

THIRD SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST
VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



Icon of the Elevation of the Holy Cross

March 12, 2023: Third Sunday of the Great Fast		
Epistle: Heb. 4:14 - 5:6		Gospel: Mk. 8:34 - 9:1
Mon., March 13	9:00	+ Jacob, Ann & Karen Jablonski (Gloria Jablonski)
Tues., March 14	9:00	+ Anna Mae Krisanda (Vince & Joan Narcoonis)
Wed., March 15	6:00	Stations
Thurs., March 16	9:00	+ Emmett & Zenia Hooper (Family)
Fri. March 17	6:00	Presanctified Liturgy
Sat., March 18	No Morning Divine Liturgy	
	2:00	Confessions
	4:00	+ Elinore Chowanec (Family)
Sun., March 19	10:30	For Our Parishioners; Sorokousty

MEDITATION FOR THE THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

Daily we are bombarded with messages which reveal the steadfast rivalry between various political and social groups. Each contends that they are acting in the interests of all in society. Panels of media “experts” debate the merits of what people in power say and do. Yet, there is a reluctance to surrender to some common ground. Where is the gift of sacrifice in the interests of the other, the common good? St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Philippians, exhorts us to “do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but also everyone for those of others. Have

among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:3-5).

The veneration of the Holy Cross on the third Sunday of Great Fast reminds us of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross for you and for me. Jesus died voluntarily for our salvation. As you venerate the Holy Cross, resolve to live with greater humility. Let go of rigid attitudes and perceptions. Resolve to show greater understanding for the benefit of the common good. Participate in the special Lenten services, being a part of a community of faith. A Blessed Journey in Great Fast!

SPIRITUAL REGULATIONS FOR THE GREAT FAST

Although our Church traditionally prescribed abstention from meat and dairy products in days gone by for the entire duration of the Great Fast, the following are the minimal Lenten regulations today:

Abstinence from meat and all dairy products on the First Day of the Great Fast and on Good Friday.

Abstinence from meat only on all Fridays of the Great Fast as well as Holy Saturday. It is also traditional to abstain from meat on Wednesdays during the Great Fast.

Everyone should receive the Holy Mysteries of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist during the period from the onset of Great Fast to the Wednesday before Ascension Thursday.

The Fasting and Abstinence

regulations are not binding on persons 60 or older, the very poor, sick, nursing or pregnant women, children below the age of 14, and those who engage in physically very hard labor. However, all are urged, if able to do so, to observe the fasting and abstinence regulations.

All the faithful are urged to attend the Lenten services such as the Presanctified Liturgy, and the Commemoration of the Deceased (Sorokousty).

Such good deeds as almsgiving, visitation of the sick, Bible reading and praying for vocations to the priesthood and religious life are most earnestly recommended to all the Faithful. This year, families are especially urged to pray together in the mornings and evenings.

SOROKOUSTY/СОРОКОУСТИ

During Great Lent we are called to renew and strengthen our relationships with others (both living and dead) and with God. A special service during Great Lent is Sorokousty (Сорокоусти), when we remember those who have gone before us.

“Sorokousty” literally means “forty mouths,” referring to an ancient monastic practice of 40 monks or priests singing this commemoration of our departed brothers

and sisters.

Sorokousty is a beautiful way to remind us that our Christian family reaches beyond our present time and space to encompass generations past.

Families submit the names of their family members which are to be remembered during the Sorokousty. **The names mentioned during the Sorokousty are based on the submitted names and not on the Death Register of the Parish.**

THE REAL PEARL NECKLACE

Jenny was a bright-eyed, pretty five-year-old girl. One day when she and her mother were checking out at the grocery store, Jenny saw a plastic pearl necklace priced at \$2.50.

How she wanted that necklace, and when she asked her mother if she would buy it for her, her mother said, "Well, it is a pretty necklace, but it costs an awful lot of money. I'll tell you what. I'll buy you the necklace, and when we get home we can make up a list of chores that you can do to pay for the necklace. And don't forget that for your birthday Grandma just might give you a whole dollar bill, too. Okay?"

Jenny agreed, and her mother bought the pearl necklace for her. Jenny worked on her chores very hard every day, and sure enough, her grandma gave her a brand new dollar bill for her birthday. Soon Jenny had paid off the pearls.

How Jenny loved those pearls. She wore them everywhere-to kindergarten, bed and when she went out with her mother to run errands. The only time she didn't wear them was in the shower; her mother had told her that they would turn her neck green.

Now Jenny had a very loving daddy. When Jenny went to bed, he would get up from his favorite chair every night

and read Jenny her favorite story. One night when he finished the story, he said, "Jenny, do you love me?"

"Oh yes, Daddy, you know I love you," the little girl said.

"Well, then, give me your pearls."

"Oh! Daddy, not my pearls!" Jenny said. "But you can have Rosie, my favorite doll. Remember her? You gave her to me last year for my birthday. And you can have her tea party outfit, too. Okay?"

"Oh no, darling, that's okay." Her father brushed her cheek with a kiss. "Good night, little one." A week later, her father once again asked Jenny after her story, "Do you love me?"

"Oh yes, Daddy, you know I love you."

"Well, then, give me your pearls."

Oh, Daddy, not my pearls! But you can have Ribbons, my toy horse. Do you remember her? She's my favorite. Her hair is so soft, and you can play with it and braid it and everything. You can have Ribbons if you want her, Daddy," the little girl said to her father.

