

BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MARYLAND



SAINT GREGORY OF NYSSA

Byzantine Catholic Church - Washington community

12420 Old Gunpowder Road Spur, Beltsville, MD 20705

www.stgregoryofnyssa.net / Facebook: stgregorybyzath

Services live-streamed on Facebook

Pastor: Reverend Serhii Deiak

Email: frsergij@stgregoryofnyssa.net

Fr. Serhii Cell: (240) 644-2661 / Office: (301) 953-9323

Deacon: Deacon William (Bill) Szewczyk

Email: deacon@stgregoryofnyssa.net

PATRONAGE OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

Byzantine Catholic Church – Baltimore community

1260 Stevens Avenue, Arbutus, MD 21227

www.patronagechurch.com / Facebook: Patronagechurch

Email: patronage.church@gmail.com / Office: (410) 247-4936

Pastor: Reverend Serhii Deiak

Email: frserhiipatronagechurch@gmail.com / Fr. Serhii Cell: (240) 644-2661

PATRONAGE MISSIONARY CHURCH IN HAGERSTOWN

St. Ann Catholic Church

1525 Oak Hill Ave., Hagerstown, MD 21742

Pastor: Reverend Serhii Deiak

Contact: Adam and Lauren Myers:

(301) 791-0930 / axxearp@yahoo.com

Next Liturgy: Saturday

March 4th, at 10am

CONFESSION: Fr. Serhii is available 20 minutes before or immediately after Divine Liturgy.

Let Us Remember in Prayer: The people of Ukraine, that peace may be soon restored to their land.

Those who are ill or convalescing: Thomas Petrick, Father Joseph Borodach, Rosemarie Pipta, Laverne Hametz, Michael and Carol Slovinsky, James DeWolfe, Howard Guba, Lector Joseph and Marie Repasi, John Sekura, Madeline Bender, Richard Cooley, Christine Szewczyk, Kathleen Lynch, Ken Demianchik, Michael Fitzgibbon, Suzanne Krofchik, Mary Jo Kelly Wilhelm, Robert P. Pipta, Christine Pipta Svitana, Ann Dardzinski, Doreen Dardzinski, David Chekan, Anna Rae Brabston, Keith Hay, Walter Krofchik, Sylvia Rusnock, Nickolette Dobrovoczky, Irene Simi, John Cahill, Clara Valeika, Caroline Belensky, Nancy Erdek, Kay Dinko, Doris Ruszin, Anne Gupman, Anna Martin, Marge Dulina, Georgianna Kostak, Betty Rankin, Sandra Suseck. May our Lord Jesus Christ, the Physician and Healer of souls and bodies, grant them peace and good health for many blessed years.

St. Gregory Church:

Stewardship: (Donate at <https://tithe.ly/give?c=2442387>) Feb. 12

Offertory: \$928.00

Tithe.ly: \$364.30

ECL: \$12.00

All Souls: \$10.00

Patronage Church:

Stewardship: (Donate at <https://tithe.ly/give?c=2346733>) Feb. 12

Stewardship figures will appear in next week's bulletin

Hagerstown Mission:

Stewardship:

Stewardship figures will appear in next week's bulletin

Lector Signup: A signup sheet for lectors for Sunday's Divine Liturgies is on the table in the back of the hall. Please consider signing up for this important service. If you have never chanted the Epistle, the cantors will be happy to work with you to make you feel comfortable.

Welcome to Our Parish: We welcome all new visitors to our parish family, and are happy you are joining us to share in the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. If you would like to be added to our parish email list, send an email to us at frsergij@stgregoryofnyssa.net or frserhiipatronagechurch@gmail.com. *My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.* (Isaiah 56:7)

Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic Fasting Regulations for the Great Fast 2023

Abstinence:

- The law of Abstinence forbids the use of meat, permitting the use of eggs and dairy products.
- All the faithful of the Eparchy who receive Holy Communion are obliged to abstain.
- Abstinence is to be observed on all Wednesdays and Fridays during the Holy Season of the Great Fast.

Strict Abstinence:

- The law of Strict Abstinence (Fast) forbids the use of meat, eggs, and dairy products.
- All the adult faithful of the Eparchy who receive Holy Communion are obliged to observe Strict Abstinence.
- Strict Abstinence is to be observed on the First Day of the Great Fast, Pure Monday, February 20 and on Great and Holy Friday, April 7.

