



San Antonio Byzantine Catholic Community

Meeting at St. Alphonsus Catholic Church
1202 S. Zarzamora St., San Antonio, TX

February 26, 2017

Cheese Fare Sunday

Please join us for hospitality in the classroom in the rear of the church after Divine Liturgy.

Welcome guests. Please sign the guest book in the back of the church. If you would like to be added to our mailing list leave your email address. Please stay and visit after Liturgy. Visit www.stanastasiasa.org. Also please leave your email in the guest book so you can be added to the mailing list.

**REMEMBER LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS
FRIDAY AT 7:00 PM IN THE CHURCH**

Deacon Jeff let us know that the Austin Byzantine Catholic community will be having Divine Liturgy for Cheesefare Sunday, followed by a social, this Sunday at 5 PM? Services will be in the chapel of St. Michael's Catholic Academy, 3000 Barton Creek Road, Austin TX 78735, and we will have Forgiveness Vespers at 7 PM. In the future Liturgy will be served at the same location at 5:00 pm on Sundays.

If you get a chance you might want to stop by and see how our community garden is coming along. It is next to the Church Hall over on Calavaras Street.

The members of St. Alphonsus Church had a very successful parish meeting this week. They are embarking on a project to build a new office/classroom/hall building in the next year or so. Please keep them in your prayers and contribute in any way you can to help them succeed in this project.

Often there are questions about fasting regulations in the Byzantine Catholic Church. The normal fasting time before communion is the same as in the Roman Catholic Church, one hour before receiving communion. A good source for answers to fasting questions and a lot of other things is Byzantine 101 http://www.eparchyofphoenix.org/education_of_the_faithful.html

We always need help. If you are interested in being a reader or altar server or singing in the choir please see Fr. Ramon.

Please put the books on the table by the entrance door. Drop you donation in the basket on the counter.

2-19-17

Attendance 29
Collection \$460

Expenditures for the last two weeks

2-26-17	Dominican Priory	Fr. Ramon, 2-2,5,12,19,26	\$500
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Readings for Cheese-Fare Week

2/27	Isaiah 1:1-20	Genesis 1:1-13	Proverbs 1:1-20
2/28	Isaiah 1:19-2:4	Genesis 1:14-23	Proverbs 1:20-33
3/1	Isaiah 2:3-11	Genesis 1:24-2:3	Proverbs 2:1-22
3/2	Isaiah 2:11-21	Genesis 2:4-19	Proverbs 3:1-18
3/3	Isaiah 3:1-15	Genesis 2:20-3:20	Proverbs 3:19-34
3/4		Hebrews 1:1-12	Mark 2:23-3:5

In the Great Lent in humility and repentance, we can attain deeper communion with God as we receive His forgiveness and He blesses by guiding us to greater spiritual heights.

Remember you are all welcome to stop by the church hall for breakfast after the 11:00 mass

Sunday of Forgiveness



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.

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.

<http://lent.goarch.org/forgiveness/learn/>