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Great Lent—Saint John Climacus

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Archbishop Daniel, Metropolitan Antony, Metropolitan Yuriy, Anastasia [Metropolitan Yuriy's mom], Metropolitan Theodosius [OCA], Archbishop Jovan, Bishop Robert, Father George & Pani Lillian Hnatko, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Elias Warnke, Father Nestor Kowal, Father George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John & Pani Mary Anne Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Protopresbyter William Diakiw, Archpriest Dionysi Vitali, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Adam Yonitch, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Father Paisius McGrath, Father Michael Smolynec, Father Lawrence & Matushka Sophia Daniels, Father Joe Cervo, Father John Harrold [Saint Sylvester], Pani Mary Ann Chubenko, Father Jim Orr, Joshua Agosto and his family, Eva Malesnick, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Joseph Sliwinsky, Gary & Linda Mechtly, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Linda Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Archbishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Esther Holupka, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Julie Eiler, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—young man with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl & Margaret Reed, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary

Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Helen Bozo, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Strozh [young lady with cerebral palsy], Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Howard Simpson, Chris, David Hiles, Jennifer, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Sandi Anderson, Lina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, Tom Hyatt, Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko-Andy's sister, William Lemonakis, Alma Wyke, Lindsay Romanczak & family, Virginia Catherine Pynch, Susan Lucas, Neil Carter & family, James Paluh, Mickie Weikel, Evelyn Krempasky, Tammy Strunk, Loida Esbry, Darlene Chicka Deskins, Drew, Alice & Keith Philipa, Kateryna Kocelko, Nancy Heinbaugh, Mira Filipović, Lynn, Jacqueline, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Kristy, Elaine Ellenberger, Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Ron Schwartz, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, Manny "Lazarus" Lopez, Glenn & Lucas Burlack, Katie Elizabeth, Mileva, & Michael, Deirdré Straughan, Terri Paluh, Lori & Steve Lucier, Kyranna Cherpas, Pastor Bruce Nordeen, Heather Ried, Carla Perry, Linda Elliot, Dennis McDaniel, Luke Tinsley, Brent, Tricia, Katherine Gorman, Pamela Jaquette, Sherri Walewski, Marika Zeliszczuk, Donna Davis, Jackie Crimbchin, Marta Charron, Mary [Corba], Stella McKeag, Margie Sekelsky, Gary Howell, Fran Fulton, Gina Catanese, Bill Vizza, Jamie Swarm, Kevin Allen (from Ancient Faith Radio), Kathy Flaherty, Tori Reade-Henry's niece, Derick-Glen Burlack's neighbor, Michael, Nichole & Christopher, Ben Douglas, Dianne Donahue, Zachary, Natasha, Noah Willard, Jodi Hanczar, Gregory Cervo, Lisa Bruce, Martha Nezolyk, Kathy Cvetkovich, Judy, Will, Emma, Ginny, Ye-Jin, Maria, John & JoAnn, Jim & Kitty, Phil Bouse, Ralph & Beverly Stoker, Noah Willard, Nikola, Natalie, Nikola, & Nevenka Jovonovich, Julia Collier, Amy Kemerer, Thomas Smith, Tracy Slaugenhaupt, Louis & Teresa Bercelli, Tom Nolan, Silvia Martin, Sarah Dorning, Dena & George, Georgia, Lawanda [Evelyn's niece], Maureen Sams, John Kendall, Judi Danser, Darcy, Denis Strittmatter, Nancy, Ian Brick, Cecilia Barnhart, Logan Magorien, Pam & Gordon Grant, Debbie & Jerry Novosel, Noah Willard, Sandra Dillard, Danielle McCann, Barry [Father Jim Orr's cousin], Tim Joyce, Mike Pawlyshyn-Jeannie Stutchell's brother, Joe Samchuck—vocations, Albert Heckman, Brianna Stumpf, Stanley Porembka, David & Terry Coyne Hartnett, Mike C., Jennifer Scheirer [Nick Behun's daughter], Catherine Beecham [Father Bob's cousin], JoAnne & Dave Andrews, Rev. Peg Bowman, Pat Jennings, Tim Sams, Mike Ruzzi, Cindy M., Stephen Popichak—Fr. Bob's brother, Mary Kay Ludovicy, Pastor

