

# TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 3

March 2009



## *The Meaning of the Great Fast*

*His Eminence,  
Metropolitan Kallistos Ware*

The forty days journey of Lent recalls in particular the forty years in which the Chosen People journeyed through the wilderness. For us, as for the children of Israel, Lent is a time of pilgrimage. It is a time for our liberation from the bondage of Egypt, from domination by sinful passions; a time for progress by faith through a barren and waterless desert; a time for unexpected reassurance, when in our hunger we are fed with manna from heaven; a time when God speaks to us out of the darkness of Sinai; a time in which we draw near to the Promised Land, to our true home in Paradise whose door the crucified and risen Christ has reopened for us.

A distinctive feature of the Lenten weekdays is the 'Liturgy of the Presanctified,' celebrated according to present practice on each Wednesday. Strictly speaking, the term 'Liturgy' is a misnomer, for there is no Eucharistic consecration at this service; it is simply the office of Vespers, followed by the distribution of Holy Communion from elements consecrated on the previous Sunday. The full celebration of the Eucharist, being always a festive and triumphant event, is felt to be inconsistent with austerity of the weekday Lenten Fast; and so already in the 4th century it was laid down that there should be no complete celebration of the Liturgy during Lent except on Saturday and Sunday. But so as to enable the faithful to receive communion on weekdays in Lent – for in the ancient Church it was normal to communicate frequently, and in some places even daily – the order of the Presanctified Liturgy was devised.

Many moments in the Presanctified Liturgy recall the period when Lent was a time of final training before the reception of Baptism, the sacrament of light or 'illumination'. Thus between the two Old Testament lessons, the priest, holding the censer and lighted candle,

blesses the congregation, saying: 'The light of Christ shines upon all'; and, following the Litany for the Catechumens and their dismissal, there is during the second half of Lent an additional Litany 'for those who are ready for illumination'. Each time we take part in the Liturgy of the Presanctified, we should ask ourselves: In a world that is increasingly alienated from Christ, what have I done since last Lent to spread the light of the Gospel? And where are the catechumens in our Orthodox churches today?

## *Fasting*

*Fasting must be undertaken willingly and not by compulsion.*

*God doesn't need our fasting. We don't fast as a kind of personal punishment for our sins. We cannot pay God back for our sins but we can only confess them to Him to receive forgiveness. Fasting with a willing spirit and not just with an attitude of fulfilling a religious obligation means that we keep the purposes of fasting always before us which is to develop self-control and to remember in what we eat but also in how much we eat. Fasting is simplicity of eating. We leave the table not with loaded stomachs. Being a little hungry during the day becomes a constant reminder of God, of our dependence on Him, and of the fact that the Lord, alone can give us "food that lasts for eternal life"*

*(John 6:27). In fasting and prayer, He reveals Himself to us as our true food and drink.*

Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos

Transfiguration of Our Lord Greek Orthodox Church  
414 St. Stephens School Rd, Austin, TX 78746  
Phone: (512) 329-6363 Fax: (512) 329-6364  
Rev. Ekonomos Jordan G. Brown, Parish Priest

Parish Council Officers  
President: Lou Apostolakis  
Vice President: Stuart Yoder  
Secretary: Christopher Harris  
Treasurer: Ron Jernigan

**LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE**  
**GREAT LENT BEGINS ON MONDAY, MARCH 2**  
**Explanation of Lenten Services**

**MONDAY EVENINGS**  
**Great Compline 6:00 pm**

**TUESDAY MORNINGS**  
**Compline 10:00 am**

**WEDNESDAY EVENINGS**  
**Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:00 pm**

**Wednesday Evening Lenten Suppers will be held following  
Service**

**FRIDAY EVENINGS**  
**Akathist/Salutations 7:00 pm**

**SATURDAY EVENINGS**  
**Great Vespers 5:00 pm**

**SUNDAY MORNINGS**  
**Orthros 8:45 am**  
***Divine Liturgy of St. Basil 10:00 am***

**Great Compline Service (Monday Evenings at 6:00 pm and Tuesday Mornings at 10:00 am)**

Compline in Greek is “Apodipno” meaning from of after dinner. The Compline service is traditionally offered after dinner. We have in our Orthodox prayer books the Small Compline Service. This service is much shorter than the Great Compline and is a wonderful service to pray at your home prayer corner throughout the year. The Great Compline Service offered during Great Lent consists of the reading of Psalms and the chanting of hymns related to combating sin in the evening hours and during sleep. The Great Compline Service is a wonderful way to begin the week.

