

:: Fr. Alexander Schmemmann on the Last Judgment ::

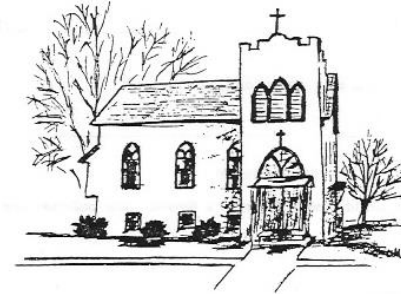
*An excerpt from **Great Lent**, chapter 2: Preparation for Lent*

It is *love* again that constitutes the theme of "*Meat-Fare Sunday*." The Gospel lesson for the day is Christ's parable of the Last Judgement (Matt. 25:31-46). When Christ comes to judge us, what will be the criterion of His judgement? The parable answers: *love*-- not a mere humanitarian concern for abstract justice and the anonymous "poor," but concrete and personal love for the human person, any human person, that God makes me encounter in my life....

Christian love is the "possible impossibility" to see Christ in another man, whoever he 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. For, indeed, what is love if not that mysterious power which transcends the accidental and the external in the "other"-- his physical appearance, social rank, ethnic origin, intellectual capacity-- and reaches the *soul*, the unique and uniquely personal "root" of a human being, truly the part of God in him? If God loves every man it is because He alone knows the priceless and absolutely unique treasure, the "soul" or "person" He gave every man. Christian love then is the participation in that divine knowledge and the gift of that divine love. There is no "impersonal" love because love *is* the wonderful discovery of the "person" in "man," of the personal and unique in the common and general. It is the discovery in each man of that which is "lovable" in him, of that which is from God. ...

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 men 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 men 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. For "inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, you have done it unto Me..."

Do you have an announcement for our bulletin? Please call or email Fr. Andrew no later than Friday each week for anything to be included in Sunday's bulletin.



**St. George Orthodox Church
of Spring Valley**

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Sunday, March 6, 2016

Sunday of the Last Judgment and Meat-Fare

Matins: 9:00 AM :: Divine Liturgy: 10:00 AM

Epistle Reader: Georgia Kapetaneas

Holy Bread/Coffee Hour: The Ladies of St. George

Memorial Prayers for Michael Favia

Next Sunday's Coffee Hour: Ron and Dottie Malooley

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 7): Thou didst shatter death by Thy Cross, Thou didst open paradise to the thief; Thou didst turn the sadness of the ointment-bearing women into joy. And didst bid Thine Apostles proclaim a warning, that Thou hast risen O Christ, granting to the world the great mercy.

Troparion of St. George the Great Martyr (Tone 4): Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and succour of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among martyrs, the victory-clad George: Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

Kontakion for the Last Judgment (Tone 1): When Thou comest, O God, to earth with glory, and all creatures tremble before Thee, and the river of fire floweth before the Altar, and the books are opened and sins revealed, deliver me then from that unquenchable fire, and make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand, O righteous Judge.

St. George is a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
The Most Reverend Metropolitan JOSEPH
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY, Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest
www.antiochian.org

THE EPISTLE

For Sunday of the Last Judgment

The Lord is my strength and my song; with chastisement has the Lord chastened me.

The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (8:8-9:2)

Brethren, food will not bring us closer to God; for neither if we eat, are we the better, nor if we do not eat, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this authority of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you, as someone who has knowledge, reclining at a table in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of the one who is weak be emboldened to eat of the things sacrificed to idols and through your knowledge the weak brother perishes, for whom Christ died? And thus, sinning against the brethren, and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food causes my brother to stumble, I will not eat meat forever, lest I cause my brother to stumble. Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, yet at least I am to you; for the seal of my apostleship are you in the Lord.

THE GOSPEL

For Sunday of the Last Judgment

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (25:31-46)

The Lord said, "When the Son of man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. Before Him will be gathered all the nations, and He will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and He will place the sheep at His right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at His right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed Me, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you visited Me, I was in prison and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see Thee hungry and feed Thee, or thirsty and give Thee drink? And when did we see Thee a stranger and welcome Thee, or naked and clothe Thee? And when did we see Thee sick or in prison and visit Thee?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Then He will say to those at his left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave Me no food, I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome Me, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see Thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to Thee?' Then He will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to Me.' And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and services at St. George, see our website, www.stgeorgeorthodox.org.

This week's events and services:

- **Today:** Children's Sunday school downstairs, immediately after Holy Communion.
- **This Saturday, March 12: Spring Gathering in Palos Heights with Bishop Anthony!** Please see the flier on the back table for more details. A group of us will be leaving early Saturday morning and returning Saturday evening. See Fr. Andrew or Ron Malooley for more information.
- NO VESPERS this Saturday.
- **Next Sunday, March 13: Forgiveness Sunday and Cheese-Fare.** Matins, 9am and Divine Liturgy, 10am. Holy Bread and Coffee Hour:

Looking ahead:

- **Friday, March 18: First Akathist Service to the Theotokos.** Fr. Robert Spillman and our friends from Nativity of our Lord Catholic Church will be with us this evening.
- **Sunday, April 24:** Palm Sunday
- **Sunday, May 1:** Holy Pascha

From Fr. Andrew and Kh. Patty: Many thanks to all of you for your generosity at the birth of our baby Joseph! Mom and baby are planning to return to church today for their churching ceremony.

Lenten Fasting: TODAY is Meat-Fare Sunday, which means the meat fast begins tomorrow! As we are able, we abstain from eating all meat until Pascha, May 1. NEXT SUNDAY is Cheese-Fare, the traditional last day to eat dairy products. Please see Fr. Andrew if you have any questions.

Lenten Confessions: Now that the season of Lenten Triodion has begun, this would be a good time to meet with Father for the sacrament of Confession. I will be available before and after evening services, and after Sunday Liturgy. I recommend Confession at least four times a year, and as a bare minimum, once during Lent. (And of course if you'd prefer to go to another priest, that is perfectly fine. Just let me know!)

February Financial Report

Operating Income: \$ 2071.00
Operating Expense: \$ 5323.36
Bank Balance: \$ 7016.03

*Please continue your faithful tithes and offerings to our church!
Any questions, please see our treasurer, Anysia Medamar.*