Ancestral Fall. The way back to paradise is by crying out to the New Adam, Our Savior, for His merciful loving-kindness. The world suffers from the sickness of sin and death and the Church offers the cure, the path to healing through the medicine of repentance from the Divine Physician, Jesus Christ.

Second, we learn from the theme of forgiveness for this Sunday that the path of forgiveness is not just something we need to follow generally as part of fallen humanity. This is the path that we also need to undertake personally for the sins that we have committed, repenting personally for each of them and asking God to forgive us. One of the best expressions of this personal act of repentance is that of King David, the author of the Psalter, in Psalm 50. This particular Psalm should be familiar to us and should be prayed daily, for instance, in Daily Matins.

Although you do not hear it, it is also prayed quietly by the deacon or priest as he incenses the Holy Table and the Sanctuary in the Divine Liturgy. Psalm 50 is the prayer King David offered to God after being confronted by the Prophet Nathan over his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and the subsequent murder of his loyal subject, her husband, Uriah the Hittite, to cover up David's wrongdoing.

So for us, these inspired words of the repentant Prophet which we offer today help us to focus on this theme of forgiveness not just for the sin of humanity but for our own particular sin.

Third and finally, as alluded to in the Gospel, the prayer taught by the Lord Jesus to His disciples that has been prayed by all Christians, everywhere for 2000 years and which we will offer here in the Divine Liturgy as we do in every liturgical service contains the central message of forgiveness. "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." In other words, according to the Christian Gospel, for forgiveness to be received from God it must be extended...cruciformly, you might say, to those around us.

On this particular day, for instance, traditionally at Forgiveness Vespers, we ask for and extend forgiveness to one another under the shadow of the Cross of Christ. This is known as the Ceremony of Mutual Forgiveness. This ancient rite of the exchange of mutual forgiveness most certainly fulfills the prayer of the Our Father – asking God to forgive us as we forgive others! But the Lord Jesus, the King of Glory, while hanging from the life-giving Tree of the Cross, took things even one step further: While on the Cross He said: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Jesus Christ made in that very moment an act of what is called "representative repentance," or repenting to God on behalf of others. Not only did He forgive others for the wrongs they did Him, He repented on their behalf and asked His Heavenly Father to forgive them as well! Here Jesus Christ hung on the cross between heaven and earth, with His arms extended wide marked by the nails in His hands, offering a prayer of priestly intercession for His knowing or unknowing persecutors, asking His Heavenly Father to forgive the wrongdoing of others.

Jesus is the true embodiment of the prayer He had just taught recently His disciples, forgiving those who trespass against us even to the point of asking God to forgive them!

Schedule of Divine Services:
SAINT GREGORY CHURCH

SUNDAY, Feb. 19, 2023

Cheesefare Sunday

The Holy Apostle Archippus

11:00 AM *Hymns from Matins*

11:15 AM *Divine Liturgy in memory of +Bibish Carole, +Hugh, +Vivian as requested by Francisca Nzounkekang*

WEDNESDAY, Feb. 22, 2023

Finding of the Venerable Relics of the Martyrs at Eugenia

6:00 PM *Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts*

SUNDAY, Feb. 26, 2023

First Sunday of the Great Fast

Sunday of Orthodoxy

Memory of the Holy Prophets

Our Holy Father Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza.

The Holy Great Martyr, Photina the Samaritan

8:45 AM *Hymns from Matins*

9:00 AM *Divine Liturgy in memory of +Anna Wroblewski and her family*

PATRONAGE CHURCH

SUNDAY, Feb. 19, 2023

Cheesefare Sunday

The Holy Apostle Archippus

8:45 AM *Hymns from Matins*

9:00 AM *Divine Liturgy in memory of +Zach Kennedy as requested by Lisa and Rich Guba*

FRIDAY, Feb. 24, 2023

Our Holy Father Tarasius, Archbishop of Constantinople

6:30 PM *Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts*

SUNDAY, Feb. 26, 2023

First Sunday of the Great Fast

Sunday of Orthodoxy

Memory of the Holy Prophets

Our Holy Father Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza.

The Holy Great Martyr, Photina the Samaritan

11:00 AM *Hymns from Matins*

11:15 AM *Divine Liturgy in memory of +John Onufrak as requested by Viktor Haburchak*

Propers for today: Tone 4, page 141; Cheesefare Sunday, page 218
Romans 13:116-14:4; Gospel, Matthew 6:14-21

Cheesefare Sunday: The Great Fast begins tonight at sunset. The first week of the Fast is known as *Clean Week*, as this is the time we put aside the distractions of the world to prepare for Pascha. Monday of Clean Week, February 20, is a day of Strict Fast.