**Presanctified Liturgy (Wednesdays, 6:00 pm, and the First 3 days of Holy Week)**

The Presanctified Liturgy is a service celebrated on Wednesdays during Great Lent. The Presanctified Liturgy is also celebrated the first three mornings of Holy Week beginning on Monday. The liturgy is called “Presanctified” because the consecration of the Holy Gifts takes place on the preceding Sunday. The Presanctified Liturgies are offered to the faithful to offer more opportunities to receive Holy Communion during the most Holy Period of the Church year.

The question frequently comes up regarding fasting before the evening Presanctified Liturgy. The faithful make every effort to eat a light Lenten meal in the morning. We should do our best to keep at least a 6 hour fast before Liturgy. In other words, eat a small Lenten meal as close to 12 noon on the day of the Liturgy.

The first part of the service is a Vespers with beautiful readings from the psalms. The last part of the service is a Divine Liturgy. During the readings of the psalms the Presanctified gifts are transferred from the altar table, the Proskomide (Oblation Table). The Presanctified Liturgy is unique because the mood of the service is very solemn. The liturgy is traditionally considered to be the effort of St. Gregory of Rome (6th century bishop). I encourage everyone to participate in as many of these liturgies as possible. This is a wonderful time to help with the many readings of the service.

**Akathist (Salutations / Akathistos) Friday Evenings, 7:00 pm**

“Akathistos” in Greek means standing up or without sitting down. In the Orthodox Tradition the people offer this service standing up the entire time (Elderly, the sick and small children can sit). It is believed the Akathist Service was composed and offered to the Mother of God in the year 626. That year Constantinople was saved from the siege of the Avars and Persians. This entire service is a poetic canon dedicated to the Theotokos. The Akathist Service is known as one of the hymnological masterpieces of the Church. The service is both historical as well as Theological. We hear hymns expounding the belief in the Incarnation of the Lord and the salvation of believers in Him. The hymns are not only offered to the Lord and the Virgin Mary, but also to St. John the Baptist, Gabriel the Archangel, the Shepherds and Wise Men worshipping Christ. Most agree the Akathist Service is the most emotional of all the Lenten Services.

## *Adult Education*



### *Clean Monday Retreat*



The Transfiguration and St. Elias church will celebrate together the first day of Lent, known as “*Clean Monday.*”

Fr. Jordan Brown and Fr. David Barr will offer reflections both in the morning and evening of Clean Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The morning reflection will be given by Fr. David at the Transfiguration Church at 10:00 am., and the evening reflection will be given by Fr. Jordan at St. Elias at 7:00 pm

## **ADULT EDUCATION - GREAT LENT: THE PILGRIMAGE TO THE RESURRECTION**

**WEDNESDAY EVENINGS DURING GREAT LENT (1ST CLASS IS MARCH 4<sup>TH</sup>)**

Lent is a special time for all of us to return to our spiritual home. Historically, Great Lent prepared Catechumens to be baptized on Holy Saturday.

The Pilgrimage to the Resurrection series is an opportunity for everyone to embrace and have a better understanding of Lent, the meaning of baptism, and the baptismal message of life celebrated throughout Lent.

Father Jordan will be teaching this series.

The classes will be held from 7:30pm to 8:30pm in the Conference Room

For questions please contact the church office.

### *Morning Bible Study*

The Bible studies for March during Great Lent will be held every Tuesday morning March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>; following the Compline Service at 10:00 am.

Father Jordan will be leading the study.

We welcome all women to participate. Child care is available.

Contact Kori Yoder for more information at [kori.yoder@gmail.com](mailto:kori.yoder@gmail.com)

# Parish Announcements

## Philoptochos March Events

### Wednesday Lenten Dinners

Lent is a time for spiritual growth and fellowship. On Wednesdays during Great Lent the Presanctified Liturgy will begin at 6:00 pm. Following service a Lenten dinner will be offered in the community center around 7:00 pm. The Philoptochos has graciously offered to help with the dinners. We still need your help. Please notify the church office if you are able to bring a Lenten dish or help with setting up and cleaning up.