Sara Irwin, George Dilendorf, Andy Torick, Carol Behun, Erv Frye, William Lusherand, Bill Boretsky, Colin Kirton—Stage 4 pancreatic cancer, Clifford, Joe Veto, Paul Riley, Tonee & Sydnee Turner, Annette Paluh, Cathy Lotinsky, Monk Andrew, Jeff & Buschra Kerr, Susan Pulcini—Father Ted Pulcini's mom. ARNOLD: Homer Paul Kline and Walter Sakol. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

"If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and I will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: All Christians and the others in the Middle East who are suffering during this time of great tragedy and unrest. May God watch over and keep them safe! Lord have mercy!

Please remember ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American service men and women—and bring them all home safely!

REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please ask Father Bob.

AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY, MARCH 29 NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE 10:30 AM
FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT; SAINT JOHN OF THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT; MARTYR SABINAS OF HERMOPOLIS-EGYPT; MARTYR PAPAS OF LYCAONIA; APOSTLE ARISTOBULUS OF THE 70-BISHOP OF BRITAIN; HIEROMARTYR ALEXANDER-POPE OF ROME; MARTYR TROPHIMUS & THALUS OF LAODICEA; MARTYR JULIAN OF ANAZARBUS

Tone 8

Hebrews 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:9-19

Mark 9:17-31; Matthew 4:25-5:12

SUNDAY, APRIL 05 Saint Basil-OBEDNITZA DOWNSTAIRS IN THE CHURCH HALL 10:30 AM
FIFTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT; VENERABLE MARY OF EGYPT; MONK-MARTYR
NICON & 199 DISCIPLES IN SICILY; MARTYRS PHILETAS THE SENATOR, WIFE
LYDIA, SONS MACEDON & THEOPREPIUS, NOTARY CRONIDES, &
AMPHILOCHIUS THE CAPTAIN IN ILLYRIA; VENERABLE NICON OF THE
PERCHEVSKY LAVRA

Tone 1

Hebrews 9:11-14

Mark 10:32-45

*Litany in Blessed Memory of Frank Pendlyshok, John Cherepko, Ollie
Pendlyshok, Stella Peanoske, Rose Lopushanski, Mary Haluszczak, Vladimir
Hanczar, Michael Brittan, Deacon Dennis Lapushansky, & Lynne Giglione—Fr.
Bob*

SUNDAY, APRIL 12 OBEDNITZA DOWNSTAIRS IN THE CHURCH HALL 10:30 AM
SIXTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT; PALM SUNDAY; ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO
JERUSALEM; VENERABLE JOHN CLIMACUS OF SINAI-AUTHOR OF THE LADDER;
PROPHET JOAD; HOLY APOSTLES SOTHENES, APOLLOS, CEPHAS, CAESAR, &
EPAPHRODITUS OF THE 70; SAINT EUBULA-MOTHER OF SAINT PANTELEIMON;
VENERABLE JOHN THE SILENT; VENERABLE ZOSIMAS-BISHOP OF SYRACUSE

Philippians 4:4-9

John 12:1-18

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 29 MARCH 2020

FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT; SAINT JOHN OF THE LADDER OF
DIVINE ASCENT; MARTYR SABINAS OF HERMOPOLIS-EGYPT;
MARTYR PAPAS OF LYCAONIA; APOSTLE ARISTOBULUS OF THE 70-
BISHOP OF BRITAIN; HIEROMARTYR ALEXANDER-POPE OF ROME;
MARTYR TROPHIMUS & THALUS OF LAODICEA; MARTYR JULIAN OF
ANAZARBUS

The First Antiphon Tone 2 (Psalm 116)

I love the Lord because He has heard the voice of my supplication.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Because He inclined His ear to me, therefore I will call on Him as long as I
live.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

The snares of death encompassed me; the pangs of hell laid hold on me.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

I suffered distress and anguish; then I called upon the name of the Lord.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and
unto ages of ages. Amen.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, O Savior, save us.

The Second Antiphon Tone 2 (Psalm 116)

I kept my faith even when I said: "I am greatly afflicted!"

**O Son of God who sat upon the foal, save us who sing to Thee :
Alleluia!**

What shall I render to the Lord for all the things He has given me?

**O Son of God who sat upon the foal, save us who sing to Thee :
Alleluia!**

I will receive the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.

