INTRODUCTION

The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Most Holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary is celebrated on March 25 each year. The Feast commemorates the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God, would become incarnate and enter into this world through her womb.

BIBLICAL STORY

The biblical story of the Feast of the Annunciation is found in the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke (1:26-39). The Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary, who was living in Nazareth, and said to her, “Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you.” Mary was perplexed and wondered what kind of greeting this was.

The angel told her not to be afraid, for she had found favor with God. He said, “You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

Mary responded to the angel by asking how this could happen since she had no husband. The angel told her that the Holy Spirit and the power of God would come upon her, and that the child to be born of her would be called holy, the “Son of God.”

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Diakonia

is the monthly newsletter of
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St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church is a parish under the spiritual and ecclesiastical shepherding of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

The Mission of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church is to proclaim the Gospel of Salvation through the Orthodox Christian Faith for the glory of our Triune God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We are a community of believers who journey towards our Lord Jesus Christ and one another through our worship, fellowship, spiritual growth, witness, and service. We invite all people to join us on this journey toward the Kingdom of Heaven.

"Diakonia" is published on the first of each month. The deadline for submissions to this newsletter is the 20th of the prior month.

Published by
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-  For Christine - Memory Eternal.
  By Kathleen Zacharko
-  For Unborn Twins - Better health & motherhood.
  By Mariam Haddad
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  by Douglas & Leta Povich

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From Fr. Timothy

GREAT LENT: ARE WE READY?

In 2018 a child fell over a balcony rail in Paris, catching himself by the rail but unable to pull himself back to safety. A neighbor on the next balcony over was trying to reach over and pull him back up but was too far away. In the precious moments before the child's grip failed and he fell, one of the bystanders on the street below climbed the building, balcony to balcony, until he reached the child's balcony five stories up and pulled the child to safety.

I know enough about myself that I’m not fit enough to climb a building, nor do I have the necessary skill and balance to do what that young man did. Nor, when I work out, am I thinking about what muscles I need to work and what exercises I need to practice in order to acquire those skills. I don’t think that young man had it in mind as he went about the exercises that prepared him for that moment that he was preparing to climb a building. There are people, though, who do exactly that. As a matter of fact, one of the unexpected results of that heroic rescue was that the Paris Fire Brigade offered the young man a job, because what he did is exactly the sort of thing they train themselves to do. They keep themselves in constant physical readiness so that when they are called to do something the rest of us might think insane or impossible, they are ready.

Lent is like this. Lent, as the Orthodox practice it, is not a crisis, or a judgement, or a punishment. Every time we take up a fast, whether it is a Wednesday, a Friday, or one of the great fasts, we are taking on an exercise regimen to help us prepare for actual moments of crisis. This is not the only purpose of Lent, or of fasting and the ascetical life, but it is a big one. During the “Great Forty Days” of Lent, we fast, we pray, and we give alms not as ends in themselves, but for a purpose – to teach us how we should behave in a crisis, even how we should behave at all times.

St. Dionysios of Zakynthos was once accosted by a man who begged him to hide him – he had just killed a man and was being pursued by others intent on bringing him to justice. It turned out that the man this fugitive had killed was St. Dionysios’ brother – and even in his grief, St. Dionysios had the compassion and mercy to help his brother’s murderer. This kind of compassion isn’t something that just happens, it’s something we have to practice. The saint was ready to forgive because he had practiced the habit of forgiveness – ready to show compassion because he had inculcated the virtue of compassion through practice. Giving to those in need, responding to moments of fear, anger, pain, and grief with love and repentance doesn’t just happen – we have to practice it. In fact, acquiring these virtues to the point of practicing them in moments of crisis and at all times is something we spend our entire lives doing – constantly growing, falling, and trying again to meet everyone and everything with the humility, love, and mercy that is our calling as the Body of Christ.

The young man in Paris was ready because he kept himself constantly in a state of readiness. A fireman doesn’t have to think about whether or not he can run up a ladder. We should be so ready with love and compassion that we don’t have to think about it. May God guide us all as we practice and put into practice these heavenly virtues this Lent, and whenever we fast.

Blessed Lent!

"TIME FOR A CHECK-UP?"

As we prepare for and enter into the season of Great Lent, Fr. Timothy is available to hear confessions by appointment. You can call or email Father to make an appointment: (989) 331-5600 / frtimothycook@gmail.com.
The angel then proceeded to tell the Virgin Mary that her cousin Elizabeth had conceived a son in her old age (John the Baptist), and affirmed that with God nothing is impossible. In faith and obedience to the will of God, Mary replied to the angel, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be according to your word.” Upon her response, the angel departed.

It is on the Feast of the Annunciation, that Orthodox Christians commemorate both the divine initiative of God, whereby He took on flesh from the Virgin for our salvation, and the human response, whereby Mary freely accepted the vocation offered to her. He elected to become man, and He desired to do this with the willing agreement of her whom He chose as His mother. Mary could have refused, for she was not a passive instrument, but an active participant with a free and positive part to play in God’s plan for our salvation. Thus, when on this and other feasts the Orthodox Church honors the Theotokos, the Mother of God, it is not just because God chose her but also because she herself chose to follow His will.

