

## GREAT LENT: THE TITHE OF THE YEAR (CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK)

From a talk by Fr. Thomas Hopko

*Do not engage intrusive thoughts and feelings.* When feelings come upon you, when thoughts come upon you, don't engage them. If you accept them, they've got you, and you will sin. So you've got to cut them off, right at the very start.

*Reveal all your thoughts and feelings to a trusted person regularly.* Normally, that would be one's pastor, or one's Spiritual Father or Mother, one's elder. But every human being, every Christian, must have someone who knows everything about them. And that we regularly report to them about what is going on in our life.

*Read the Scriptures regularly* – not reading them to fight with others, not reading them to show off quoting, but reading them as fuel, as food. Because if we don't read the Scriptures regularly, we die. It would be like trying to live without eating or to drive a car without putting fuel into it.

*Read good books,* a little at a time. Don't gobble them up. Don't read through it to say "I've read it." Slowly read books. Sometimes, read the same book two or three times over again – trying to put into practice what it says.

*Cultivate communion with the Saints.* Learn who the holy people were in Christian history. Learn who they were who taught, who suffered, who died, who lived a Christian life. And emulate them. As St. John of the Ladder said: "Anyone who does not emulate the Saints is a fool, but also a fool would be someone who tried to imitate another person in the details of his or her life." You can't do that, but we must learn from the holy people.

*Be an ordinary person.* Be one of the human race. Don't ever say: "I thank you God, I'm not like other people. Try to be like others as much as you can. Be ordinary. As the Russian writer Chekov said: "Everything outside the ordinary is from the Devil."

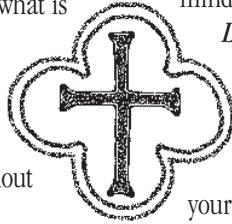
*Be polite with everyone* – first of all, the members of your own family. Sometimes we feel, we could be rude with our own family members but nice to people outside. No, we must begin with kindness to those closest to us first.

*Maintain cleanliness and order in your home.* God doesn't live in clutter or in filth and dirt. Yes, we don't have to be fanatics about having everything prissy clean, but we have to have a Sophianic order, at least in some parts of our house where we live and eat and where we pray especially.

*Have a healthy, wholesome hobby.* Have something where you exercise your brain just for the pure joy of it.

*Exercise regularly* – got to move around.

*Live a day, and even a part of a day, at a time.* Don't be in the past, and don't be in tomorrow. St. Benedict said: "Do what you're doing. Be present where you are." What does God want me to do, right now – not later tonight, not tomorrow morning, not yesterday, but right now?



*Be totally honest* – first of all, with yourself. The greatest sin is the lie, and the greatest lie is the lie about God, and the lie about me and God. Be totally honest.

*Be faithful in little things.* Jesus said it. "He who is faithful in little, inherits much and is put over much. And those that are not faithful in little, lose the little they have." In St. Luke's Gospel, the Lord even said: "lose the little, they think that they have." Fidelity in small, ordinary things.

*Do your work, and then forget it.* Don't carry it around with you. Be totally attentive to what you're doing, but don't carry it in your mind. Have your mind focused on what you're doing at the present moment.

*Do the most difficult and painful things first.* We tend to do the easy things, the things we like, and put off the things we don't. We should try to reverse that and do the most difficult and boring things first.

*Face reality.* Don't live in fantasy. There's a Russian saying: "God is everywhere except in imagination and fantasy." Face the realities of your life.

*Be grateful.* Be grateful in all things.

*Be cheerful.* Act cheerful, even if you don't feel like it, especially in the presence of others.

*Be simple, bidden, quiet, and small.* The Holy Fathers say: "If you want to be known by God, seek not to be known by people." And again, it's simplicity, hiddenness, quiet, smallness.

*Never bring attention to yourself.* Never, consciously, bring attention to yourself. Wherever you are, do what the other people do. That's especially important in Church. When you go to Church, do what the people there are doing. It's what St. Ambrose told to St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, when she asked: "What should I do when I go to Rome?" He said: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." Fast as the Romans fast. Stand as the Romans stand. Sing as the Romans sing.

*Listen when people talk to you.* To be attentive to others is one of the greatest gifts. Keep your mind awake and pay attention when people speak to you.

*Be awake, and be attentive.* Be fully present where you are – wakefulness, watchfulness, attentiveness.

