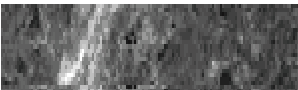




ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Message from Father Nick



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An American tourist had just seen the famous Passion Play at Oberammergan. Approaching Mr. Lang, the actor who played the part of Christ, he asked, "May I be photographed with you, lifting your cross?" "You may," said Mr. Lang. The tourist stooped to lift the cross, but he couldn't. He exerted more energy, but still could not lift it. Looking at the actor, he said, "Your cross is **very** heavy!" Mr. Lang replied, "Sir, I cannot represent Christ with a light cross!"

On the third Sunday of Lent, the Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross, March 7th, we will carry a cross on a tray of flowers around the church, and we will be invited to venerate the cross that reminds us of the cross of Golgatha on which Jesus our Savior died for the sins of the world.

In the Gospel of the day, which will be taken from the 8th chapter of Mark, Jesus says: "If any man would come after me, let him change himself and take up his cross and follow me."

The Gospel lesson is very appropriate with the feast day which is the Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross. The Gospel tells us that we who wish to follow Christ today must pick up our cross, deny ourselves and follow Him. But what does that mean? What does it mean to deny yourself and pick up your cross?

All of us, who call St. Michael our spiritual home, are baptized Christians and hopefully we are here because we love God and because we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior. But how many of us take our Christian commit-

ment seriously? So many of us have our own little private interpretation of religion.

Some of us come to church because our parents went to church, but down deep in our hearts we don't really know why we are here.

Some of us come to church because it is a good place to meet our friends. We enjoy the church mainly as a place for social contact.

Some of us come to church to hear the music and enjoy the beautiful ceremonies and rituals, as if they were enough to make us good Christians. But Jesus said, "To be my followers these things are not enough. If you want to live the Christian life, you must stop paying so much attention to yourself. You must pick up your cross, your real responsibilities and duties as a Christian in this world and follow me."

So, what is Christ telling us today? To be truly Orthodox Christians, Christ must become the center of our life. And our duties and responsibilities toward Him must become our main concern.

There can be no true religion, no true happiness, no peace in this life unless we find them in Christ and through Christ. Nobody and nothing in this whole wide world can give our lives meaning and purpose except Christ.

Can money do it? Or power?

Because all of these are so temporary, they come and go like the wind. Only Christ remains ever the same, our Lord and Savior yesterday, today and forever.

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And only Christ can give our lives meaning and purpose because only He can tell us what our lives are worth in God's eyes.

Christ died on the Cross for us. This is the price tag that God places on human beings. A human being is worth as much as the precious Blood of His Son. Someone once said, "The Cross is the medium of reconciliation because the Cross is the final proof of the love of God; and a love like that demands an answering love." And there is an English proverb that says: "Crosses are ladders that lead to Heaven."

My dear friends, the finest answer that we can give to the love of Christ on the cross is to pick up our own cross and carry it after Christ, matching our lives and actions to His challenge when He says, "If everyone would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

A Prayer...

Jesus, you died upon the cross for us, to give us the means to find forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Help us, Lord, not to overlook what you have done for us. Help us to look upon your cross this day and every day remembering your great love and sacrifice for us. Help us to respond to your love with our love. We pray. *Amen.*

MAKE LENT A SPIRITUAL SPRING

Man today has become a giant. Jet airplanes have given him wings to fly faster than sound. Radar has given him eyes so powerful that he can see through fog and darkness. Electronics have given him a giant ear to amplify the slightest whisper, turn it into a shout and hurl it around the world. Nuclear fission has given man powerful fists with which he can wipe out entire cities with one blow.

Unless man acquires a new giant soul to match his giant eyes, ears and fists, he will not remain a giant for long. How can man acquire a giant soul?

Perhaps the period of Lent can be of assistance to us in this respect; for Lent was always intended by the Church to be a period of growth for the soul, growth in the life of God.

Soon the snow will melt in the northern climes. The grass will turn green. Earth will come alive.

What is it that will cause the earth to come alive? Spring! Of course. But what is in spring that causes the earth to come alive? The greatest secret of spring is the sun! Spring is the in-between period when the earth is changing its position, turning the north toward our great source of heat and light: the sun. Spring, then, is that time when our hemisphere simply moves into the position where the sun can bring new life.

It is significant that Lent happens to coincide with spring. There is a wonderful lesson for us in this happy coincidence. Lent should be for all of us a period of placing ourselves in the position where the best things can happen to us.

That position for Orthodox Christians is the presence of Christ, where the sun of his love and power can shine into our arid souls to bring about a real awakening, a real spring-time of the soul. Lent should be for all of us a period of turning of our souls toward the source of power and new life through daily prayer, spiritual reading, the divine liturgy and participation in the sacraments.