**O Son of God who sat upon the foal, save us who sing to Thee :
Alleluia!**

I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people.

**O Son of God who sat upon the foal, save us who sing to Thee:
Alleluia!**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever
and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God, Who for our
salvation didst will to be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-
virgin Mary, Who without change didst become man and wast
crucified, Who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father
and the Holy Spirit: O Christ our God, trampling down death by
death, save us!**

The Third Antiphon Tone 1 (Psalm 18)

O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever!

**By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou didst
confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children
with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee: O Vanquisher of
Death: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the
name of the Lord!**

Let the house of Israel say: For He is good, for His mercy endures forever!

**By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou didst
confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children
with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee: O Vanquisher of
Death: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the
name of the Lord!**

Let the house of Aaron say: For He is good, for His mercy endures forever!

**By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou didst
confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children**

with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee: O Vanquisher of Death: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!

Let all those who fear the Lord say: For He is good, for His mercy endures forever!

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee: O Vanquisher of Death: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!

The Introit of the Little Entrance

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord! God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us!

By raising Lazarus from the dead before Thy Passion, Thou didst confirm the universal resurrection, O Christ God! Like the children with the palms of victory, we cry out to Thee: O Vanquisher of Death: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Another Troparion Tone 4

When we were buried with Thee in Baptism, O Christ God, we were made worthy of eternal life by Thy Resurrection! Now we praise Thee and sing: Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Kontakion Tone 6

Sitting on Thy throne in heaven, carried on a foal on earth, O Christ God! Accept the praise of angels and the songs of children, who sing: Blessed is He that comes to recall Adam!

Prokeimenon Tone 4 (Psalm 118)

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us!

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us!

O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever!

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us!

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!

God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us!

Alleluia Verses Tone 1 (Psalm 98)

O sing to the Lord a new song, for the Lord has done marvelous things!
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God!

The Hymn to the Theotokos (Replaces "It is Truly Meet")

God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us! Celebrate the feast and come with gladness! Let us magnify Christ with palms and branches, singing: Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!


Communion Hymn (Psalm 118)

Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! God is the Lord and has revealed Himself to us!

*As it is with sorrow,
each thinks his own present grief
the most severe. For of this
he judges by his own experience.*

*He who has a beautiful wife,
thinks nothing so bad as
having a beautiful wife,
because it is the occasion
of jealousy and intrigue.*

*He who has an ugly one,
thinks nothing worse than
having a plain wife,
because it is constantly
disagreeable.*



Icon of St. John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, holding a book and a cross. The icon is set against a blue background with gold accents. To the right of the icon, there is vertical text: 'Icon of St. John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople'.

**St John
Chrysostom**

A nun wrote to me. She said she was suffering and needed surgery. Otherwise she would die. I wrote an answer suggesting otherwise. Then she wrote again: the doctor told her that without an operation a perforation would occur and that would lead to death. I repeated: "Have faith, hope for God's help and choose death then." She sent me the answer, saying that her illness went away. You see? I have experienced that a thousand times. When you know you are ready for death and you

wait for it to come, it runs away from you. But when you are afraid of it, it will pursue you all the time. (St. Joseph the Hesychast)



IMMEDIATE ATTENTION 22 March, 2020

TO: ALL CLERGY AND FAITHFUL OF THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF THE USA AND DIASPORA

**RE: FULL CLOSING OF ALL PARISH CHURCHES DURING THE
COVID19/CORONAVIRUS THREAT**

Dearly Beloved Brothers and Sisters in our Lord,

CHRIST IS AMONGST US! IS AND ALWAYS SHALL BE!

The continued and worsening threat of the COVID-19/CORONAVIRUS continues to affect the lives of each and every one of us. We have asked our clergy since the beginning of this threat to serve Divine Liturgy in their churches with the assistance of a cantor or reader. **We have directed that ALL of our faithful 65 years of age and older MUST NOT participate in these Divine Liturgies and we have strongly urged that ALL OUR FAITHFUL REMAIN TO PRAY AT HOME.** We have suggested to all our faithful that many parishes are live streaming the Liturgy on Facebook and they should contact their priest or parish board about whether or not their parish is one of these.