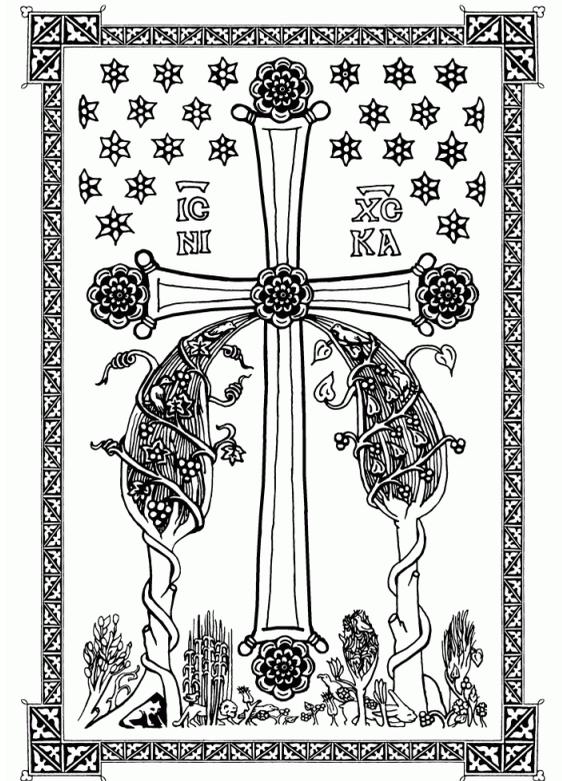
*Think and talk about things no more than necessary.* We should speak only when it's necessary to speak. In fact the Scripture says: "We should speak only when spoken to." The Fathers say: "We often repent of idle talk but very seldom have to repent of maintaining silence. Sometimes we do, because we have to speak. But we should talk and think about things no more than absolutely necessary.

*When we speak, speak simply, clearly, firmly, and directly* – nothing superfluous, not putting on airs. Again, simplicity is the rule.

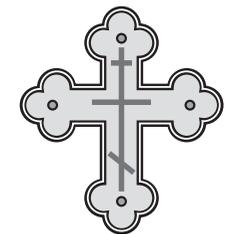
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# SS. Constantine and Elena Orthodox Church

March 11, 2018



THE HOLY CROSS



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## PARISH LIFE

### GREAT LENT: FEBRUARY 19–MARCH 30

#### MARCH 11, 2018: 3RD SUNDAY IN GREAT LENT: THE HOLY CROSS

##### (TONE 7, MATINS GOSPEL 7)

- 8:20 am Matins
- 9:45 am Service of the Veneration of the Cross (immediately before Liturgy)
- 10:00 am Divine Liturgy
- 5:00 pm Sunday Lenten Vespers and shared meal (St. Nicholas Church)

#### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14

- 6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy (followed by Lenten Pitch-in)

#### FRIDAY, MARCH 16

- 12:00 pm Presanctified Liturgy
- 6:30 pm Service of the Akathist

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 17: ST. PATRICK OF IRELAND

- 9:00 am Divine Liturgy
- 10:15 am Pitch-in lenten brunch with Fr. Seraphim Aldea
- 4:15 pm Church School
- 5:00 pm Mystery of Confession (by appointment, please)
- 6:00 pm Great Vespers (followed by confessions)



#### PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND OF OUR PARISH:

Victor Cosgarea, Jay Hanko, Jan Isham, Zachary Waltz, and Margaret Wey

#### LOOKING AHEAD...

*Next Sunday's readings: (4th Sunday in Lent: St. John Climacus): Hebrews 6:13–20, Ephes. 5: 8-19; Mark 9:17–32, Matt. 4:25-5:1-12.*

#### Monday, March 19

- 6:30 pm Parish Council Meeting (Church Hall)

#### Thursday, March 22

- 6:30 pm Great Compline with the Canon of St. Andrew & the Life of St. Mary of Egypt

#### Friday, March 23

- 12:00 pm Presanctified Liturgy
- 6:30 pm Matins with the Service of the Akathist

#### Saturday March 24: Akathist Saturday/Church Cleaning

- 9:00 am Divine Liturgy
- 10:30 am Church Cleaning Work Day

#### Sunday, March 25: Feast of the Annunciation (fish allowed)

- 8:30 am Festal Matins



## LENTEN VESPERS SERIES

Date	Location	Homilist
Tonight	St. Nicholas Serbian Church 7855 Marsh Road, Indianapolis 46278	Fr. David Wey
March 18	Joy of All Who Sorrow Church 1516 N. Delaware Street, 46202	Fr. Dragan Petrovich
March 25	St. Mary of Egypt Church 102 E. Broadway, Greenwood 46143	Fr. Nabil Hanna

## FR. SERAPHIM ALDEA VISITS

Our friend from Mull Island in Scotland, Fr. Seraphim, will be with us again this year next weekend, March 16-18. Appropriately, he will concelebrate the feast of St. Patrick of Ireland with us on Saturday, March 17, at 9 am, followed by a pitch-in lenten brunch and a talk by Fr. Seraphim.