## YOUTH NEWS: GOYA

**GOYA Ministry Welcomes Youth in 6th - 12th Grades**  
**Mark your calendars for these EVENTS IN MARCH**

### March 20<sup>th</sup> - Service Project

On Friday, March 20th the GOYANs will have an opportunity to offer their service and prayers. We will meet at the church at 10:00 am. Father Jordan is making the arrangements for the GOYANs to help with a downtown service project. The youth will be preparing meals for the needy and if time permits offer their services at the home of a shut-in. Lent is a time for prayer, fasting and acts of charity. This will be a wonderful experience for our young people. More detailed information will be sent to you. If you have any questions please contact Father Jordan.

March 21<sup>st</sup> - Fireside Chat at the home of Dr. Peter and Linda Kangos - 6:00pm

## Greek Independence Day Celebration!

Plan to join us on Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> in celebration of Greek Independence Day.

The Greek School and the newly formed Greek Dance Troupe will perform a short program after church .

We also wish to thank AHEPA for sponsoring the delicious lunch for us today!

## **Weddings**

### **Congratulations to:**

- *Anna Maria Konstantinidis and Joseph Kiyose who were married on February 7th .*
- *Gia Eakins and Greg Galifianakis who were married on February 28th.*

**God grant you many years!**

## Men's Fellowship

Transfiguration Men's Fellowship will meet on Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>. They will be meeting at Fresh Choice in the Arboretum.

If you are interested in receiving email notifications/reminders about the Men's Fellowship Luncheons and other gatherings please send an email to Allen Wynn at [awynn3816@gmail.com](mailto:awynn3816@gmail.com)

## OCF/UT

### Orthodox Campus Fellowship

We welcome all college students to the OCF ministry. Please note the change in the day we are meeting on campus. Beginning in February, the OCF will be meeting every other Monday, 6:00 pm at the University Episcopal Center located at 209 W. 27th at University Ave.

**Monday, March 9th at 6:00 pm**

and

**Monday, March 23rd at 6:00 pm**

### Regional Retreat

A&M is hosting this semester's regional retreat on weekend of April 3-5. The topic is dating, relationships, and marriage. More details to come

Please contact Gabe Kaim at 832-656-1657 or email - [Gabriel.kaim@bba05.mcombs.utexas.edu](mailto:Gabriel.kaim@bba05.mcombs.utexas.edu)

## **Baby News!**

*Congratulations to Serena and Brent Smith on the birth of their daughter, Olivia Margaret, on January 30<sup>th</sup>*

## **Prayers for Healing**

*Dolly, Betty, Arlena, Sophie, Archie, Lou, Thomas, Kathy, Linda, Suzanne, Pat, Steve, Nina, Phyllis, James, Gwen Elizabeth, Panayioti, Anna*

## **“Grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”**

*2 Peter 3:18*

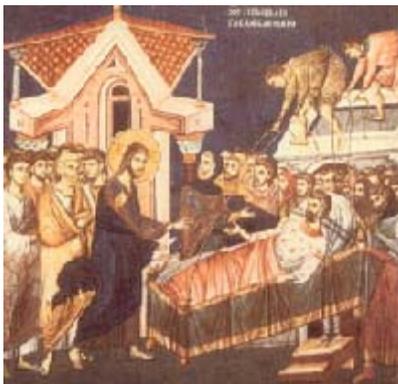
We are invited to the most important spiritual journey. Great Lent is a time when our fasting and prayers are intensified. The church offers increased opportunities for worship during the week. Lent is a time we can be nourished spiritually. In order to grow we must be disciplined. We fast not only from certain foods, but from any obstacles that keep us from growing with God. In all my years of blessing homes, I have never seen so many Televisions in the bedrooms. TV is not a sin, but should images from the media be our last thoughts before going to bed. What is better for our spiritual health, to close the day with prayer and scripture, or the false and humiliating message of “American Idol?” This Great Lent make the effort every morning and evening to first light the oil lamp or candle in your prayer corner and not the TV or computer. If you need help setting up a prayer corner please call me or at the least set up an icon and candle on your kitchen table.

Great Lent is not only a spiritual journey but a wonderful opportunity to blossom. Lent for the Orthodox Christian focuses not on the penitence but on the metania “change of mind.” We do not put ashes on a head but fly kites. There is the custom in Orthodox countries that on Clean Monday, the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Lent, the faithful would head to the parks and fly kites. They would do this to remind themselves that Great Lent prepares them for a new life in Christ. It is appropriate how Great Lent moves into the season of spring where life begins to blossom. The Great Feast of the Annunciation is celebrated during the Great Lent on March 25<sup>th</sup>. The Archangel Gabriel waited for the Virgin Mary’s reply. She responded to God’s call. Lent is a time we respond and say “yes” to God and the opportunity He offers us to be with Him during this Great Lent.

