

SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE - FORGIVENESS SUNDAY



*Icon of the the Ladder of Divine Ascent*

# St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

A Parish of the Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese ([antiochian.org](http://antiochian.org)) ... and ...  
The Diocese of Charleston, Oakland & The Mid-Atlantic ([antiochian.org/east](http://antiochian.org/east))  
(*"...the Disciples were called Christians first in Antioch!" Acts 11:26*)



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Most Rev. Metropolitan SABA – Archbishop & Primate  
Right Rev. Bishop THOMAS – Auxiliary Bishop  
Very Rev. Fr. Donald E. Shadid, M.Div. & D.Min. – Archpriest & Pastor  
Sub-Deacon Timothy (Cade) Scott, MAT  
Edward Makdad, Jr. – Parish Council Chairperson

*"The World is Evil... Weep for your Sins... Have a Piece of Chocolate!"* (Advice from Staretz in Russia to Fr. T. Hopko+)

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+ THE SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS +  
(The Expulsion of Adam from Paradise & The Sunday of Cheese-Fare)

Sunday, March 17, 2024

*Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory be to Him Forever!*

Venerable ALEXIOS The 'Man of God' / PATRICK, Bishop of Armagh & Enlightener of Ireland

*March is "Antiochian Women Month!"*

*We welcome all of you, our Faithful and our Visitors, to St. Mary Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church! It is a pleasure to have you with us as we glorify and praise the Name of our God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Please sing along with our Choir during the Liturgy.*

*Please note, as has been the practice of the Church since the Feast of Pentecost, that the Sacrament of Holy Communion can only be given to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting, regular Confession (at least twice per year ... 7 Yrs. old & up), who attend Liturgy regularly & on time (at least 3 times a month) ... and ... are at peace with all people.*

*When receiving Holy Communion, please fold your arms over your chest, open your mouth wide, tip your head back slightly, and allow the priest to place the elements in your mouth.*

*For our non-Orthodox brethren, we welcome you to sing and pray with us, venerate the Cross, and receive the Blessed Holy Bread at the end of the Divine Liturgy. Please join us again soon. May God Bless You Always!*

**HOLY OBLATION:** Offered by: (1) Ed & Nancy Makdad for the health of all within *The Makdad Family*; (2) Kathy Azar McMillan in beloved memory of Stanley Azar ... and ... (3) Karen Joseph for the health of Aunt, Dolores (Joseph) Hawkins.

**PASCHAL CANDLES:** Offered: (1) in beloved memory of *Joshua Mack* by The Mack Family; (2) for the health of *Don McMillan* by his wife, Kathy ... and ... (3) *Jesse George* by his mother, Christine Asfar.

**PROSKAMEDIA CANDLE:** Offered for the health of: (1) *Maria* as she celebrates her Birthday (March 2) and her Feast Day (March 25); and *Ivan, Miranda, Paul, Grace, Fotia, Alexa, Andrea, Becky, Connie & Arianna* by The McClatchey Family ... and ... (2) *Elias Ghantous* as he celebrates his Birthday (March 16) by parents, Albert & Mary Jo, sister, Marissa & husband, Mike and wife, Rebecca.

**SEVEN-BRANCHED CANDLE:** Offered: (1) for the health of *Albert & Mary Jo Ghantous* by Children & their Families ... and ... (2) in beloved memory of parents & grandparents, *Edward (+33 Yrs.) & Julia (Audi) Mack (+26 Yrs.)* by Butch & Renee (Mack) D’Ettorre and Family.

**TRISAGION PRAYERS OF MERCY (Naha):** Offered in beloved memory of: (1) *His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP of Thrice-Blessed Memory & Eternal Repose (+03/19/2014)* by Fr. Don & the Faithful of our St. Mary Parish Family ... and ... (2) mother, grand & great-grandmother, *Elizabeth (Andrews) Spada* by Tony & Marianne Spada and Family and *Gene & Barbara (Spada) Skala* and Family. **“May Their Memory Be Ever Eternal!” and “Christ is Risen!”**

<b><i>For The Living – “God Grant Them Many Years!”...and... For The Departed – “May Their Memory Be Ever Eternal!”</i></b>
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**- VARIATIONS & NOTES ON THE LITURGY -**

**THIRD ANTIPHON:** (*Troparion During The Little Entrance – Tone Eight*)

See “Troparion of The Resurrection” Below.

**AFTER THE LITTLE ENTRANCE:**

**TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION:** (*Tone Eight*)

From the heights Thou didst descend, O Compassionate One, and Thou didst submit to the three-day burial, that Thou might deliver us from passion; Thou art our life and our resurrection: O Lord, glory to Thee!