**ICON OF THE FEAST**

The icon of the Annunciation is one that presents the joy of the announcement of the coming of Christ. It is an icon of bright colors, depicting the Archangel Gabriel (1), who has descended from heaven, and the Virgin Mary (2), who has been chosen to be the Mother of God.

The Archangel is shown with his feet spread apart as if he is running to share the good news with Mary (3). In his left hand is a staff, the symbol of a messenger. His right hand is extended toward Mary as he delivers the message and announces the blessing bestowed upon her by God (4).

On the right side of the icon the Virgin sits on an elevated seat, indicating that as the Mother of God she is “greater in honor than the cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the seraphim, who without corruption gave birth to God the Word.” In her left hand she holds a spindle of scarlet yarn (5) which depicts the task she was assigned of preparing the purple and scarlet material to be used in making the veil for the Temple in Jerusalem. Her right hand is raised in a gesture of acceptance in response to Gabriel’s message. Her posture expresses willing cooperation with God’s plan of salvation. The three stars on her garments (7) represent that she was a Virgin before, during, and after the birth of Christ.

At the top of the icon the segment of a circle represents the divine realm (8), from which three rays emerge. This demonstrates the action of the Holy Spirit coming upon her.

**ORTHODOX CELEBRATION OF THE FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION**

The Feast of the Annunciation of the Theotokos is celebrated with the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom which is conducted on the morning of the Feast and preceded by a Matins (Orthros) service. A Great Vespers is conducted on the evening before the day of the Feast. Scripture readings for the Feast are the following: At Vespers: Genesis 28:10-17; Ezekiel 43:27—44:4; Proverbs 9:1-11. At the Matins: Luke 1:39-49, 56. At the Divine Liturgy: Hebrews 2:11-18; Luke 1:24-38.
**Hymns of the Feast**

**Dismissal Hymn (Fourth Mode)**
Today is the summary of our salvation, and the revelation of the age-old mystery. For the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin, and Gabriel announces the good news of grace. Therefore, let us join him, and cry aloud to the Theotokos: "Rejoice, Maiden full of grace! The Lord is with you."

**Kontakion (Plagal Fourth Mode)**
O Champion General, I your City now inscribe to you Triumphant anthems as the tokens of my gratitude, Being rescued from the terrors, O Theotokos. Inasmuch as you have power unassailable, From all kinds of perils free me, so that unto you I may cry aloud: Rejoice, O unwedded Bride.

**Chrysations**

**Jean "Zoe" Farrington**
On January 30th - the feast of the Three Holy Hierarchs - we welcomed Jean Farrington into the Orthodox Church. Her sponsor is Bo Tarachas, and she received the name of "Zoe" in Holy Chrismation. May God grant them both many years!

**Timothy Patishnock**
On February 28th - the feast of St. John Cassian - we welcomed Timothy Patishnock in the Orthodox Church by Holy Chrismation. His sponsors are Evan & Alexia Houpis. May God grant them all many years!

**President’s Corner**

Judy S. Blebea, MD, MTh

As we enter into the Triodion period with the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee, we are beginning to prepare ourselves for the spiritual journey of Great Lent, a time for us as Orthodox Christians to draw closer to God through worship, prayer, fasting and acts of charity. This is also the time that we as a parish are preparing to embark on a strategic planning process which we hope will help shape our long-term goals and determine the future direction of our parish.

While we are clearly blessed here at St. Demetrios with all that God has provided us, we still need to continue to grow spiritually as a community and in service to others. It is always a good idea to periodically stop and take inventory of our mission as a parish and to thoughtfully reflect on how we can improve our current ministries and outreach. For example, I would love to see our music ministry grow into the formation of a full choir, our educational ministries expand to include our teens and our outreach to our senior members improve.

I hope that you will join us in this strategic planning process by completing any surveys that are sent to you and attending the retreats planned for April and July. Together, we can make a difference caring for one another and serving as ever faithful members of the body of Christ.

*Dr. Blebea is a graduate of the St. Stephen’s Certificate Program of the Antiochian House of Studies and holds a Master of Theology in Applied Orthodox Theology from the St. John of Damascus School of Theology of the University of Balamand, Lebanon.*
INTRODUCTION

The Sunday of the Last Judgment is the third Sunday of a three-week period prior to the commencement of Great Lent. During this time, the services of the Church have begun to include hymns from the Triodion, a liturgical book that contains the services from the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the tenth before Pascha (Easter), through Great and Holy Saturday. On this day, focus is placed on the future judgment of all persons who will stand before the throne of God when Christ returns in His glory.

BIBLICAL STORY

The commemoration for this Sunday is taken from the parable of our Lord Jesus Christ concerning his Second Coming and the Last Judgment of all, both the living and the dead. In Matthew 25:31-46, Christ speaks about what will happen at this specific point in time when He will “come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him” (v. 31).

At His coming, “He will sit on the throne of His glory,” and all of the nations will be gathered before Him. He will separate them “as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats” (v. 32). The sheep will be placed on His right hand, and the goats on the left.

To the sheep, He will say “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (vv. 33-34)

This kingdom is offered to the sheep because of their compassion and service to those in need. Jesus says, “…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 to Me.”

