

THE TROPHYBEARER

Pastoral Thoughts

"Now Let Your Servant Depart in Peace"

The Feast of the Presentation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Temple is called by the Fathers The Meeting, for today God and man encounter one another face to face. As Saint Cyril of Alexandria teaches, the Only-Begotten Word, though above the Law as its Giver, humbles Himself and enters the Temple in obedience, that He might "fulfill all righteousness" and restore fallen humanity through humility.

Saint Sophrony of Jerusalem proclaims that today the Ancient of Days becomes a Child, and the One who rests in the bosom of the Father is carried in the arms of the Virgin. Christ does not come to abolish the Law by force, but to fulfill it by love. In His submission, He sanctifies obedience itself, healing Adam's disobedience and opening the path of life.

The righteous Simeon, bearing the weight of centuries of expectation, receives the Child and beholds the fulfillment of the promises. According to Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Simeon's joy is not merely that he sees Christ, but that he holds Him—showing that salvation is not an idea but a living communion. Having embraced Life Himself, Simeon is freed from the fear of death and cries, "Now let Your servant depart in peace."

Yet Simeon also reveals the mystery of contradiction. Saint John Chrysostom teaches that Christ is a sign opposed because the Cross overturns worldly wisdom. The same Child who enlightens the Gentiles and glorifies Israel will be rejected. The Theotokos will share in her Son's suffering, as a sword pierces her soul. From the Temple, the Cross already stands before us.

The prophetess Anna, advanced in years and rich in prayer, bears witness to all who await redemption. As Saint Ambrose observes, she teaches that perseverance in prayer prepares the heart to recognize Christ when He appears.

Today, the same Lord comes to meet you. Saint Maximus the Confessor reminds us that Christ desires to be received not only in the Temple of stone, but in the living Temple of the heart. If we, like Simeon, purify ourselves through repentance and faith, we too shall behold the Light of salvation.

Let us therefore go forth to meet Christ, that, holding Him in our hearts, we may also depart in peace.



This issue:

Pastoral Thoughts

PAGE 01

Epistle Readers

PAGE 02

Parish Council Groups

PAGE 02

Evening Meal Volunteers

PAGE 02

Prosphora Makers/Coffee
Social Hosts

PAGE 02

Lives of the Saints

PAGE 03

Church Calendar

PAGE 08

PARISH NEWS

Epistle Readers

Anyone wishing to become an Epistle Reader, Please Contact Father Michael

Sunday, February 1, 2026: The Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee: Aletheia Hadjis

Sunday, February 8, 2026: The Sunday of the Prodigal Son: Scott Florence

Sunday, February 15, 2026: Judgment Sunday: Kim Eastland

Sunday, February 22, 2026: Forgiveness Sunday: Eric Reyes

Evening Meal Volunteers

February 25, 2026: Susan Coin / Cathy Farrell

March 25, 2026: Kim Eastland / Veronica Tolescu

April 22, 2026: Dennis and Nancy Spurgetis

May 27, 2026: Kathy Begyn / Elaine Amidon

June 24, 2026: Fr. Michael and Presbytera Maria Constantinides / Doug and Patti
Kenyon

Anyone interested in taking part in this worthwhile ministry should contact Mary
Winters at 563-726-2880

Pastoral Notes

1. The week of the Publican and the Pharisee, the first week of the Triodion, is a fast-free week. That means we can eat anything any day and still receive Holy Communion on Sunday. It is Fast-free because we do not wish to be like the Pharisee who fasted twice a week and was hypocritical, so we do not fast this week.
2. The week following the Prodigal Son, the second week of the Triodion, is a normal fasting week.
3. The week following Judgement Sunday, that is, the third week of the Triodion, is fast-free from everything except meat. That means we are allowed to eat anything except meat on any day including Wednesday and Friday, and still receive Holy Communion on Sunday.

Parish Council Sunday Duty Schedule

Sunday, February 1, 2026: Kathy Begyn, Kim Eastland, Mary Kay Eckert, and Mary
Rankin.

Sunday, February 8, 2026: Nick Elias, Ted Pitsoulakis, and Dennis Spurgetis

Sunday, February 15, 2026: Joe Burmeister, Mariellen Crosson, Pete Hadjis, Gus Pappas

Sunday, February 22, 2026: Kathy Begyn, Kim Eastland, Mary Kay Eckert, and Mary
Rankin.