**TROPARION OF THE DORMITION:** (*Patron Feast Day - Tone One*)

In thy birth-giving, O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling-asleep thou hast not forsaken the world for thou wast translated

into life, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore, by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

**KONTAKION OF FORGIVENESS / CHEESE FARE SUNDAY:** *(Tone Six)*

O Thou Who guidest to wisdom, and givest understanding and intelligence, the Instructor of the ignorant, and Helper of the poor, strengthen my heart and grant it understanding, O Master. Give me word, O Word of the Father; for behold, I shall not refrain my lips from crying to Thee, O merciful One, have mercy upon me who am fallen.

**EPISTLE:** Romans 13:11-14:4    **HOLY GOSPEL:** Matthew 6:14-21  
*(The Sunday of Forgiveness)*

Concerning the “Kiss of Peace,” prior to the Nicene Creed, we encourage you to greet those around you with a handshake, saying: **“Christ is in Our Midst!”** ... the response being: **He is And Always Shall Be!”** In this way, we express: (1) our Joy that God has acted to restore our Communion with Him ... **and ... (2) our Hope in the Resurrection of the Dead that is offered to us by our Lord’s own “trampling down death by death!”** **God is With Us (“Emmanuel”)!**

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**- THIS WEEK’S EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS -**

*Church Office: Tuesday – Friday ... 9 AM – 2 PM.*

**BEGINNING TOMORROW OUR FAST INCLUDES  
MEAT, FISH, DAIRY, WINE & OLIVE OIL**

**+ Sunday, March 17 – SUNDAY OF FORGIVENESS (CHEESE FARE) ... MATINS (ORTHROS) – 8:30 AM ... DIVINE LITURGY – 9:30 AM ... followed by a special Cheese-Fare Agape Fellowship (Coffee-Hour) ... think Cheesecake! ... followed by LENTEN VESPERS FOR THE BEGINNING OF GREAT LENT (PURE / CEAN MONDAY) & THE RITUAL OF FORGIVENESS.**

... and ...

**+ + + OUR 2024 SCHEDULE FOR “PURE / CLEAN WEEK” + + +  
(The First Week of Great Lent)**

**+ Monday, March 18 – GREAT COMPLINE WITH THE PENITENTIAL CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE (Part 1 of 3) – 6 PM ... Followed by BIBLE STUDY!**

**Please Note that during the Great Lent, our Weekly Bible Study will meet after our Great Compline Prayers on the following Mondays ...  
March 25 and April 01, 08, 15 & 22.**

**+ Tuesday, March 19 – GREAT COMPLINE with THE PENITENTIAL CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE (Part 2 of 3) – 6 PM.**

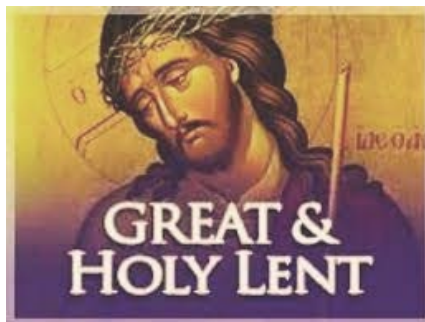
**+ Wednesday, March 20** – NINTH HOUR & TYPIKA – 5:15 PM ... Followed by the PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY – 6 PM – Please abstain from food & drink from your Noon Meal onward if you will be partaking of the Holy Eucharist at this Vespers Liturgy ... also, please note that since our Parish Organizations consist of many of the same parishioners, all within our Parish Family are asked to help with the set-up & clean-up of the Lenten Suppers ... if you can bring a non-meat and/or non-dairy Casserole / Dish / Lenten Dessert, please do so ... and ... everyone, please join us after the Service as we break our fast together.

**+ Thursday, March 21** – GREAT COMPLINE with THE PENITENTIAL CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE (Part 3 of 3) – 6 PM.

**+ Friday, March 22** – LITTLE COMPLINE WITH THE AKATHIST HYMN (Madayeh Service) – Stasis 1 – 6 PM.

**+ Saturday, March 23** – GREAT VESPERS – 5 PM.

**+ Sunday, March 24** – FIRST SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT – SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY – MATINS @ 8:30 AM & DIVINE LITURGY with The Procession of The Holy Icons @ 9:30 AM ... .. and ... SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY PAN-ORTHODOX GATHERING with LENTEN VESPERS & FELLOWSHIP at St John The Baptist Orthodox Church (427 1<sup>st</sup> Street – Conemaugh, PA) – 4 PM.