The sheep, who are the righteous chosen for the kingdom, will ask how this could be so. They will ask Jesus when was He hungry or thirsty, a stranger, naked, and in prison. He will answer them by saying, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to the least of these My brethren, you did it to me” (vv. 35-40).

Christ the King, seated on His throne of judgment, will then turn to the goats on His left and say, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (v. 41). He will condemn them because they did not feed Him when He was hungry, give Him drink when He was thirsty, take Him in when He was a stranger, clothe Him when He was naked, visit Him when He was sick or in prison.

The goats will ask the Lord, “When did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?” Then He will answer them saying, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me” (vv. 42-45).

Jesus concludes His words on the Last Judgment by stating that those on the left “will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life” (v. 46).

On the past two Sundays of this pre-Lenten period, the focus was placed on God’s patience and limitless compassion, of His readiness to accept every sinner who returns to Him. On this third Sunday, we are powerfully reminded of a complementary truth: no one is so patient and so merciful as God, but even He does not forgive those who do not repent. The God of love is also a God of righteousness, and when Christ comes again in glory, He will come as our Judge. Such is the message of Lent to each of us:
turn back while there is still time, repent before the End comes.

This Sunday sets before us the eschatological dimension of Lent: the Great Fast is a preparation for the Second Coming of the Savior, for the eternal Passover in the Age to Come, a theme that is also the focus of the first three days of Holy Week. But the judgment is not only in the future. Here and now, each day and each hour, in hardening our hearts toward others and in failing to respond to the opportunities we are given of helping them, we are already passing judgment on ourselves.

Another theme of this Sunday is that of love. When Christ comes to judge us, what will be the criterion of His judgment? The parable of the Last Judgment answers: love—not a mere humanitarian concern for abstract justice and the anonymous “poor,” but concrete and personal love for the human person—the specific persons that we encounter each day in our lives.

Christian love is the “possible impossibility” to see Christ in another person, whoever he or she is, and whom God, in His eternal and mysterious plan, has decided to introduce into my life, be it only for a few moments, not as an occasion for a “good deed” or an exercise in philanthropy, but as the beginning of an eternal companionship in God Himself.

The parable of the Last Judgment is about Christian love. Not all of us are called to work for “humanity,” yet each one of us has received the gift and the grace of Christ’s love. We know that all persons ultimately need this personal love—the recognition in them of their unique soul in which the beauty of the whole creation is reflected in a unique way. We also know that people are in prison and are sick and thirsty and hungry because that personal love has been denied them. And, finally, we know that however narrow and limited the framework of our personal existence, each one of us has been made responsible for a tiny part of the Kingdom of God, made responsible by that very gift of Christ’s love. Thus, on whether or not we have accepted this responsibility, on whether we have loved or refused to love, shall we be judged.

**ICON OF THE FEAST**

The icon of the Sunday of the Last Judgment incorporates all of the elements of the parable from Matthew 25:31-46. Christ sits on the throne and before him the Last Judgment takes place. He is extending his hands in blessing upon the Theotokos on his right, and John the Baptist on his left. Seated on smaller thrones are the Apostles, represented by Peter and Paul, a depiction of the words of Christ in Matthew 19:28.

Proceeding from the throne are the scrolls pronouncing the judgment upon the sheep and the goats. The faithful are received with the words that are written on the scroll to the right of Christ the Judge, “Come, you blessed of My Father, and inherit the kingdom” (v. 34). The scroll on the left condemns the unfaithful with the words, “Depart from me you cursed, into the everlasting fire” (v. 41).

Before the throne, the progenitors of the human race, Adam and Eve, bow before Christ. In the center of the icon is the Archangel Michael. He is holding the scales of judgment and is surrounded by the books that contain the works of each person (Revelation 20:11-13). Also shown are the angels with trumpets announcing the return of Christ and signaling the resurrection of the dead and the commencement of the Last Judgment (I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

To the left of the Archangel are both the living and the dead who are approaching the throne and Christ the judge. Whereas Adam and Eve are representative of all of humanity, this part of the icon shows that both the living and the dead will stand before Christ.

At the bottom right of the icon is the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and the demons, and also for those who are not found worthy to inherit the Kingdom of God.

The icon offers a clear image of the theme of judgment with Christ on His throne, the Archangel with the scales and books, and the anticipation of the sentence of everlasting punishment for the unrighteous and the reward of eternal life for the righteous.
CHEESEFARE - FORGIVENESS SUNDAY - MARCH 14TH

INTRODUCTION

The Sunday of Forgiveness is the last Sunday prior to the commencement of Great Lent. During the pre-Lenten period, the services of the Church include hymns from the Triodion, a liturgical book that contains the services from the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee, the tenth before Pascha (Easter), through Great and Holy Saturday. On the Sunday of Forgiveness focus is placed on the exile of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, an event that shows us how far we have fallen in sin and separated ourselves from God. At the onset of Great Lent and a period of intense fasting, this Sunday reminds us of our need for God's forgiveness and guides our hearts, minds, and spiritual efforts on returning to Him in repentance.