A folk tale of the Belgian Congo tells of a clearing made in the virgin jungle. Certain ground was exposed to sunlight for the very first time. Strange shoots appeared, strange plants, with flowers of indescribable beauty. People had not dreamed that these exquisite plants could grow in that place. Often the same is true with us. We allow old sins and evil habits to grow to the point where our soul becomes like a jungle. But, if through sincere repentance we allow Christ to forgive us, he will remove the sins that hide us from the life-giving sun of his Spirit. He will make flowers of indescribable beauty grow where formerly there were weeds. He will help us achieve our greatest potential.

THE PROOF OF FASTING

Do you Fast?

Give me proof of it by your works.

If you see a poor man, take pity on him.

If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him.

Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eye, and the feet, and the hands and all the members of our bodies.

- Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice.
- Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.
- Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful.
- Let the ears fast by not listening to evil talk and gossip.
- Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism.

For what good is it if we abstain from birds and fishes, but bite and devour our brothers?

St. John Chrysotom

2010 PLEDGE FORMS ARE DUE!

If you haven't already done so, please take this time to fill out your 2010 Pledge Form and return it to the parish office. Your generous annual pledge is vital for the support of our beloved parish. Everyone, including students and prospective members, is encouraged to make an annual stewardship commitment to St. Michael. Extra Pledge Forms are available at the rear of the church.

EASTER FLOWER COLLECTION

Anyone wishing to contribute flowers for the Epitaphion on Holy Friday, please contact Marilyn George at (508) 363-3420.

PASCHAL LITURGY—Saturday, April 3rd**Reception following Divine Liturgy**

Everyone is welcome to enjoy breaking the fast meal following Divine Liturgy (Elaine & Electra Savas will be organizing this event. Please let them know Sunday what your contribution will be and if you would be willing to help with preparations or clean up. Remember to bring ready to serve plated finger food only (no food that has to be heated) to facilitate easy clean up at this early a.m. hour, and plan to take your plate home “as is.”

DECORATING THE EPITAPHION

Join us for a special time of fellowship after the Royal Hours (about 10:30 a.m.) on Holy Friday, April 2nd, as we decorate the Epitaphion and prepare the church for Pascha. A Lenten luncheon will be served. For more information, please call Lynn O’Hara at (508) 539-2765.

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHTS

A priest’s stewardship story, as reported and paraphrased by one of his parishioners:

Years ago I belonged to a parish in New Britain, CT. Our parish struggled along in the red. Our women’s group was graying, their hands sore from years of make pirogues. Our endless stream of yearly church bazaars wearied those who planned and ran them. As I sat down in the pew for the umpteenth Sunday sermon, our pastor made this confession:

“You all know me pretty well by now, visited my home, seen my four kids grown up, and so on. Here we are on stewardship Sunday again, and I’m a little embarrassed.

Last year, I reread the Bible verses on stewardship, and I just realized then that I never tried to tithe (no way!—we’d have to cut out cable TV or phone), but we decided to give more money to the parish. We decided we’d not try 10% of our income, but 1%. Still looked like we couldn’t swing it, but I thought we should trust God (use some of that faith that I always preach about). So secretly, for the rest of that year, that is what we gave. And we seemed to always have enough at the end of the month. I was shocked at our lives. So now I feel that I can come out in public about it and ask you to join me. This year my wife and I upped our giving to 3%, and now we have someone in college! It’s scary sometimes, but I’m waiting to see what God does to keep his promises.”

It is reported that the New Britain church has been in the black for many years, supported solely by the parishioners. They only have fund raisers now for the poor and other causes. As for the pastor, he has continued his giving practice, each year increasing his pledge until he reached and surpassed a tithe, even when he had two children in college and sharing how God pulled it all off!

Great Lent is the perfect time to look into our own hearts here at St. Michael’s and examine our giving. Can we stretch ourselves to give more—1%, 2% or 3%? There are a few people in our church who give much more than that, but sadly, most give much less. We challenge you to take this priest’s lead and see how God blesses your life.

“He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work.”—2 Corinthians 9:6-8.

WOMEN’S GROUP — FUND RAISERS

During the last meeting of the Women’s Group, we discussed having bake sales during upcoming major holiday weekends: (1) the 4th of July, (2) Labor Day and (3) Fallmouth Days. Also planned is a possible concert by the Worcester Antiochian Wedding Choir.

Full participation would be greatly appreciated!

Women’s Group membership is open to all women of the parish for \$10.00.

CHAIRMAN PAUL ANDREWS

Now that the new members of the council have been elected for the year 2010, the number one priority is to establish some programs which will generate funds to complete the renovation of our downstairs hall. Please feel free to offer suggestions and/or plans to accomplish this most worthy project. I welcome ideas from all the parishioners and guests and with God’s help the renovation program will be completed by the end of this year.