Today's statistics—Sunday 22 March—about the people hospitalized with the virus are astonishing. They clearly exhibit that the virus is a threat NOT just to the elderly. 40% of those hospitalized are under the age of 55. 20% of those hospitalized are under age 20! Having spoken with many of our clergy today, we have learned that just too many of the faithful have not taken our directives and urgings to heart and decided to attend Divine Liturgy on this third Sunday of Great Lent. We realize that they—you—did so out of a sincere desire and need to participate in the Divine Liturgy, glorifying God in the Holy Trinity, offering gratitude for the blessings in their lives and beseeching protection from this virus threat for themselves, their families and all mankind. However, because there were simply too many of you present in some of our churches—words we could not have imagined

coming forth from our mouths, let alone our hearts prior to these days—**we are obliged to direct that all our churches are now closed for public worship for the duration of this threat to all of us.** We make this decision also in consideration of the ever-increasing restrictions being announced daily by federal, state and local government bodies. We are headed into the most dangerous part of the coronavirus threat and we all must be extremely careful.

We do permit our clergy to celebrate Divine Liturgy in their churches—behind closed doors—with at least a cantor or reader to assist them. We ask these clergy to use their own good sense, in particular about their own health and the health of the cantor or reader when making a decision about whether to serve or not. Please Fathers, follow your own conscience in making your decision. Be certain about one thing, however—**NONE OF THE FAITHFUL FROM YOUR PARISH OR FROM ANYWHERE ELSE MAY BE PRESENT IN CHURCH FOR THE LITURGY.** This permission is granted so that the Eucharist and our special prayers may be offered in “behalf of all and for all” our faithful and all mankind.

We understand that the desire to be at Divine Liturgy is to receive the Holy Eucharist—the Blood and Body of our Lord—in Communion from the Holy Chalice as the source of all healing. We learned something else today, however, that has not been expanded upon in the media and it heavily influenced our decision announced here. The fact is that those who have this day been diagnosed with the virus were actually infected last week or the week before. This means that they probably spread the virus to others for a week or two without experiencing any symptoms of the disease. It is what we might be carrying upon ourselves or within ourselves—without our knowledge—that may hurt others by simple proximity. Hence, this letter.

All our faithful can be assured that they will be prayed for during the live streamed Liturgy from St. Andrew Memorial Church each Sunday. The stream on this third Sunday of Great Lent had almost 400 people present for the entire Liturgy and as these words are written, over 13,500 others have viewed or watched the video of the Liturgy in just the four hours after the Liturgy completed and Facebook data tells us that in total 26,000 people were reached by the video. We invite you to join us on the Sundays ahead. As we explained in an earlier letter, dearly beloved, you certainly will not suffer any spiritual penalty during this crisis. Our Lord’s compassion goes far beyond our comprehension and He will certainly embrace us at all times as we pray in our individual homes or as we watch the live streaming of Divine Liturgy on Facebook and YouTube.

Morning Prayers at 7:30 a.m., Evening Prayers at 9:00 p.m. with special prayers for those afflicted with the virus and for our medical professionals are already live streaming from Three Hierarchs Chapel on St.

Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Seminary's Facebook page. Sunday Divine Liturgy will continue to be live streamed from the Memorial Church at 10:00 a.m. on both the Seminary Facebook page and the Facebook page of our Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. It also appears that a live stream will also be possible on YouTube. Please go to our Church website—www.uocofusa.org—to learn how to connect to both streams and to read any further updates from us throughout this difficult time for all.

We love you all, our dear spiritual children. God has entrusted you all to our spiritual care and we have agonized over all the continually increasing restrictions we have had to issue in that care. We assure you of our endless prayers for each and every one of you—not only during crisis times. We are people of faith and that faith will continue to bring upon us the embrace of our Loving Lord. Pray each day the powerful words: “The Father is my Hope, the Son is my Refuge, and the Holy Spirit is my Protection.” The Grace inspired into our lives through each of the Mysteries/Sacraments will enable us to remain faithful. Allow that Grace to work within you each moment of your life so that it will flow forth from you into the lives of all around you. **Christ IS amongst us**—eternally!

