzky friend’s mother, hospice; **Gene, Joe and son Matt** – Maureen Gentry friends, Matt is a long distance care giver; **Donna and Doug** – Jonathan Reach’s parents, Donna has ALS; **June Yount** – back surgery and recovery

**THE ADORNMENT CORNER**

Partly because Nicolai ran into some border crossing issues we are preparing to revise our agreement with him. Tentatively, it looks like it will be structured to pay per canvas as it is shipped to us with a single total installation payment at the end. That plan is still being developed, however it does mean that our cash flow will still be a regular disbursement. Please continue your generosity to the adornment fund.

**ODO MEALS AT SS. PETER AND PAUL**

The next luncheon will be on April 5. This is a great Lenten opportunity for almsgiving/service. Please consider chairing, cooking, serving or a combination from the three.

**AKATHIST AND INSIDE SPEAKERS EVENING**

On the fifth Friday of Great Lent, April 3, we will celebrate our usual Akathist service to the Mother of God followed by our Inside Speakers Evening. This year the High School Church School class has been creating icons of their choosing. Each student will display his/her work and give a talk about the saint depicted. It will be a great opportunity to learn a bit more about some of the Holy ones in our midst. We are still seeking someone(s) to host the evening refreshments during the talks. You can sign up on the ministries sheet on the bulletin board. Thank you.

**WHOLE CHURCH CLEAN UP FOR PASCHA**

On Saturday, April 4 beginning at 9:00 A.M. we will gather to do a serious clean-up for Pascha and our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the O.C.A. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy (see next item below). Many hands always make the work go quickly, so please plan to come to help. Jobs will include some polishing, dusting, wax removal, furnishing aligning, vacuuming (particularly in the nooks and crannies), and even some outside yard debris clean-up. If you have looked around and thought “that needs attention”, then we have a job for you. We are looking for your help. Thank you.

**LOOKING A BIT BEYOND THE SCOPE OF THIS BULLETIN, BUT.....**

The year 2020 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Autocephaly (literally self headed) of the Orthodox Church in America. Each diocese of the O.C.A. has planned celebrations/commemorations of the event throughout the year. For us in the Michigan Deanery of the Diocese of the Midwest it will take place on Bright Friday, April 24 and Bright Saturday, April 25. Since April 25 is the Feast day of our Patron, the Apostle and Evangelist Mark, and since we too are celebrating our God blessed 40 years of parish life

at St. Mark, we will be hosting a deanery-wide Hierarchal Divine Liturgy and luncheon that day in double celebration. Stay tuned. More will follow.

### **THE HOLY WEEK CRUNCH**

**Lazarus Saturday, April 11** – By this day we will have need of palms and pussy willows for the weekend celebration. If you have access to pussy willows please have them at church by the Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> Pre-sanctified Liturgy. The pancake brunch is always a big deal for the children. Check the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board or the attendance sheet on the candle table to see how you can help.

**All communicants at the chalice** should have their Lenten confessions completed by the Palm Sunday Divine Liturgy. We can make accommodations for college students coming home for Pascha. Please contact Fr. Andrew by Palm Sunday to make arrangements.

**Bridegroom Matins on Palm Sunday** will follow the Sunday coffee hour.

**Sign-up for Holy Week Jobs** on the bulletin board: shroud bearers for Friday afternoon and evening, door holders for Friday evening and Saturday night, Psalm readers before the tomb of our Savior from Holy Friday after Great Vespers through the beginning of the Holy Saturday Vespersal Divine Liturgy, procession bearers for the Paschal procession on Saturday night, chairpersons for the Paschal Agape meal following the service, helpers for the children's egg hunt on Sunday afternoon, and anything else that may come up. We need you.

**Don't forget the hard boiled red dyed eggs for the Paschal service.** We ask that each household bring one egg for each family member PLUS an additional egg for a guest. Regardless of the size of your household do the same math.

**By Bright Week** the whole building will have clearly taken a hit. The regularly scheduled cleaners can use some help getting the facilities in order for the Hierarchal Divine Liturgy on Bright Saturday. Please stay tuned for information on how you can help us put on our best for our guests.

### **LENTEN DISCIPLINES – A REVIEW**

#### PASTORAL SUGGESTIONS FOR KEEPING GREAT LENT

#### FASTING NORMS

- 1) During the week before Great Lent meat is forbidden, but eggs, cheese and other dairy products (and fish) may be eaten.
- 2) During the days of Great Lent and holy Week (with the exception of the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25 and Palm Sunday when fish is allowed) all meat and animal products (milk, cheese, butter, eggs, lard) and fish are not to be eaten.

#### PRACTICAL APPLICATION

- 1) The traditional practices for Great Lent are recommended for all baptized Orthodox Faithful who are physically able to keep them.
- 2) The full strictness of the fast is lessened for the aged, the very young, those in poor health and pregnant mothers.

3) Most importantly we must remember that “the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.” (2 Cor. 3:6). It is LOVE, not the spirit of legalism that motivates our lenten practices

4) Prepare yourself and make a Good Lenten Confession. (note: confessions can be made following the Great Vespers on Saturdays, before the weekly Presanctified Divine Liturgy, after most daily lenten matins [please ask Fr. Andrew first], or at other specially arranged times.)

5) Along with dietary fasting we should also:

- a. Practice a daily rule of prayer in the morning and evening.
- b. Read the Holy Scriptures daily.
- c. Make a concerted effort to attend Lenten services. Try to change your work and social schedules to accommodate the Church, not vice-versa.
- d. Increase your concern and care for the sick, the poor and the homebound.
- e. Fast not only with your stomach, but with your mouth, ears and eyes. Guard what you say, what you hear, what you watch.
- f. Prepare for and receive Holy Communion often.
- g. Plan ahead for Holy Week. Make sure the preparation of traditional foods does not interfere with Holy Week services. We all belong in Church.

### **PARISH ALMS FOR GREAT LENT**

As is our custom, alms collected in the parish alms box during Great Lent (this year it will be March 1<sup>st</sup> through all of April) will be earmarked for the International Orthodox Christian Charities, I.O.C.C. The work of the I.O.C.C. helps to provide Christian relief and support for those who are struggling through disasters both in the United States and throughout the world. Almsgiving is an essential aspect of our Lenten discipline and preparation for the Lord’s Pascha. Whether you contribute through the parish alms box or elsewhere or both it is an activity worthy of God. Please be sure to participate.

### **AND, OF COURSE, PRAYER**

The third leg of the Lenten discipline activity, along with fasting and almsgiving is, of course, prayer. For over a decade our faithful at St. Mark have appreciated the structure which is offered through the schedule of psalm readings posted below. It is not an end in itself, we should continue our daily prayer rule, but it has proven to be a spiritually rewarding community based Lenten activity for those who have employed the practice. Please join in this year if you have not already done so. You will appreciate it.

Greater than baptism itself is the fountain of tears after baptism, even though it is somewhat audacious to say so. For baptism is the washing away of evils that were in us before, but sins committed after baptism are washed away by tears. As baptism is received in infancy, we have all defiled it, but we cleanse it anew with tears. And if God in His love for mankind had not given us tears, few indeed and hard to find would be those in a state of grace. (From The Ascetic Experience).