Fr. Seraphim is founding the Monastery of All Celtic Saints on Mull, the first Orthodox monastery in Scotland in over a thousand years. (We will be taking a small group of pilgrims to the monastery this summer.) Make plans to be present on Saturday, bring a dish to share and be encouraged by this visionary young monastic.



## CHURCH CLEANING DAY

Our annual pre-Pascha work day is set for Saturday, March 24. As this is the Saturday of the “Akathist” and the anniversary of the consecration of our altar, we will serve the Divine Liturgy first at 9 am, followed by a brief brunch and then the cleaning of various articles. Once again this year, we hope to enlist parishioners to take on specific items for cleaning, in order to be sure everything is done in good order – “many hands make light work.” Watch for a sign up sheet soon, and plan to help prepare our temple for the “coming of the Bridegroom” on Pascha.

## DEALING WITH “SOLICITORS” – BEST PRACTICES

Several on the Parish Council are diligently working on ways to enhance our safety policies as a community of believers. We are asking the entire parish membership to help with one of the first principles, when approached by the occasional stranger who asks for a handout. Simply put, the response must always be, “We don’t give out cash.” This is often the quickest and easiest way for someone to ask for help, but it also sets up a precedent for repeated soliciting: word definitely goes around that one “can go to that church, someone will likely give you money.” While it does place us, as Christians, in a dilemma about how to respond to such requests (“the poor you will have with you always” as the Lord said), we have to seek a good balance between generosity and wisdom with regard to safety and proper boundaries. (This is the reason

we have a dedicated “alms fund,” to be available to the clergy when dealing with such requests.)

So, we request that everyone abide by this first principle. If someone approaches you for help, just say, “we don’t give out cash.” Beyond that, you can refer them to Fr. David or Dn. Paul, or one of the council members.

## LOOK AHEAD, AND PREPARE

This blessed season of Great Lent offers many opportunities for prayer, worship and spiritual refreshment. However, in our busy lives, it is easy to let these occasions slip past us, and we may find ourselves deprived of the growth that is possible. Thus, the faithful are encouraged to look carefully at the calendar (here in the bulletin and on the parish website) and make a sincere effort to adjust the usual routine to include as many of the services and events as possible.

There are still opportunities to attend the weekly Presanctified Liturgies, and the Akathist Service on Friday evenings; we have the Lenten Sunday Vespers, held in various sister parishes; and, this year, a visit from Fr. Seraphim (see above) and the Feast of the Annunciation which falls on a Sunday. All this leads us toward the Great and Holy Week (April 2-7) and the glorious Feast of Pascha. Let us make time for the washing of our souls and the deepening of our love and devotion to our good God, who has saved us!

## PREPARATION FOR EVENING PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY

The Faithful are encouraged to prepare to receive the Holy Mysteries at these services by prayer and fasting for at least six hours before. For the evening services, this would mean having an early, light lunch by noon if possible, and then nothing more to eat or drink until receiving Communion. See Fr. David if you have any questions.

## ST. JOHN'S SUMMER CAMP 2018

This year's camp will be held from Sunday, July 15th to Saturday, July 21st at Camp Rivervale in Mitchell, IN. Summer camp is for kids going into 4th grade through college freshman in the fall. There will be fellowship, prayer, teachings, singing, games and great merriment; a week filled with wonder and one you won't soon forget - don't miss it for the world! REGISTER ASAP - SPACE IS LIMITED; REGISTRATION MAY BE CAPPED! Early bird registration rate is \$405 through March 31st; Standard registration rate is \$455 and closes June 30th. It is OKAY if you cannot pay the full registration fee up front as long as full payment is received two weeks before camp. If you need financial assistance, please speak to your parish priest. Scholarships may also be available through St. John's Camp Program's Scholarship Fund. And...don't forget to INVITE YOUR FRIENDS! For more details and to register, please go to [www.saintjohnscamp.org/events/sc2018](http://www.saintjohnscamp.org/events/sc2018).

Questions? Contact Jon Beecham - [director@saintjohnscamp.org](mailto:director@saintjohnscamp.org)