LADIES FELLOWSHIP COFFEE

Ladies Fellowship Coffee - Second Thursday of every month @ 9 am. The Coffee House in East Village, 1315 Jersey Ridge Rd., Davenport. Spread the word. No RSVP required - hope to see you there!

PROSPHORA MAKERS

Sunday, February 1, 2026: Open

Sunday, February 8, 2026: Open

Sunday, February 15, 2026:
Open

Sunday, February 22, 2026:
Open

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

February 1, 2026: Tom and Jenny
Bakeris

February 8, 2026: Kathy and
Kevin Begyn

February 15, 2026: No Coffee
Hour/Meat fare Luncheon

February 22, 2026: Elaine
Burmeister

PARISH REGISTRY

Baptism

The servant of God, John Blauman,
was Baptized into the Orthodox
Faith on November 23, 2025, and
the sponsor was Sarah Elias.

Funeral

The servant of God, Judy Pappas,
fell asleep in the Lord and was
buried on December 12, 2025.

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee: Triodion Begins (February 1)

The Pharisees were an ancient and outstanding sect among the Jews known for their diligent observance of the outward matters of the Law. Although, according to the word of our Lord, they "did all their works to be seen of men" (Matt. 23:5), and were hypocrites (ibid. 23: 13, 14, 15, etc.), because of the apparent holiness of their lives they were thought by all to be righteous, and separate from others, which is what the name Pharisee means. On the other hand, Publicans, collectors of the royal taxes, committed many injustices and extortions for filthy lucre's sake, and all held them to be sinners and unjust. It was therefore according to common opinion that the Lord Jesus in His parable signified a virtuous person by a Pharisee, and a sinner by a Publican, to teach His disciples the harm of pride and the profit of humblemindedness.

Since the chief weapon for virtue is humility, and the greatest hindrance to it is pride, the divine Fathers have set these three weeks before the Forty-day Fast as a preparation for the spiritual struggles of virtue. This present week they have called Harbinger, since it declares that the Fast is approaching; and they set humility as the foundation for all our spiritual labors by appointing that the parable of the Publican and the Pharisee be read today, even before the Fast begins, to teach, through the vaunting of the Pharisee, that the foul smoke of self-esteem and the stench of boasting drives away the grace of the Spirit, strips man of all his virtue, and casts him into the pits of Hades; and, through the repentance and contrite prayer of the Publican, that humility confers upon the sinner forgiveness of all his wicked deeds and raises him up to the greatest heights.

All foods are allowed the week that follows this Sunday.

The Presentation of the Lord (February 2)

When the most pure Mother and Ever-Virgin Mary's forty days of purification had been fulfilled, she took her first-born Son to Jerusalem on this, the fortieth day after His birth, that she might present Him in the temple according to the Law of Moses, which teaches that every first-born male child be dedicated to God, and also that she might offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons, as required by the Law (Luke 2:22-24; Exod. 13:2; Lev. 12:6-8). On this same day, a just and devout man, the greatly aged Symeon, was also present in the temple, being guided by the Holy Spirit. For a long time, this man had been awaiting the salvation of God, and he had been informed by divine revelation that he would not die until he beheld the Lord's Christ. Thus, when he beheld Him at that time and took Him up into his aged arms, he gave glory to God, singing: "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, O Master. . ." And he confessed that he would close his eyes joyfully, since he had seen the Light of revelation for the nations and the Glory of Israel (Luke 2:25-32). From ancient times, the Holy Church has retained this tradition of the churhching of the mother and new-born child on the fortieth day and of the reading of prayers of purification.

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son (February 8)

Through the parable of today's Gospel, our Saviour has set forth three things for us: the condition of the sinner, the rule of repentance, and the greatness of God's compassion. The divine Fathers have put this reading the week after the parable of the Publican and Pharisee so that, seeing in the person of the Prodigal Son our own wretched condition -- inasmuch as we are sunken in sin, far from God and His Mysteries -- we might at last come to our senses and make haste to return to Him by repentance during these holy days of the Fast.