BIBLICAL STORY

The Sunday of Forgiveness, the last of the preparatory Sundays before Great Lent, has two themes: it commemorates Adam's expulsion from Paradise, and it accentuates our need for forgiveness. There are obvious reasons why these two things should be brought to our attention as we stand on the threshold of Great Lent. One of the primary images in the Triodion is that of the return to Paradise. Lent is a time when we weep with Adam and Eve before the closed gate of Eden, repenting with them for the sins that have deprived us of our free communion with God. But Lent is also a time when we are preparing to celebrate the saving event of Christ's death and rising, which has reopened Paradise to us once more (Luke 23:43). So sorrow for our exile in sin is tempered by hope of our re-entry into Paradise.

The second theme, that of forgiveness, is emphasized in the Gospel reading for this Sunday (Matthew 6:14-21) and in the special ceremony of mutual forgiveness at the end of the Vespers on Sunday evening. Before we enter the Lenten fast, we are reminded that there can be no true fast, no genuine repentance, no reconciliation with God, unless we are at the same time reconciled with one another. A fast without mutual love is the fast of demons. We do not travel the road of Lent as isolated individuals but as members of a family. Our asceticism and fasting should not separate us from others, but should link us to them with ever-stronger bonds.

The Sunday of Forgiveness also directs us to see that Great Lent is a journey of liberation from our enslavement to sin. The Gospel lesson sets the conditions for this liberation. The first one is fasting—the refusal to accept the desires and urges of our fallen nature as normal, the effort to free ourselves from the dictatorship of the flesh and matter over the spirit. To be effective, however, our fast must not be hypocritical, a “showing off.” We must “appear not unto men to fast but to our Father who is in secret” (vv. 16-18).

The second condition is forgiveness—“If you forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you” (vv. 14-15). The triumph of sin, the main sign of its rule over the world, is division, opposition, separation, hatred. Therefore, the first break through this fortress of sin is forgiveness—the return to unity, solidarity, love. To forgive is to put between me and my “enemy” the radiant forgiveness of God Himself. To forgive is to reject the hopeless “dead-ends” of human relations and to refer them to Christ. Forgiveness is truly a “breakthrough” of the Kingdom into this sinful and fallen world.

ICON OF THE FEAST

The icon shows Adam and Eve standing before Jesus Christ. Prior to their descent into sin through
disobedience, Adam and Eve were blessed with a beautiful relationship of communion and fellowship with God. However, they were tempted by the devil appearing in the form of a serpent to disobey God and eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:15-17).

When they took of the fruit and sinned, they realized that they were naked. Further, when “they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden”...they hid themselves “from the presence of the Lord” (3:8). The icon shows Adam and Eve attempting to cover themselves with fig leaves as they try to hide, and yet they stand ashamed before the Lord.

Because of their disobedience the Lord expelled them from the garden. The icon shows the Archangel of the Lord directing them out of Paradise, through the gate of Eden where God placed “the cherubim and a sword flaming and guarding the way to the tree of life” (3:23-24). Adam and Eve are dressed in the garments of skins made for them by God (3:20).

**ORTHODOX CELEBRATION OF THE SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS**

The Sunday of Forgiveness is commemorated with the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, which is preceded by the Matins service. A Great Vespers is conducted on Saturday evening. The hymns of the Triodion for this day are added to the usual prayers and hymns of the weekly commemoration of the Resurrection of Christ. The naming of the Sunday is taken from the commemoration of the Exile of Adam and Eve from Paradise and from the Gospel reading of the Divine Liturgy.


The Sunday of Forgiveness is also known as Cheesefare Sunday. This is the last day that dairy products can be eaten before the Lenten fast. The full fast begins the following day on Clean Monday, the first day of Great Lent. On the evening of the Sunday of Forgiveness the Church conducts the first service of Great Lent, the Vespers of Forgiveness, a service that directs us further on the path of repentance and helps us to acknowledge our need for forgiveness from God and to seek forgiveness from our brothers and sisters in Christ. This is the first time that the Lenten prayer of St. Ephraim accompanied by prostrations is read. At the end of the service all the faithful approach the priest and one another asking for mutual forgiveness.

Orthodox Christians are encouraged to enter Great Lent in repentance and confession by attending these services, coming for the Sacrament of Confession, and dedicating themselves to worship, prayer, and fasting throughout the Lenten period. The first day of Lent, Clean Monday, signifies the beginning of a period of cleansing and purification of sins through repentance.

On the Saturday before this Sunday, the second of three Saturdays of the Souls are held. This is a special commemoration when the Church offers a Divine Liturgy and Memorial Service for the departed faithful. This is considered a universal commemoration of the dead. Through the memorial services, the Church is commending to God all who have departed and who are now awaiting the Last Judgment. This specific Saturday is a general commemoration of all the ascetic Saints of the Church, both men and women. As we set out on the Lenten fast we are reminded that we will make this journey as members of a family, supported by the intercessions of the Saints.

**HYMNS OF FORGIVENESS SUNDAY**

**Prokeimenon of Vespers**

Turn not Your face from Your child, for I am afflicted; hear me speedily. Give heed to my soul and redeem it.

**Kontakion**

O guide to wisdom, provider of prudence, disciplinarian of fools, and defender of the poor, fortify and discipline my heart, O Master; You, give me a word, O Word of the Father. For behold, I will not hinder my lips from crying to You: O merciful Lord, have mercy on me who have fallen.