"No, that's okay," her father said and brushed her cheek again with a kiss. "God bless you, little one. Sweet dreams."

Several days later, when Jenny's father came in to read her a story, Jenny

was sitting on her bed and her lip was trembling.

“Here, Daddy,” she said, and held out her hand.

She opened it and her beloved pearl necklace was inside. She let it slip into her father’s hand. With one hand her father held the plastic pearls and with the other he pulled out of his pocket a blue velvet box. Inside of the box were real, genuine, beautiful pearls. He had them all along. He was waiting for Jenny to give

up the cheap stuff so he could give her the real thing.

The same with our Heavenly Father, He is waiting for us to give up the cheap/ fake things in our lives. Are you holding on to harmful relationships, habits, activities... which you have come so attached to that it seems impossible to let go? Sometimes it is so hard to see what is in the other hand but do believe one thing, God will never take away something without giving us something better

CLOTHING AND FOOD DRIVE: MARCH 11TH AND 12TH

In October 2022, we reinstituted the Clothing and Food drive as a Church Community Service Project. It was a fast turnaround due to the emergency need for clothes for the “United Neighborhood - Angels Attic”. Items were not accepted from any of our events (rummage sale) during the pandemic at many of the organizations.

The Project was initiated in November 2013. Once again we are conducting a Clothing and Food Drive for March 2023. Clothes will be accepted for men, women, and children, including accessories and shoes for all seasons. All items should be clean and wearable. This is not a dumping ground for old, and dirty clothing. Clothes can be kept on hangers, or put in bags or boxes.

All non-perishable food will be

accepted. If every parishioner brings at least 2 food items, we can fill the bread box at the “Restore and Rescue” Church on Willow Street, as Father Nestor suggested.

Items can be dropped off on Saturday, March 11th (3:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.) and Sunday, March 12th (10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.) before, or after the Divine Liturgy, at St. Cyril’s School Gym. Volunteers will accept the clothes/food. We thank you for your support and donations.

Volunteers will be needed to help transport the clothes to “The United Neighborhood” in Scranton. On Monday, March 13th at approximately 10:00 a.m. the clothes will be loaded into cars or trucks. Come and lend a helping hand on March 6, 2023. Contact Lauren Telep at 646-241-9443 for any questions.

CEMETERY GRAVE DECORATIONS

Our Cemetery Care-Takers are beginning to prepare our Cemetery in anticipation of the Spring season. They ask that all Christmas and artificial decorations be removed from the graves. These decorations can get

in the way of grass cutting, damage our equipment, or even result in an injury. Any left-over decorations can be retrieved by the Cemetery garage.

PUSSY-WILLOWS

Flowery (Palm) Sunday is just three weeks away! Once again this year, we turn to our Parishioners to help in procuring our pussy-willows. If you have any bushes,

please share them with us. You can either bring them in or arrangements can be made to have them picked up. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

FLOWER FUNDRAISER

We are sponsoring an Easter Flower Sale and Hanging Basket Flower Sale, partnering with Jerry's For All Seasons. Flower Flyer with ordering information are available in the Church Vestibule. Please take some to

help out by distributing them to friends and neighbors. Call Jule (570) 357-6171, Michaelene (570) 209-2026, or Mary Ann (570) 489-4648 with any questions.

ST. JOSEPH DAY BREAKFAST

The Women's Society of St. Joseph Melkite Catholic Church on N. St. Frances Cabrini Avenue, West Scranton, is sponsoring its annual St. Joseph Day Breakfast, Sunday, March 19, 2023. Eat In or Take Out. Our abundant meal includes Eggs, scratch pancakes, Home Fries, Olives, HoneyBaked Ham, Breads, juice & coffee. 9am-1pm.

Adults \$12.00 and children age 6-10 \$6.00. Take Out \$10/\$6 with no beverages. Our fragrant St. Joseph Bread available in two loaf packages for \$5 until sold out. Tickets at the door. For more information, rectory 570-343-6092, melkite.scranton@gmail.com, facebook or melkitescranton.org.

COLLECTION PROCESSING TEAM...

The Collection Processing Team for the month of March 2023 is Team #3: Marlene

Zelno, Dorothy Zinsky, and Cheryl Matuszewski.

Sunday Collection for March 4 & 5, 2023: \$



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Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

Taking Up the Cross

Whatever is commanded through evangelical precepts is undoubtedly related to the cross, as the Lord Himself proclaims: "Whoever will come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." To be sure, this cross is rightly called "holy to the Lord," because the world, which until then had been profaned, is blessed by it

Paint this sign of your life ... as if on your forehead; also imprint it no less on the threshold to your heart, so that when the avenging angel perceives this he will not delay to pass over without causing you injury. Let these phylacteries hang before your eyes without ceasing, let these marks brand your body on every side, just as the Apostle testified concerning himself: "I," he said, "bear

the marks of Jesus in my body."

Break the body with fasts, abstain from your own desires, submit yourself in very prompt devotion to the command of another's order, let the modest judgment of silence check the impudent remarks of an insolent tongue, let the charms of droll speech not break out, let the rigor of severe continence tear out the illicit motions of the carnal passions, so that for you who die now with Christ of your free will, the heavier His cross is observed to be in your ... life, the more fully the glory of his Resurrection will accrue to you.

St. Peter Damian

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