Furthermore, those who have wrought many great iniquities, and have persisted in them for a long time, oftentimes fall into despair, thinking that there can no longer be any forgiveness for them; and so being without hope, they fall every day into the same and even worse iniquities. Therefore, the divine Fathers, that they might root out the passion of despair from the hearts of such people, and rouse them to the deeds of virtue, have set the present parable at the forecourts of the Fast, to show them the surpassing goodness of God's compassion, and to teach them that there is no sin -- no matter how great it may be -- that can overcome at any time His love for man.

SATURDAY OF SOULS (FEBRUARY 14)

Through the Apostolic Constitutions (Book VIII, ch. 42), the Church of Christ has received the custom to make commemorations for the departed on the third, ninth, and fortieth days after their repose. Since many throughout the ages, because of an untimely death in a faraway place, or other adverse circumstances, have died without being deemed worthy of the appointed memorial services, the divine Fathers, being so moved in their love for man, have decreed that a common memorial be made this day for all pious Orthodox Christians who have reposed from all ages past, so that those who did not have particular memorial services may be included in this common one for all. Also, the Church of Christ teaches us that alms should be given to the poor by the departed one's kinsmen as a memorial for him.

Besides this, since we make commemoration tomorrow of the Second Coming of Christ, and since the reposed have neither been judged, nor have received their complete recompense (Acts 17:31; II Peter 2:9; Heb. 11:39-40), the Church rightly commemorates the souls today, and trusting in the boundless mercy of God, she prays Him to have mercy on sinners. Furthermore, since the commemoration is for all the reposed together, it reminds each of us of his own death, and arouses us to repentance.

JUDGEMENT SUNDAY (FEBRUARY 16)

The foregoing two parables -- especially that of the Prodigal Son -- have presented to us God's extreme goodness and love for man. But lest certain persons, putting their confidence in this alone, live carelessly, squandering upon sin the time given them to work out their salvation, and death suddenly snatch them away, the most divine Fathers have appointed this day's feast commemorating Christ's impartial Second Coming, through which we bring to mind that God is not only the Friend of man, but also the most righteous Judge, Who recompenses to each according to his deeds.

It is the aim of the holy Fathers, through bringing to mind that fearful day, to rouse us from the slumber of carelessness unto the work of virtue, and to move us to love and compassion for our brethren. Besides this, even as on the coming Sunday of Cheese-fare we commemorate Adam's exile from the Paradise of delight -- which exile is the beginning of life as we know it now -- it is clear that today's is reckoned the last of all feasts, because on the last day of judgment, truly, everything of this world will come to an end.

All foods, except meat and meat products, are allowed during the week that follows this Sunday.

HOPE

Humanitarian Outreach & Philanthropic Engagement

DONATION CHECKLIST

Non-Perishable Items

CARBOHYDRATES

- Pasta 16 oz
- Rice 2 lbs
- Lentils 16 oz
- Instant Potatoes
- Graham Crackers
- Crackers 7 oz
- Cereal 8.9 oz
- Oatmeal 18 oz

CANNED ITEMS

- Chicken 5 oz
- Tuna 5 oz
- Salmon 5 oz
- Turkey 5 oz
- Beans 15.5 oz
- Corn 15.25 oz
- Soup-low sodium 19 oz
- Chili

CONDIMENTS

- Fruit Jams 18 oz
- Granola Bars 12 ct
- Apple Sauce 24 oz
- Pudding 4 pk
- Pasta Sauce 24 oz
- Nuts
- Cooking Oils
- Powdered Milk
- Peanut Butter 16.3 oz
- Dried herbs/Spices

Please include 12-15
of the non-perishable items

3-4 items per category

Do not overstuff the bags if you
are using double paper bags

Separate into multiple bags
or place in canvas bags
to avoid ripping.



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA
METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO





St. George Parish Council Meat Fare Luncheon



Lunch • Fellowship

Sunday
February 15

Following
Liturgy

Gold
Room

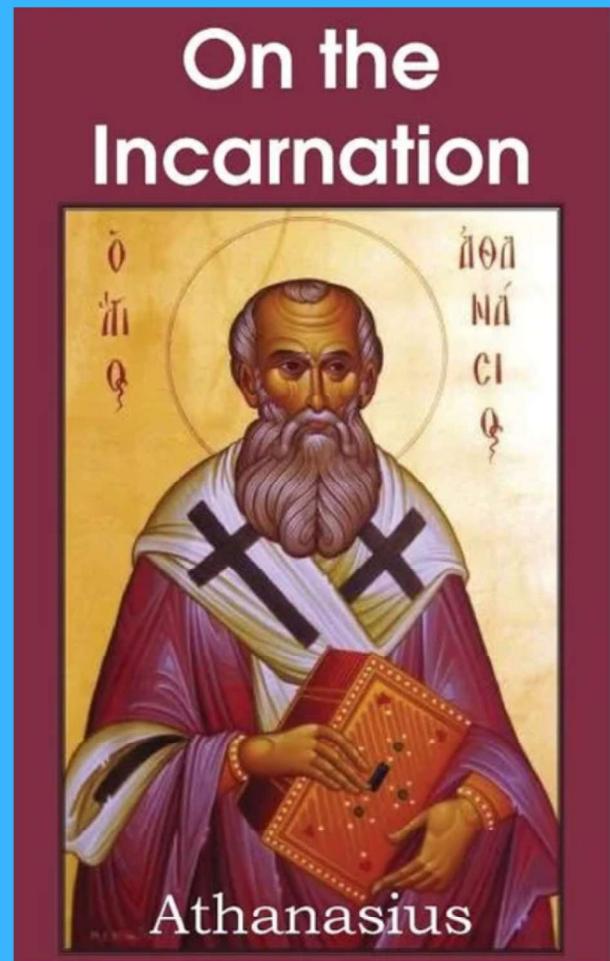
Adults: \$18

Children (12-under) \$12

Greek Salad, Chicken Kapama, Desert
Pre-Orders encouraged.

Send pre-order to frmike99@aol.com by Wednesday, February 11, 2026
Please join us for our meat fare luncheon and bring donations for our
Project Hope project!

Let Us Explore: “On the Incarnation” By Saint Athanasios the Great Every Thursday at 7:00 p.m.



Join us either in person (in our parish library) or
via Zoom

Saturday of Souls

Name Lists for the Saturday of Souls

February 14, 2026

February 21, 2026

February 28, 2026

List the first names (Baptismal Names) of your loved ones that have fallen asleep in the Lord

2026 FEBRUARY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee (The Triodion Begins) 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes follow Holy Communion	2 The Presentation of the Lord Fast Free 8:00 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy @ Assumption Church	3 Fast Free 7:00 p.m. Virtual Orthodox Study Forum	4 Fast Free 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum	5 Fast Free 7:00 p.m. Book Study: On the Incarnation by Saint Athanasios the Great both "in-person" and Zoom	6 Fast Free	7 Fast Free
8 Sunday of the Prodigal Son 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes following Holy Communion	9	10 7:00 p.m. Virtual Orthodox Study Forum	11 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum	12 9:00 a.m. Women's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 7:00 p.m. Book Study: On the Incarnation by Saint Athanasios the Great both "in-person" and Zoom	13 Fast Day	14 1st Saturday of Souls 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy
15 Judgment Sunday (Meat-fare Sunday) 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes follow Holy Communion Meat-fare Luncheon following the Divine Liturgy Project Hope Service Project following the Divine Liturgy	16 Fasting only from meat	17 Fasting only from meat 7:00 p.m. Virtual Orthodox Study Forum	18 Fasting only from meat 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum	19 Fasting only from meat 7:00 p.m. Book Study: On the Incarnation by Saint Athanasios the Great both "in-person" and Zoom	20 Fasting only from meat	21 2nd Saturday of Souls Fasting only from meat 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy
22 Forgiveness Sunday (Cheese-fare Sunday) 8:30 a.m. Orthros 9:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy Sunday School Classes follow Holy Communion 5:00 p.m. Forgiveness Vespers	23 Clean Monday Great Lent Begins Fast Day 6:00 p.m. Great Compline	24 Fast Day 6:30 p.m. Parish Council Meeting	25 Fast Day 8:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship Group @ Coffee House (1315 Jersey Ridge Road, Davenport, IA) 11:00 a.m. Orthodox Study Forum 5:30 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy @ Assumption	26 Fast Day 7:00 p.m. Book Study: On the Incarnation by Saint Athanasios the Great both "in-person" and Zoom	27 Fast Day 7:00 p.m. First Salutations	28 3rd Saturday of Souls Oil and Wine Allowed 8:30 a.m. Orthros followed by the Divine Liturgy