Tax Statements: Those that wish to receive a charitable tax statement for the year 2022, please let us know by sending an email to either patronage.church@gmail.com or frsergij@stgregoryofnyssa.net, and add to the subject line, "Tax Statement."

The Bishop's Appeal began October 25, 2022.

- The goal for Patronage of the Mother of God Parish is again \$9,800.00. \$3,240.00 in donations have been credited to Patronage. When we meet our goal, the parish will receive 40% rebate.
- The goal for St. Gregory Parish is again \$5,400.00. \$8,750.00 in donations have been credited to St. Gregory. Many thanks to all the parishioners of St. Gregory for the generous support of our diocese! During the summer, our bishop's office will return 40% of your donations to our community.

Patronage Church Pot Luck: Please join us after Liturgy on Sunday, February 26th, for a pot-luck luncheon and to watch the first of a series of videos on the Apocrypha in Scriptures. After the video, we will be discussing our upcoming parish festival, repair ideas for our social hall kitchen and bathrooms, and those interested in joining our parish and financial council. Please bring a dish and any proposals or ideas you may have to share.

St. Gregory Pot Luck: Our next pot luck lunch will be today, Cheesefare Sunday, February 19. John Cahill will also have the first of a series of videos on the Apocrypha in Scriptures. A signup sheet will be in the hall. Please join us. After the video, we invite everyone to join our Parish and Finance Council for 2023.

Sacraments of Initiation: Patronage Church congratulates Alexandra Claire Ross who received the Sacraments of Baptism, Chrismation, and Eucharist on Saturday, February 18th. Kevin and Laura Ross are her proud parents along with her brother, Calvin and sister, Penelope. May God grant Alexandra and her family peace, health, and happiness for many Blessed years! *Mnohaja Pita!*

Patronage Church: We have updated our Liturgy intention book and forms for your use. We also have more Liturgical calendars for 2023. Both are available on the book rack in the Narthex. Please help yourself.

Patronage Church: We are in need of a volunteer to deliver 2 bags of donated food to a local food bank. If you are available to do this, please let Fr. Serhii know. Many thanks!

Homily for Sunday of Cheesefare – Sunday of Forgiveness

In today's Gospel for Cheesefare Sunday, we hear some of the most disturbing and unsettling words of the Lord Jesus written in the New Testament. Coming right after He teaches His disciples how to pray using what we know as the prayer of the Our Father, as if like a Good Teacher He wants to emphasize one of the most important points of the lesson, He offers this commentary: "For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Now He then goes on to talk about the importance of fasting, keeping our faces washed and clean as we enter into the Fast, so as not to receive praise from others for our fasting but only praise from our heavenly Father who rewards us in secret. He also talks about us laying up not earthly treasures, but heavenly treasures – the treasures of grace and good works that are everlasting. All very important messages! And perhaps we might wish that He had skipped over those verses on the necessity of forgiving others and focused on these points!

But alas for us today, this is not just called Cheesefare Sunday, but also the Sunday of Forgiveness, and so the central theme of seeking forgiveness for ourselves from God and neighbor and forgiving others is front and center. The central message of Forgiveness is important for us going into the Great Fast, and we see this theme highlighted today in three key ways.

First, in our Cheesefare Matins Service, we hear many beautiful and poetic prayers of repentance and lamentation from the lips of Adam who is depicted as standing outside the newly closed Cherubic Gate giving access to the beautiful garden of Eden and the Tree of Life. He also speaks of his nakedness and how now - instead of the bodily nudity and purity of his soul, he faces the brutal nakedness and rejection in soul and body outside of the Garden. Adam is depicted as calling out to Christ the New Adam as Savior to call him back to Paradise to receive forgiveness and the garment of light again:

We learn through these prayers offered today on Cheesefare Sunday that we like Adam are outside of paradise because of our transgressions – we have lost the garment of light given to us in our Holy Baptism, and need to repent for our sins, lament our terrible state, and turn to God for mercy and forgiveness. Only then can we have access to the paradise of the presence of God and to the fruit of the Tree of Life, the Holy Eucharist. This forgiveness is more than just simply a pardon, it is a restoration, a rebuilding of our life around God and His grace, not just for ourselves, but for the sake of our loved ones and the world.

The lamentation and repentance of Adam is not simply an image of ourselves in exile from paradise, but the image of the whole of humanity which is suffering from the effects of the