(For more on these Sundays, or on Triodion and Great Lent - including hymns, prayers, reflections, and much more - visit goarch.org/lent)
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**Notes:**
- Shaded days denote a fast day.
- ☾ denotes a Liturgy
- ☜ Great Vespers/Compline
- ❄ Akathist/Paraklesis
- ☸ Presanctified Liturgy
- fish/wine/oil allowed
- wine/oil allowed
STRATEGIC PLANNING

“Where there is no vision, the people will perish”
Proverbs 29:18

Why do we exist?
Where do we want to be?

Where are we now?
How will we get there?

Join us on Saturday, March 13th, for a parish-wide Town Hall (hosted on Zoom) as we welcome Bill Marianes, our Strategic Planning coordinator, to introduce the process which we as a parish will be going through as we develop, prepare, and implement a new Strategic Plan for our parish.

Please fill out the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats) worksheet you received, or pick one up in the Narthex today! These can be returned either electronically or by dropping them off at the Office.

For updates on the Strategic Planning Process, you can check our parish page at Mr. Marianes' website "stewardshipcalling.com" under "Strategic Planning," or you can check the Strategic Planning page on our own website. Please keep our parish and our team in your prayers as we develop this project!

METROPOLIS OF DETROIT COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
(see website or call office with questions)

St. Demetrios will continue to live-stream all of our services, so anyone who is so desires may continue streaming our services from home.

- Anyone who is currently experiencing any symptoms of illness must stay at home.
- Everyone is required to wear masks. Masks are available at the door of the Church.
- Everyone is required to sign-in as they enter the Church. This information is held at the Church and is not distributed to anyone else. We collect this only for our own contact-tracing purposes (in the hopefully unlikely event of an exposure at the Church), so we can contact people as necessary.
- Please maintain a physical distance of at least six feet between family units in the pews, and in both the communion and antidoron lines.
- The faithful should refrain from kissing the icons and other holy objects, showing reverence instead with a bow.
The Sunday of Orthodoxy is the first Sunday of Great Lent. The dominant theme of this Sunday since 843 has been that of the victory of the icons. In that year the iconoclastic controversy, which had raged on and off since 726, was finally laid to rest, and icons and their veneration were restored on the first Sunday in Lent. Ever since, this Sunday has been commemorated as the "Triumph of Orthodoxy."

**INTRODUCTION**

The Sunday of Orthodoxy is the first Sunday of Great Lent. The dominant theme of this Sunday since 843 has been that of the victory of the icons. In that year the iconoclastic controversy, which had raged on and off since 726, was finally laid to rest, and icons and their veneration were restored on the first Sunday in Lent. Ever since, this Sunday has been commemorated as the "Triumph of Orthodoxy."

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Seventh Ecumenical Council dealt predominantly with the controversy regarding icons and their place in Orthodox worship. It was convened in Nicaea in 787 by Empress Irene at the request of Tarasios, Patriarch of Constantinople. The Council was attended by 367 bishops.

Almost a century before this, the iconoclastic controversy had once more shaken the foundations of both Church and State in the Byzantine empire. Excessive religious respect and the ascribed miracles to icons by some members of society, approached the point of worship (due only to God) and idolatry. This instigated excesses at the other extreme by which icons were completely taken out of the liturgical life of the Church by the Iconoclasts. The Iconophiles, on the other hand, believed that icons served to preserve the doctrinal teachings of the Church; they considered icons to be man's dynamic way of expressing the divine through art and beauty.

The Council decided on a doctrine by which icons should be venerated but not worshipped. In answering the Empress' invitation to the Council, Pope Hadrian replied with a letter in which he also held the position of extending veneration to icons but not worship, the last befitting only God.

The decree of the Council for restoring icons to churches added an important clause which still stands at the foundation of the rationale for using and venerating icons in the Orthodox Church to this very day: "We define that the holy icons, whether in colour, mosaic, or some other material, should be exhibited in the holy churches of God, on the sacred vessels and liturgical vestments, on the walls, furnishings, and in houses and along the roads, namely the icons of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, that of our Lady the Theotokos, those of the venerable angels and those of all saintly people. Whenever these representations are contemplated, they will cause those who look at them to commemorate and love their prototype. We define also that they should be kissed and that they are an object of veneration and honour (timitiki proskynisis), but not of real worship (latreia), which is reserved for Him Who is the subject of our faith and is proper for the divine nature. The veneration accorded to an icon is in effect transmitted to the prototype; he who venerates the icon, venerated in it the reality for which it stands".

An Endemousa (Regional) Synod was called in Constantinople in 843. Under Empress Theodora. The veneration of icons was solemnly proclaimed at the Hagia Sophia Cathedral. The Empress, her son Michael III, Patriarch Methodios, and monks and clergy came in procession and restored the icons in their rightful place. The day was called "Triumph of Orthodoxy." Since that time, this event is commemorated yearly with a special service on the first Sunday of Lent, the "Sunday of Orthodoxy".

Orthodox teaching about icons, as defined at the Seventh Ecumenical Council of 787, is embodied in the texts sung on this Sunday.