Lent is not easy. A wise bishop said, “fasting would not be called fasting if it was easy.” Lent requires our ‘askesis.’ Askesis is the Greek word for ‘effort and struggle.’ We have a wonderful example in the healing of the Paralytic in the gospel of St. Mark (2:1-12). A man is sick and helpless. He is carried by four men. The four men make a great effort to push through the crowd and eventually climb up onto the roof and than proceed with opening the roof in order to let down the bed of the sick man. “And Jesus, seeing their faith.” Jesus saw their faith. St. Nicholas commented, “The Lord did not hear their faith expressed in words, but He saw it.” Lent requires that we work. Jesus said, “Watch ...pray always that you may be accounted worthy ...to stand before the Son of Man.” (St. Luke 21:36).

This lent can be different. The sacrament of confession can make a difference. We celebrate the repentance of St. Mary of Egypt every lent. God gave back her life and released her from her sins. St. Mary experienced the redemption of Jesus. God loved her. Even in her sinful condition God loved Mary. She is the model of true conversion. Sin will harden our hearts and keep us from God. A wise Christian shared how when God dwells in us we become soft. “Think of an artist and his clay. It is pliable and it can be shaped into an object of beauty, but once baked, it sets and change is not longer possibility. A soul with humility is always pliable, and it will surely see the kingdom.”

St. Mary discovered the church and began to live once again. She lived humbly. She put God first in her life. This Great Lent let us discover like St. Mary the sanctifying grace which flows through the life of the church.



*Father Jordan*

*Let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.*

**Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church**  
**2009 CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP**

**POOR IN SPIRIT**

The art of being poor in spirit is to distinguish between use and ownership. A person who owns something or regards himself as owner believes that he has the sole right to determine how that thing is used. He may use it himself or authorize another person to use it. But this sense of ownership is a terrible snare, because it prevents a person's soul from marching onward to God. The person who wishes to move toward God must free himself from all sense of ownership. He must regard all things as loans from God, even the things which he himself owns. A loan is to be used for a period, and then paid back. This is precisely how we should regard our houses and fields, clothes and furniture; they are loans which God grants us for our short span on earth, to be repaid at the moment of death. To be poor in spirit does not mean to be destitute, lacking in even the basic comforts and necessities. It means to regard nothing as your own, and everything you have as a temporary loan.

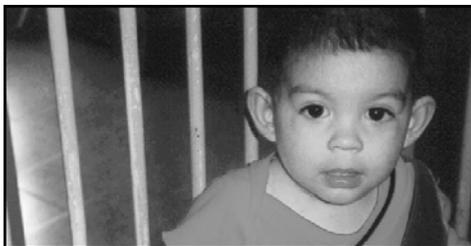
Saint John Chrysostom

Thank you for your stewardship and generous financial support of our parish.

If you have not done so, please prayerfully consider what God would have you contribute financially to our parish this year and return your completed pledge card. Pledge cards and stewardship information is available in Mt. Tabor hall and narthex..

Stuart Yoder  
(512) 914-9938  
stuyoder@gmail.com

Brandon Suehs  
(512)-922-7598  
bsuehs@mail.utexas.edu



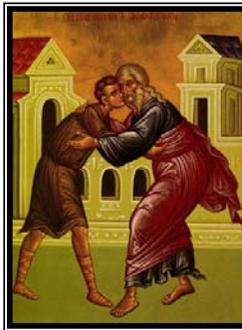
**In Some Places "Futures" Have  
Nothing To Do With  
The Stock Market.**

In many parts of the world, innocent children have no alternative to living in harmful environments.

In Romania, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) has joined with the Romanian Orthodox Church to make a difference in young lives. A newly established youth center provides educational, recreational and cultural activities in a safe environment.

Through IOCC's youth programs in Romania and other countries, you can help ensure a brighter future for the children of our world.