In the All-Encompassing Love of our Lord,

+ **ANTONY**-Metropolitan

+ **DANIEL**-Archbishop

+ **JEREMIAH**-Archbishop

The Third Sunday of Great Lent—Veneration of the Holy Cross

And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.(KJV)Mark 8:34-38, 9:1

We are all mere beginners in learning about the Lord Jesus Christ. Learning about the Lord Jesus Christ is a life-long, unending journey and process. Formal theological education helps.

Faithful reading of the Bible, Church history and the lives of the saints certainly increases knowledge about Christ. Attending the Divine services of the Church and prayer enables believers to continue to learn and to experience Christ.

Christian growth is intended to be unending. The Holy Apostle Paul urged renewal of the mind in the Epistle to the Romans. Christians are not to become

stagnant.

The Holy Apostle said: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the **renewing** of your **mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Rom. 12:2)

The world would have believers become sidetracked and corrupted. Evil is prevalent in every age. Temptations and perils to the soul always exist. Vigilance and fervency in Christ require constancy.

Christians loving Christ and grateful for Christ's love are to remain firm against the dangers in today's world. Strength and wisdom drawn from Christ are necessary to combat attacks of the heart, mind and soul.

Great Lent emphasizes repentance, fasting, and increased prayer. Renewal, strengthening and deepening the relationship with Jesus Christ are intended and expected during the Lenten journey.

Joy increases as Christ grows in the heart, mind and soul. Fasting, prayer and almsgiving facilitate cleansing the sinfulness afflicting a believer. Repentance, Confession and Communion lead to new beginnings in Jesus Christ.

The Church has centuries of experience with lasting benefit to believers. Attentive and serious believers seek the nourishment existing in God's Holy Church.

Believers are expected to continuously die to the "old self" involved in sin and to begin anew after each fall. Repentance and Confession foster new beginnings in life.

The Lord Jesus Christ's love was made clear when He voluntarily ascended the Cross and permitted Himself to be Crucified. Believers are always to remember Jesus Christ's voluntary suffering, death and resurrection.

Believers are to always be grateful to the Lord. (I Thess.5:18) Gratitude is best shown to Christ by following the Commandments. We are to love God and our neighbor completely. (Mt.22:37-40)

The Cross stands in the middle of the church today and throughout this week. The Cross revealed the power of Jesus Christ over death. We benefit greatly when the Cross of Jesus Christ is firmly in our hearts.

This is not a time to be fearful of death. Now is the time to repent of sins while we are able. Jesus Christ welcomes and affords believers new life through repentance. (Mt.9:13)

The hunger of the soul is satisfied in Christ. (Mt.5:6) Faithfulness to Christ leads to joy. (Mt.25:21) Great Lent addresses satisfying the hunger in the soul and the desire for joy in life. Christ's Resurrection brings the greatest joy!

Thank God for the hardships in our lives. Thank God for the threats that exist to each of us. Hardships and threats require us to be more attentive to Jesus Christ. We are expected to be soldiers for Jesus Christ.

Being a Christian is not for the faint hearted. On Great and Holy Saturday we read about the faithfulness to God of the Three Youths in the fiery furnace as we prepare to celebrate Christ's Resurrection. (Dan.3:1-23)

Suffering and hardship are lasting lessons Jesus Christ taught when He ascended the Cross. Martyrs through the centuries have life histories that teach succeeding generations of the value of suffering for Christ.

Christ does not abandon those who confess Him and remain steadfast with Him. Christ strengthens and emboldens the fervent in faith. (Acts 9:27-29) The Lord provides the words necessary for those confessing Him in faith. (Lk21:12-15)

These trying days of Great Lent require the presence of fervent believers full of firm belief, love and compassion. Much suffering exists. Compassionate believers as neighbors are necessary to alleviate the suffering.

Parish churches have the opportunity to share the love of Christ and the wisdom of Christ in these moments of world crisis. Churches filled with prayer and believers with hearts of love and prayer are needed beyond measure.

The Third Sunday of Great Lent. The Sunday of the Precious Cross. The Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste. March 9/22, 2020. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic

Our sympathies and prayers go out to Anne Quinn and her family on the falling asleep in the Lord of her husband Jerry on Monday, March 16. May God grant His Newly-Departed Servant Gerald the Kingdom of Heaven and Life Everlasting! Vechnaya Pam'yat! Memory Eternal! We will have a memorial Parastas for Jerry at some point in the future after the COVID-19 emergency is over...