PROGRESS FROM EARLY Unpacking Altar Items BEGINNINGS IN 1994

Kudos to our devoted parishioners who have persisted since 1994 to establish our pan-orthodox church from a handful of visionaries to over 80 families. We have purchased the property, and made numerous improvements thanks to the participation of our dedicated members. Presently our efforts are directed towards raising funds for the lower level hall to provide much needed space for educational as well the social needs of our church.

Vicky Abodeely &
Harry Kanavos

St. Michael the Archangel Orthodox Church

62 Main Street, Cotuit, MA 02635 (508) 420-1113

is sponsoring an

Adult Lenten Retreat

“Calling All Cradles and Converts!

Our Wonderful Journey To Pascha With A Forgiving Jesus”

A Lenten Retreat For Stressed Out Modern Christians

Presented by

Rev. Fr. Kyriakos (Kerry) V. Saravelas

Orthodox Priest, Radio Host and Popular Lecturer

Resource Books:

“One Flew Over The Onion Dome” by Fr. Joseph David Huneycutt

“Great Lent Unplugged” by Jean Hoefling

Saturday, March 13th

Registration—8:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy—9:00 a.m.

Coffee—10:15 a.m.

Presentation Part I—10:45 a.m.

Lunch—12:00 noon

Presentation Part II—12:45 p.m.

Closing—2:30—3:00 p.m.

Directions from Bourne Bridge: Rt. 28 to Rt. 151 to Mashpee Rotary. Continue on Rt. 28 towards Hyannis. Immediately after Rt. 130 turn right on Main Street. St. Michael’s is on the left.

Directions from Sagamore Bridge: Rt. 6 to Rt. 130 (Exit 2). Take Rt. 130 to Rt. 28. Left on Rt. 28, then an immediate right on Main Street. St. Michael’s is on the left.

Pre-Registration encouraged

\$20 Retreat & Luncheon

_____ Number Attending

\$ _____ Enclosed

Names: _____

Address: _____

Tel. No: _____

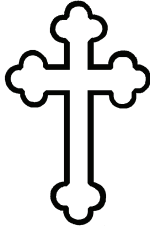
Please make check payable to “St. Michael Orthodox Church” and mail by March 8th to:
St. Michael the Archangel, 62 Main Street, Cotuit, MA 02635
For more information, contact Lorraine Reiley at (508) 240-2412.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

March 28 Sunday 10:00 a.m.	Palm Sunday Divine Liturgy & Procession of the Palms
March 28 Sunday 6:30 p.m.	Service of The Bridegroom
March 29 Holy Monday 6:30 p.m.	Service of The Bridegroom
March 30 Holy Tuesday 6:30 p.m.	Service of The Bridegroom Hymn of Kassiane
March 31 Holy Wednesday 6:30 p.m.	Sacrament of Holy Unction
April 1 Holy Thursday 9:00 a.m.	Vespers and Divine Liturgy
April 1 Holy Thursday 6:30 p.m.	Service of the Twelve Gospels & Solemn Procession with the Sacred Cross of Our Savior
April 2 Holy Friday 9:00 a.m.	Royal Hours
April 2 Holy Friday 3:00 p.m.	Vespers & Removal of Our Lord's Body from the Cross
April 2 Holy Friday 6:30 p.m.	Service of the Lamentations and Procession of the Holy Sepulchre
April 3 Holy Saturday 9:00 a.m.	Vespers and Divine Liturgy
April 3 Holy Saturday 10:45 p.m.	Rush Service and Paschal Liturgy
April 4 12:00 Noon	Great and Holy Pascha Agape Vespers

**Father Manikas and the Parish Council wish you all a
Blessed Lenten Season and Holy Week and a Glorious Pascha!**

St. Michael The Archangel Orthodox Church
62 Main Street
Cotuit, MA 02635



Church Hours

Divine Liturgy 10:00a.m.

Rev. Dr. Nicholas C. Manikas
Choir Director: Margo Irwin
Sunday School

Services in English

2010 PARISH COUNCIL OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

Elections as of Sunday, January 31st, 2010

Parish Council for 2010:

Paul Andrews, Chairman
Judy Crocker, Treasurer
Carole Kanavos, Recording Secretary
William Crocker
Anna Valtsakis

Marilyn George, Vice Chairman
Forrest Reiley, Assistant Treasurer
Barry Irwin
Tom Michael, Corresponding Secretary

Ex-Officio Voting Members

Margo, Irwin, Choir Director
Marilyn George, Women's Group

Natalie Leva, Church School
Lorraine Reiley, Stewardship Committee