**THOSE IN SPECIAL NEED OF OUR PRAYERS:** AMBER HILLS @ CAMBRIA CARE CENTER (Ebensburg, PA): *Mary Ann Unis-Asfar (#606); LAURELVIEW VILLAGE:* *George Zdravecky (Health Care #302) & Rhoda (Nasser) Zdravecky (Vista – 913); HILLTOP HEIGHTS CARE CENTER (formerly "Laurelwood Care Ctr.): *Suzanne George (#37-W) & George Haidar (#30); HERITAGE RIDGE SENIOR LIVING (formerly "Lutheran Home"): *Elaine Heider (#34); QUALITY LIFE SERVICES – WESTMONT WOODS (formerly "Presbyterian Home"): *Emma (Nasser) Audey (#115-W) ... and ... IN TREATMENT, RECOVERING AND / OR "SHUT-IN AT HOME":* *Becky Azar; Larry Bertino; Carolyn Clark; Renee D'Ettore; Patty Devich; Joanne George; John & Dalal George; Olga Hodge; Denise Khorey-Harriman; Matthew Makdad; Huda Martin, Donald McMillan; Anna Marie (Abraham) Rovansek and Sara Shahade. **May God Be With All of Them & All of Those Who Are Ill and/or in Need!******



## LENT BEGINS TOMORROW ... ARE YOU GETTING READY?

Our Journey through Great Lent, which will then culminate in the celebration of Holy Week & Pascha, will begin tomorrow, Monday, March 18, 2024. Are you getting ready (e.g. – putting the beautiful Lenten Services on your schedule, cleaning out the Fridge to start your Fasting, planning on when you will celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Confession, etc.)!?! If you would like to learn how to prepare or need a few hints, please watch the Weekly Bulletin closely and/or talk with Fr. Don. You can also find some great help & resources on “[antiochian.org](http://antiochian.org)!” This is our opportunity to obey our Lord’s command ... “be still and know that I am God” ([Psalm](#) 45:11) ... all so that we can truly walk with our Lord to His Cross and thus, share in His Holy Resurrection! God Be With You & Your Loved Ones!

Please Note: according to the Tradition of our Holy Orthodox Church, we are called during the Great Lent to place special emphasis on the Spiritual Disciplines of Prayer, Fasting & Almsgiving.

Thus, last week we began our Fasting from Meat & Poultry; and tomorrow, Monday, March 18 (Pure Monday – First Day of Lent), we begin to Fast from all Dairy Products, Fish, Wine & Olive Oil.

Let us also avail ourselves of the opportunities during these next few weeks for extra prayer, Liturgically in Church and from within the Closet of our Hearts; and for the sharing of our Alms, our Mercies, with our Neighbor, anyone who is in need.



March is “Antiochian Women Month” throughout our Archdiocese. During this time, we highlight the ministries of our “Antiochian Orthodox Christian Women of North America” (AOCWNA), as well as the activity of our own Ladies in our St. Mary Parish Family.

On a regional & national scale, our Ladies have helped with many worthwhile ministries of our Archdiocese, such as the Antiochian Village, our Seminarians, Continuing Pastoral Education, St. George Hospital of Beirut, Lebanon, Orphanages, Strengthening The Ministries of our Church and now their current project of **“Establish an Endowment Fund For Our Beloved Widowed Clergy-Wives.”** Here in our Parish, our Ladies have always been a vibrant force ... always seeking to glorify God through their ministry of prayer, caring, liturgical life, fund-raising, etc..

As we celebrate the ministry of our Antiochian Women throughout our Archdiocese, let us thank God for their gifts that they so generously share in our Lord’s Vineyard. ***May God Grant Them All Many Years!***

Today, we welcome the women of our St. Mary Parish Family to assist us during our Liturgical Worship ... Epistle Reading, Communion Cloth, Holy Bread & Agape Fellowship after our Divine Liturgy. The Handmaidens of God who have participated thus far: *Kh. Janet Shadid, Susan Joseph, Nitsa McClatchey, Pam Keklak, Kathy McMillan, Sandy Milkie, Lisa Catanese, Pam Krinock, Laura Slifko, Lindsay & Farah Fennel, and possibly a few others ... if you have assisted & are not listed here, please inform Fr. Don of this. Thank You & God Bless You & Your Families!*

# *Epistle*

(For Sunday of Forgiveness)

*Make your vows unto the Lord and perform them.  
God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel.*

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. (13:11-14:4)

Brethren, now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly, as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in chambering and licentiousness, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill its lusts. But as for the one who is weak in faith, receive him, but not for disputes over opinions. For one believes he may eat anything; but the weak person eats herbs. 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 be the judge over the servant of a stranger? To his own master he either stands or falls; but he will be made to stand; for God is able to make him stand.

# *Gospel*

(For Sunday of Forgiveness)

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (6:14-21)

The Lord said to His Disciples: If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father Who is in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret will reward you. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

*May God Be With You!*

**+++ CONFSSION SCHEDULE +++**

By Appointment ... Please Call or Text Fr. Don @ 814-242-0084.