**From Vespers:** “Inspired by your Spirit, Lord, the prophets foretold your birth as a child incarnate of the Virgin. Nothing can contain or hold you; before the morning star you shone forth eternally from the spiritual womb of the Father. Yet you were to become like us and be seen by those on earth. At the prayers of those your prophets in your mercy reckon us fit to see your light, "for we praise your resurrection, holy and beyond speech."
Innite, Lord, as divine, in the last times you willed to become incarnate and so finite; for when you took on flesh you made all its properties your own. So we depict the form of your outward appearance and pay it relative respect, and so are moved to love you; and through it we receive the grace of healing, following the divine traditions of the apostles.”

“The grace of truth has shone out, the things once foreshadowed now are revealed in perfection. See, the Church is decked with the embodied image of Christ, as with beauty not of this world, fulfilling the tent of witness, holding fast the Orthodox faith. For if we cling to the icon of him whom we worship, we shall not go astray. May those who do not so believe be covered with shame. For the image of him who became human is our glory: we venerate it, but do not worship it as God. Kissing it, we who believe cry out: O God, save your people, and bless your heritage.”

“We have moved forward from unbelief to true faith, and have been enlightened by the light of knowledge. Let us then clap our hands like the psalmist, and offer praise and thanksgiving to God. And let us honor and venerate the holy icons of Christ, of his most pure Mother, and of all the saints, depicted on walls, panels and sacred vessels, setting aside the unbelievers’ ungodly teaching. For the veneration given to the icon passes over, as Basil says, to its prototype. At the intercession of your spotless Mother, O Christ, and of all the saints, we pray you to grant us your great mercy. We venerate your icon, good Lord, asking forgiveness of our sins, O Christ our God. For you freely willed in the flesh to ascend the cross, to rescue from slavery to the enemy those whom you had formed. So we cry to you with thanksgiving: You have filled all things with joy, our Savior, by coming to save the world.”

The name of this Sunday reflects the great significance which icons possess for the Orthodox Church. They are not optional devotional extras, but an integral part of Orthodox faith and devotion. They are held to be a necessary consequence of Christian faith in the incarnation of the Word of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, in Jesus Christ. They have a sacramental character, making present to the believer the person or event depicted on them. So the interior of Orthodox churches is often covered with icons painted on walls and domed roofs, and there is always an icon screen, or iconostasis, separating the sanctuary from the nave, often with several rows of icons. No Orthodox home is complete without an icon corner (iconostasion), where the family prays.

Icons are venerated by burning lamps and candles in front of them, by the use of incense and by kissing. But there is a clear doctrinal distinction between the veneration paid to icons and the worship due to God. The former is not only relative, it is in fact paid to the person represented by the icon. This distinction safeguards the veneration of icons from any charge of idolatry.

The theme of the victory of the icons, by its emphasis on the incarnation, points us to the basic Christian truth that the one whose death and resurrection we celebrate at Easter was none other than the Word of God who became human in Jesus Christ.

Before the Triumph of Orthodoxy came to be celebrated on the first Sunday of Lent, there was on this day a commemoration of Moses, Aaron, Samuel and the prophets. Traces of this more ancient observance can still be seen in the choice of the Epistle reading at the Liturgy and in the Alleluia verse appointed before the Gospel: “Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among them that call upon His Name.”

**Icon of the Feast**

The icon of the Sunday of Orthodoxy commemorates the “restoration” of icons in the churches and to their use in Orthodox worship. The focal point of the icon is an icon itself, the Virgin Hodegetria, a popular depiction of the Theotokos as “Directress,” or literally “She who shows the way to God.” The icon is carried by two angels.

To the left of the icon is the Empress Theodora and her son Michael III. To the right of the icon are the Patriarchs Methodios and Tarasios. The icon is surrounded by numerous saints who struggled against the Iconoclastic heresy.

The icon also represents the triumphant procession that was made on Sunday, March 11, 843, from the Church of the Theotokos in Blachernai to Hagia Sophia, where a Liturgy was celebrated to mark the restoration of icons.

*(For more on these Sundays, or on Triodion and Great Lent - including hymns, prayers, reflections, and much more - visit goarch.org/lent)*
Family Connections
2nd Sunday of Lent: St. Gregory of Palamas
Hebrews 1:10-14, 2:1-3 & Mark 2:1-12

If from one burning lamp someone lights another, then another from that one, and so on in succession, he has light continuously. In the same way, through the Apostles ordaining their successors, and these successors ordaining others, and so on, the grace of the Holy Spirit is handed down through all generations and enlightens all who obey their shepherds and teachers.

—St. Gregory Palamas (14th century)

EXPLORE TOGETHER:

Heal the Sick—This Gospel message teaches us that we must come to Christ to be healed of our sicknesses—both physical and spiritual. Discuss how spiritual sickness can lead to physical sickness and then how physical sickness can lead to spiritual health. What are tools offered through the Church that can help us in healing both body and soul? How does today’s Gospel illustrate our need for others to help heal our illnesses? How can we help others who are sick? Visit www.lent.goarch.org for more resources on this Sunday and to guide your Lenten journey.