P.O. Box 630225 • Baltimore, MD 21263-0225  
Donation Hotline ~ toll free (877) 803-IOCC(4622)  
www.iocc.org



***Lenten Prayer of Saint Ephraim of  
Syria***

*Lord and Master of my life, deliver me from  
the spirit of laziness and meddling,  
the lust for power and gossip.*

*Rather, grant the spirit of wisdom, humility,  
patience, and love to me Your servant.*

*Yes, Lord and King, grant that I may see my own faults and not  
judge my brother;  
for You are blessed to the ages of ages. Amen*

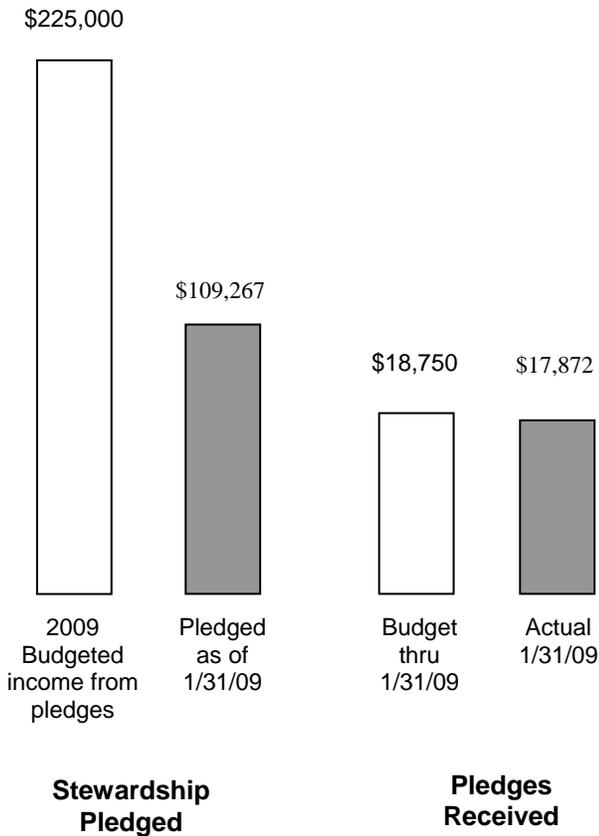
(new translation submitted by  
His Eminence, Metropolitan Isaiah )

# 2009 STEWARDSHIP *Updated as of 02/15/09*

Mrs. Jane Allen	Mr. & Mrs. Costas Evgenides	Ms. Elsie Karvelas	Mr. & Mrs. John Phillips
Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Angelo	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Gaddis	Mr. & Mrs. Tahseen Khan	Mr. & Mrs. Denis Phocas
Mr. & Mrs. Harry Benas	Mr. & Mrs. Jason Garwood	Mr. Stephan Kounelias	Mr. & Mrs. Ken Pon
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Benson	Mr. & Mrs. Anthony George	Mr. & Mrs. Tony Kniffen	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Price
Mr. & Mrs. Marko Bjeletich	Mr. & Mrs. James George	Mr. & Mrs. Lee Leatherwood	Mr. & Mrs. Jim Roberts
Fr. & Presvytera Brown	Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Gimenez	Ms. Nicki Leatherwood	Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Rodis
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Burks	Ms. Christina Glarakis	Mr. Steve Levendakes	Mr. & Mrs. Mihalis Salmatanis
Mr. & Mrs. William Chriss	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Glaros	Mr. & Mrs. Archie Meador	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Shannon
Mrs. Catherine Christ	Mr. & Mrs. Seraphim Gockley	Mrs. Maria Moros	Ms. Pat Shotwell
Mr. & Mrs. John Chronis	Mr. & Mrs. Tom Gouris	Mr. & Mrs. Xenophon Nikas	Mr. & Mrs. George Simbles
Ms. Marianne Clay	Ms. Heather Harlan	Dr. & Mrs. Rob Nolan	Mr. & Mrs. George Skevofilax
Mr. & Mrs. William Colovas	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Harris	Mr. & Mrs. Jim Norman	Mr. & Mrs. Nicolaos
Mr. & Mrs. David Cramer	Dr. James Hitt	Mr. & Mrs. Shawn O'Brien	Spiropoulos
Mr. & Mrs. Michael	Mrs. Virginia Hobbs	Mr. & Mrs. Chris Orthmann	Mr. & Mrs. Harry Stamatis
Daskalantonakis	Mr. Christopher Hooks	Mr. & Mrs. Tom Papadatos	Mr. & Mrs. Michael Strong
Mr. & Mrs. Chris Delvizi	Mr. & Mrs. David Horwedel	Mr. & Mrs. Nick Papanikolaou	Mr. & Mrs. Brandon Suehs
Mr. & Mrs. Alexander	Ms. Gwen Elizabeth Jerome	Mrs. Sophie Paulos	Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Tsihlas
Demetriadis	Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Kaim	Mr. & Mrs. Pete Pavlos	Mrs. Bettie Vaselakos
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph DeRossi	Ms. Nici Kalogirou	Mr. & Mrs. John Peet	Mr. & Mrs. Allen Wynn
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Dow	Dr. & Mrs. Peter Kangos	Drs. Nicholas & Lisa Peppas	Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Yoder
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Draina	Mr. & Mrs. George Karides	Mr. & Mrs. Austin Phelps	