Due to Fr.'s Commitment to Matins, Confession Will Not Be Offered On Sun. Mornings.



# *Saint of the Day – March 17, 2024*

## **SAINT ALEXIS THE MAN OF GOD**

Varied are the paths upon which God leads those who desire to please Him and fulfill His Law. There lived in Rome at the time of Emperor Honorius a high-ranking dignitary, Euphemianus, who was highly respected and extremely wealthy. He and his wife, Aglaida, led a God-pleasing life. Even though he was wealthy, Euphemianus sat at the table once a day, after the setting of the sun. He had an only son, Alexis, who was compelled to marry when he became an adult. But, on the night of the wedding, Alexis left not only his wife but also the home of his father. He boarded a boat and arrived at the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia, where there was the wondrous image of our Lord, sent there by our Lord Himself to King Abgar. Having venerated this image, Alexis clothed himself in the garb of a beggar. As such, he lived in the city for seventeen years, continually praying to God in the vestibule of the Church of the Theotokos. When it became known that he was a holy man, he became frightened of the praise of men, departed Edessa, boarded a boat, and traveled to Laodicea. According to God's providence, the boat was carried off-course and sailed all the way to Rome. Considering this to be the hand of God, Alexis decided to go to the house of his father and there, unknown, continue his life of self-denial. His father did not recognize him but out of charity allowed him to live in his courtyard in a hut. Alexis remained there for seventeen years, living only on bread and water. Mistreated by the servants in various ways, he endured everything to the end. When his end approached, he wrote a letter, clenched it in his hand, and then lay down and died, on March 17, 411 A.D. At the same time there was a revelation in the Church of the Twelve Apostles. In the presence of the emperor and the patriarch a voice was heard which said: "Seek out the Man of God." Shortly after that, it was revealed that this "Man of God" resided at the house of Euphemianus. The emperor along with the pope and an entire retinue arrived at the home of Euphemianus, and after a lengthy discussion they learned that the beggar was that "Man of God." When they entered his hut, they found Alexis dead, but his face shown like the sun. From the letter his parents learned that he was their son Alexis. And his bride, who for thirty-four years had lived without him, learned that he was her husband. All were overcome with immense grief and pain. Later they were comforted, seeing how God glorified His chosen one. By touching his body, many of the sick were healed, and from his body flowed a sweet-smelling oil [Chrism]. His body was entombed in a coffin of marble and jasper. His head is preserved in the Church of St. Laurus in the Peloponnese.

*To God be the Glory and Praise Always!*

### **101 THINGS GOD CAN'T DO**

*What You Must Know to Win . . . by Maisie Sparks (03/17)*

35. God can't be beaten at giving.

*"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down and shaken together, and running over ." (LUKE 6:38)*

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\*\*\* **2024 CONFESSION SCHEDULE FOR GREAT LENT** \*\*\*

**Monday: 5:00 PM - 5:45 PM**

**Tuesday & Thursday: By Appointment**

**Friday: 5:00 PM - 5:45 PM**

**Saturday: 4:00 PM - 4:45 PM if Great Vespers Scheduled**

**Please Note: No Confessions on Wednesdays.**

**If you are not able to come for Confession during the times listed above, please call Fr. Don at 814-242-0084 and he will set up an appointment for you. Also, if you come for Confession right before a Divine Service, please join us for our corporate prayer if you are able. Thank You.**

**Due To Fr.'s Commitment to Matins,  
Confession Will Not Be Offered on Sunday Mornings.**

**Note: All Parishioners Are Asked To Have Their Confessions Heard by Lazarus Saturday, April 27, 2024 ... (Exception ... Those Out of Town).**

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***Readiness to Forgive***

Nothing makes us so like God as our readiness to forgive the wicked and wrong-doer. For it is God who has made "the sun to shine on the evil and on the good."

For this same reason again in every one of the clauses Jesus commands us to make our prayers together in one voice, saying, "Our Father," and "thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," and "give us the bread, and forgive us our debts," and "lead us not into temptation," and "deliver us." So everywhere he is teaching us to use this plural word that we may not retain so much as a vestige of resentment against our neighbor.

How great a reproof then must they de-

serve, who, after all this, still do not forgive and even ask God's vengeance on their enemies. In doing so, they diametrically transgress this command. Meanwhile Christ is seeking in every way possible to hinder our conflicts with one another. For since love is the root of all that is good, by removing from all quarters whatever mars it he brings us together and cements us to each other. For there is not one, not a single one, whether father or mother or friend, who loves us as much as the God who created us.

*St. John Chrysostom*

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