St. Gregory of Palamas—On this Sunday of Lent we remember St. Gregory Palamas. St. Gregory was born into a noble family in Constantinople. He left all his wealth and prestige to pursue a life of prayer on Mt. Athos where he acquired great holiness beholding the uncreated light of God. Later, he became Archbishop of Thessalonica. St. Gregory defended the doctrine of the church that divine grace is uncreated. He also explained that we experience only this divine energy of God but not His essence, which is beyond understanding. For more information about St. Gregory Palamas visit www.goarch.org.

Before church next week, read the scripture passages for the 3rd Sunday of Lent: Veneration of the Holy Cross
Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:1-6 & Mark 8:34-38, 9:1

FOR MORE INFORMATION FOR COUPLES AND FAMILIES, VISIT:

Center for Family Care of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
www.family.goarch.org
## OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2021

**Meatfare**
- **MARCH 7th**
  - **Epistle:** 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2
  - **Gospel:** Matthew 25:31-46

  Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him!
  Use up/freeze dairy this week.

**Cheesefare**
- **MARCH 14th**
  - **Epistle:** Romans 13:11-14:4
  - **Gospel:** Matthew 6:14-21

  Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise!
  FORGIVENESS SUNDAY
  Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.

---

**1st Sunday of Lent**
- **MARCH 21st**
  - **Epistle:** Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2
  - **Gospel:** John 1:43-51

  SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY
  Bring an icon to church for a procession.

**2nd Sunday of Lent**
- **MARCH 28th**
  - **Epistle:** Hebrews 1:10-2:3
  - **Gospel:** Mark 2:1-12

  ST GREGORY PALAMAS
  Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today!
  Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.

### ST. DEMETRIOS

**GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

### LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Great Compline</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Presanctified Liturgy</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Akathist Hymn &amp; Salutations</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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*Only celebrated on the first five Fridays of Great Lent.*
St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church
2021 Stewardship Commitment Form

“When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, He had compassion on them and healed their sick.” - Matthew 14:14

**The Greatest of These is Love**

Please bring this form to the Church or mail it to the Church Office at 4970 Mackinaw Rd., Saginaw, MI 48603

Name: 
Street Address: _______________________________ City: __________________ State: ____ Zip Code: __________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual or Family</th>
<th>Spouse (if applicable)</th>
<th>Children (if applicable)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Name:</strong></td>
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<td>Occupation:</td>
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In gratitude for God's blessings, I/we pledge to contribute for Christ's work at St. Demetrios Church for 2021.

$________ annually

Please indicate areas of expertise or interest where you would like to serve:
(Individuals should provide a check mark and families provide "H" for husband, "W" for wife and "C" for children)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ADMINISTRATION</th>
<th>BUILDING &amp; GROUNDS</th>
<th>COMMUNICATIONS</th>
<th>EDUCArtion</th>
<th>LITURGICAL</th>
<th>MINISTRIES</th>
<th>OTHER</th>
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<tr>
<td>___ Audit Committee</td>
<td>___ Garden &amp; Landscape</td>
<td>___ Computer / Technical</td>
<td>___ Website / Email</td>
<td>___ Altar Service</td>
<td>___ Coffee Hour Ministry</td>
<td>___ __</td>
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<td>___ Election Committee</td>
<td>___ Iconography / Beautification</td>
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<td>___ Adult Education</td>
<td>___ Music Ministries</td>
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<td>___ Church School Teacher</td>
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<td>___ Finance Committee</td>
<td>___ Property Maintenance</td>
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<td>___ Bookstore / Library</td>
<td>___ Baking Phosphara</td>
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<td>___ Parish Council</td>
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<td>___ Intro to Orthodoxy</td>
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<td>___ Office help</td>
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<td>___ Stewardship Committee</td>
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I/we would like to receive notifications from St. Demetrios by: ___ email ___ paper mail
You can also submit your stewardship card and your contributions online at www.stdemetrios.mi.goarch.org/stewardship

CONFIDENTIAL: For Authorized Parish Personnel Only
Our 2021 Stewardship goal is **$170,000**. As of **February 27** we have received pledges reflecting 57% of that goal.

**Thank you** to the following faithful stewards who have submitted their pledge cards for 2021. Please join them in their support of our St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church and submit your pledge card today!