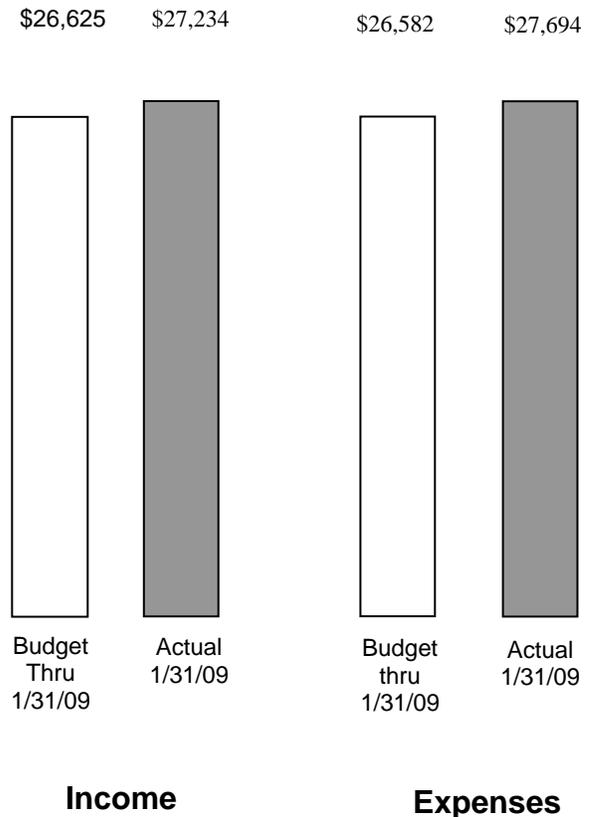
## 2009 Stewardship Status

**1/31/2009**



## 2009 Income/Expenses

**1/31/2009**



TRANSFIGURATION  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
414 ST. STEPHENS SCHOOL ROAD  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78746

Non profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
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*TRANSFIGURATION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
NEWSLETTER*

*SCHEDULE OF SERVICES*

**SUNDAY WORSHIP**

*ORTHROS*                      **8:45 A.M.**  
*DIVINE LITURGY*    **10:00 A.M.**

**SATURDAY GREAT VESPERS 5:00 P.M.**

**SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION**

After Saturday Great Vespers - or call Fr. Jordan to schedule a convenient time

**MEMORIAL SERVICES**

Please schedule Memorial Services through the Office. Memorials will be offered *only* at Saturday Great Vespers, unless it is a 40-day memorial, which may be offered at Saturday Great Vespers or following Divine Liturgy on Sundays.

**FEAST DAYS & FAST DAYS**

***CLEAN MONDAY RETREAT- MARCH 2***

*MORNING SESSION- 10:00 AM AT TRANSFIGURATION LEAD BY FR. DAVID*  
*EVENING SESSION - 7:00 PM AT ST. ELIAS LEAD BY FR. JORDAN*

***FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION***

***TUESDAY, MARCH 24***

*GREAT VESPERS - 6:00 PM*

***WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25***

*ORTHROS - 8:00 AM.*

*DIVINE LITURGY - 9:00 AM*

***COMPLINE SERVICES***

***MONDAYS ~***

*MARCH 9 - 6:00 PM*

*MARCH 23 - 6:00 PM*

*MARCH 30 - 6:00 PM*

***TUESDAYS ~***

*MARCH 3 - 10:00 AM*

*MARCH 24 - 10:00 AM*

*MARCH 31 - 10:00 AM*

***WEDNESDAY EVENING PRESANCTIFIED LITURGIES:***

*MARCH 4 - 6:00 PM*

*MARCH 11 - 6:00 PM*

*MARCH 18 - 6:00 PM*

***FRIDAY EVENING AKATHIST SERVICES - 7:00 PM***

*MARCH 6, 13, 20, AND 27*