*(Please submit any corrections to the Church office).*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Pledges: $100,260.00</th>
<th>Offerings Received: $32,560.00</th>
<th>Largest pledge: $6,760.00</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stewards pledged: 69</td>
<td>Offerings Unfulfilled: $77,039.00</td>
<td>Median pledge: $1,000.00</td>
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<td>Rev. Fr. Timothy &amp; Pr. Catherine Cook</td>
<td>Bambi Howard</td>
<td>Eliana Porchia</td>
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<td>Rev. Fr. Peter &amp; Pr. Peggy Bistolarides</td>
<td>Matina Ioannidis</td>
<td>Joni &amp; Jose Porchia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Augusta Ahejew</td>
<td>Risty &amp; Karen Kalivas</td>
<td>Leonardo Porchia</td>
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<td>Petro &amp; Sandra Ahejew</td>
<td>Mersina Karris</td>
<td>Douglas &amp; Leta Povich</td>
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<td>Petro &amp; Kristina Ahejew</td>
<td>Katerina &amp; Athanasios Katsiouras</td>
<td>Julia Povich</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christ &amp; Olga Anagnost</td>
<td>Ron &amp; Connie Kelso</td>
<td>Elaine Rapanos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Thomas &amp; Angela Barris</td>
<td>Sameer &amp; Areen Khoury</td>
<td>Jason Rapanos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johnathan Bernhart</td>
<td>Elaine Kimmerly</td>
<td>George &amp; Fran Rouman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sophia Bernhart</td>
<td>James &amp; Mary Kokas</td>
<td>F.T. &amp; Beverly Siradakis</td>
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<td>Thomas &amp; Joan Billingsley</td>
<td>Thomas &amp; Anastasia Kokas</td>
<td>Andy &amp; Voula Skoutelas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. John &amp; Dr. Judy Blebea</td>
<td>Anthony &amp; Rula Koutras</td>
<td>Bill &amp; Linda Stavropoulos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeremy &amp; Taylor Blohm</td>
<td>Nick &amp; Lena Legakis</td>
<td>Elaine Tambouridis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark &amp; Anastasia Bristley</td>
<td>Elaine Rapanos</td>
<td>William &amp; Theospo Tarachas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Georgia Caris</td>
<td>Thomas &amp; Anastasia Kokas</td>
<td>George Triantafilloul &amp; Jean Farrington</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill &amp; Vonnie DeLong</td>
<td>Michael &amp; Eleni Morris</td>
<td>Art Tselepis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brady &amp; Sandy Duke</td>
<td>Tom &amp; Peggy Nemode</td>
<td>George &amp; Virginia Ulmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soula Economou</td>
<td>David &amp; Elan Nichols</td>
<td>John Veremis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill &amp; Alexia Evans</td>
<td>David Ortega</td>
<td>Theodore &amp; Georgia Veremis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corey &amp; Andrea Ferris</td>
<td>Dennis &amp; Soula Ostler</td>
<td>Kathleen &amp; James Zacharko</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kitty Gavalas</td>
<td>Eleftheria Paez</td>
<td>George &amp; Gladys Zubulake</td>
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<td>Kimberly &amp; Quincy Gowenlock</td>
<td>Marge Paron</td>
<td>Jim &amp; Esmini Zubulake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Betty Lou Gustafson</td>
<td>Dr. Nicholas &amp; Julie Paron</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evan &amp; Alexia Houpis</td>
<td>Tim Patishnock</td>
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**Children's Corner**

**Word Search**

Can you find these words in the jumble?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANGEL</th>
<th>ANNUNCIATION</th>
<th>CROSS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAITHFUL</td>
<td>FEASTDAY</td>
<td>FRIEND</td>
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<tr>
<td>GABRIEL</td>
<td>MARY</td>
<td>PLAN</td>
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<tr>
<td>VICTORY</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**What's in an Icon?**

Here is another icon of the Annunciation. It comes from Egypt.

Can you find the Theotokos?

Can you find the Archangel Gabriel?
Seventy Years of Memories

Metropolis of Detroit
Greek Orthodox Summer Camp
Register Campers and Staff at GOMDSC.ORG

Campers Entering Grade 12/First Year of College
Week 0 June 27 - July 3

Campers entering Grades 3-11
Week 1 July 4 - July 10
Week 2 July 11 - July 17
Week 3 July 18 - July 24
Week 4 July 25 - July 31
Week 5 August 1 - August 7

Ages 19-35
Young Adult September 3 - September 6

We are moving forward with hope and a mission to gather safely in Rose City for the 2021 camp season, but preparing a backup plan should our circumstances change.
ITEMS NEEDED FOR GREAT LENT / HOLY WEEK / PASCHA 2021

The following items are needed for the celebration of the special services for Great Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha. If you would like to donate one or more of these items, please sign up at the Pangari or call the Church Office. This will be on a first come first serve basis.

In the event that the item in which you are interested has already been donated, please consider either another item or a general donation toward this list. Thank you!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>COST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Icon for Sunday of Orthodoxy</td>
<td>21 March</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icon of St. Demetrios</td>
<td>21 March</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daffodils for 3rd Sunday of Lent</td>
<td>4 April</td>
<td>$75.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Palms for Palm Sunday</td>
<td>25 April</td>
<td>$175.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Icon of the Bridegroom</td>
<td>25 April</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icon of the Mystical Supper</td>
<td>29 April</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icon of the Crucifixion</td>
<td>29 April</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Candles for the Passion Service</td>
<td>29 April</td>
<td>$60.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icon of Pentecost</td>
<td>20 June</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are interested in helping Eleni Morris & Joni Porchia decorate the icons and the Church, please reach out either to one of them or to the Church Office. All helpers (including children, if accompanied by a parent) are welcome!

Thank you to everyone who supports and participates in our liturgical ministries during this holy season! Blessed Lent!

THE LENTEN PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

"O Lord and Master of my life, do not permit the spirit of laziness and meddling, the lust for power and idle talk to come into me.

Instead, grant me, Your servant, the spirit of prudence, humility, patience, and love.

Yes, Lord and King, give me the power to see my own faults and not to judge my brother. For You are blessed unto the ages of ages. Amen."