

THE FORERUNNER

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LENT: AN INTIMATE JOURNEY TO GOD

What is Lent? By most popular definitions lent is a period of abstinence, total or partial, from food. It is basically a diet. The Christian understanding of fasting however and especially the Orthodox one, is much more complex.

So what is our understanding of lent? Of course during lent we renounce some types of foods like meat, dairy products etc. This is an important part of our Lenten journey, not to be forgotten or neglected; it helps the body become swifter and, less encumbered by heavy foods, so it can rise faster to prayer and other soul enriching activities. Abstaining from food, although absolutely necessary, is not a goal in itself, but just a gate to greater things.

Fasting is first and foremost an attempt to live, even if for a short period, closer to perfection, to the Christian ideal; it is a return to the basics of humanity before the fall. In Paradise Man was not concerned with food and the matters of the body. The purpose of his existence was to advance in the grace of God by remaining close to Him, trusting completely in His loving care. What came with the fall was loosing sight of this dependence of God and becoming over-concerned with the matters of the body, to a point when they completely suffocate his entire existence.

Lent is an exercise meant to help us break free from these bonds of material necessity so we could redirect our efforts towards spiritual development. This involves separation from the world (understood as passions) through fasting completed by a more rigorous preoccupation with reaching a closeness to God through the Christian works.

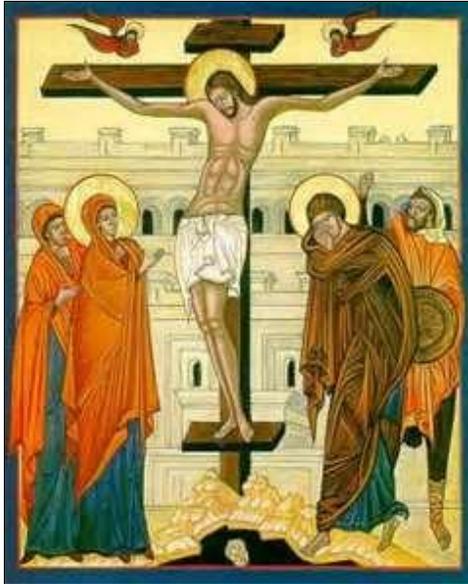
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COUNCIL CAPSULE

With Great Lent rapidly approaching, we must prepare, as this is a time of sacrifice and commitment. We need to take the time to thank our Lord for all that we have accomplished this past year and remember to make our pledge of stewardship. Living as a steward is not expressed in a simple action or even in a number of actions, but in an entire way of life. If you have filled out a 2013 Stewardship Card we thank you; if not, take a moment to do so. St. John's needs your support.

On March 17th, we have scheduled our Spring General Assembly. Please make plans now to stay after liturgy for this informative meeting. We will have full reports from every

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Lent, an intimate Journey to God*
- *Stewardship program for 2013 is on going. join today!*
- *Gladsome Light Dialogues is back!*
- *GOYA Upcoming Events*
- *Music Ministry Page*
- *Philoptochos couples retreat*
- *Church Events*

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COUNCIL'S CAPSULE



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organization of St. John's. Our ministries continue to grow as does our parish. There is something for everyone in the community of St. John's and we encourage you to volunteer.

Also on the agenda for the March General Assembly will be the Food Festival for 2013. A profitable festival will go a long way in defraying the cost and burden on each one of us to retire our loan. The Plan-

ning Committee has been re-established and one of their goals will be to address the needs of our growing community. As of this printing, we are still in need of a chairman for the Food Festival. Please think about volunteering as an individual or as a group.

Also coming up on March 10th, the church will host a Meat Fare Sunday luncheon courtesy of Stratos Restaurant on Northwest Hwy in Dallas. There is a wonderful selection

of entrees to choose from for just \$20 per person, and children eat free! Leo Alexander will be taking reservations every Sunday in the church hall. Make plans now to join your church family and celebrate the beginning of our Lenten Season.

Barbara Vittas

Parish Council President

THE PERMANENT PLANNING COMMITTEE IS BEING REVITALIZED TO BEGIN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MASTER PLAN OF LONG TERM PARISH SITE AND FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT.

PLANNING COMMITTEE TO BEGIN WORK

Now that the Capital Campaign and Building committees have completed or nearly completed their work, the permanent Planning Committee is being revitalized to begin the development of a master plan of long term Parish site and facilities development. Once begun, this planning effort will conclude with the definition of Phase IV scope, budget and schedule to complete the current Capital Development Program.



The Parish Council has appointed Joe Sullivan and George Vittas to co-chair the Planning Committee for the above stated purposes and goals. Joe and George will brief parishioners on the organization, approach and schedule of the Planning Committee at the General Assembly planned for 17th March 2013.

In the interim, Joe and George invite all who have opinions and comments on the Parish's grounds and fa-

ilities needs, and/or who wish to be an active part of the Planning Committee's efforts, to please contact them as soon as possible. To be effective over a short time period, the Planning Committee will be limited in number of members, but the Committee's approach will be to assure all parishioners who wish to take part will have the means to do so over and above attendance at General Assemblies.

LENT: AN INTIMATE JOURNEY TO GOD (CONT.)

(Continued from page 1)

A complete Lent rests on three pillars: fasting, prayer and almsgiving, uncovered by Christ Himself in the sermon on the mountain (see Mathew 6:1-18).

The first pillar: Fasting.

"Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

Fasting should be a first and foremost a great joy, not a burden, an unwanted punishment for our trespasses, but rather a willful renunciation taken upon as an indispensable exercise that builds up the Man in Christ. We fast not only because we have to, but because we want to. God gives the command but He respects our freedom. When we freely choose to fast this should bring joy rather than tears, because when we follow the lead of the Lord we are in communion with Him. *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."* (John 14:15)

Fasting is also not meant as competition but rather as a private matter, an intimate achievement that ultimately helps us rediscover who we are and how we relate to the others and with the entire material world. The ascetic exercise of

lent replenishes the meaning of things that might be taken for granted. If one abuses even the most thought after food for example, after a while it becomes mundane, unsatisfying, not appealing anymore. If one fasts for a time however, when even simple foods are tasted again, they recover their original taste, texture, flavor and we are able to enjoy them again. Same goes for everything we abstain from during lent according to the ancient teachings of the Church. This is one of the great rewards of fasting that can only be understood through personal struggle.

The second pillar: Almsgiving.

"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.?? But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly."

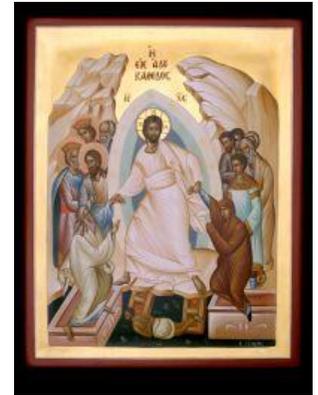
The alms are an evidence of our love for God expressed through the love of our neighbor. On our love for God and on the love of our neighbor rests the entire law of God. (Mat. 22-40). One cannot love God without loving his neighbor who is made, just like ourselves, in God's image. Honoring Him we honor God.

Many times though, the purpose behind almsgiving can be derailed to its demise. Some may give so others can see them and applaud, others to achieve some kind of worldly status, or just to show superiority. Thus all their efforts are in vain and their reward temporary, losing the greater prize awaiting in heavens. Almsgiving, like fasting, should be part of our personal journey to God, that should be accomplished for the sole purpose of getting us closer to Him through the fulfillment of the commandment of love. It is about us, learning how to love, how to care, how to be more sacrificial following the example of Christ Who sacrificed everything for us. It is us becoming more Chris-like. That's why has to be a private affair, not a boasting opportunity.

The third pillar: Prayer

"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy king-

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The Resurrection

*WHEN THOU
DOEST THINE
ALMS, DO NOT
SOUND A
TRUMPET BEFORE
THEE*



LET STEWARDSHIP BE A WAY OF LIFE



PLEASE
PRAYERFULLY
AND CHEERFULLY
COMMIT TO
BECOMING A
STEWARD OF
GOD AT ST.
JOHN'S

Effective stewardship ministry is not a single event or project. Rather, it is going to our people wherever they are in their walk with Christ, listening to their concerns, helping them to realize their importance as branches of the True Vine and encouraging them to offer their gifts in His service. Stewardship is caring for the needs of others. It is offering one's self to God as He offered Himself to us. Stewardship is what a person does after saying "I believe..." as proof of that belief. These words, spoken in Williams and McKibben's *Oriented Leadership*, should resonate with all of us as parishioners. Stewardship is an ongoing

way of life and not a single event one Sunday of the year.

I read the words of Fr. William Chiganos of Holy Apostles Church in Westchester, Illinois. They are right on point. He said, "People don't give to need; they give to vision... Church people don't stretch their giving because of need to meet the budget; they give more because they are able to see a vision of people being reached and God's purposes being accomplished in the life of the church and its ministry." Parishes with successful Orthodox Christian Stewardship Programs have found that incredible support is unleashed from Stewards

who unselfishly and joyfully offer their time, talent and treasures, which in turn enhances the spirituality and ministry of the parish.

It's time. If you have not completed your Stewardship card, please do so. To date we have 82 stewards and \$188,870 pledged towards this year's goal of \$265,000. We need everyone to participate. We pray that you share in our vision for the future of the parish so that we can reach our full potential.

Nina Sullivan and Hope File
Stewardship Ministry

Chosen and Appointed by God to Go and Bear Fruit. John 15:5

UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Can we now build a definition for stewardship? How might we describe "stewardship in action?"

The following list is adapted from one prepared by Ron Nicola:

1. Stewardship is our active commitment to use all our time, talent and treasure for the benefit of humankind in grateful acknowledgment of Christ's redeeming love.
2. Stewardship is caring for the needs of others.
3. Stewardship is offering one's self to God as He offered Himself to us.
4. Stewardship is what a person does after saying "I Believe . . .", as proof of that belief.
5. Stewardship is learning how to be a responsible and

concerned caretaker of Christ's Church; it is learning how to enjoy Church life and be happy in Church work, for in Her dwells the fullness of the Spirit of God.

6. Stewardship is devotion and service to God and his Church as persons, as families, as metropolises, as national Churches, and as the Church universal. (Ron Nicola, "Stewardship - A Set of Basic Principles," *The Word*, November 1982,4.)

Perhaps we could summarize the points just mentioned this way: Christian stewardship is a life in service to God and His Church motivated by our thankfulness for His love to us . "... in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." It is the wise and proper use of all the gifts

God has entrusted to our care. (See Romans 5:8) What **then are the essential** elements of stewardship?

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

1. Acceptance of the belief that all life and life itself is a gift from God.
2. Freedom to choose not to sin and freedom from the constraints, pressures and temptations of the world that smother the expression of this belief.
3. Life in the Spirit which is characterized by behavior that uses and nurtures the time, talents, and treasure entrusted to us by God.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I become a member of the parish?

Membership in the Orthodox Church begins at Baptism (Chrismation for some) and continues throughout our life. We are united with Christ through the sacraments and through our faithful offering of our lives to Christ. We have to distinguish however between voting members and non-voting members. A voting member is over 18 years old and has turned in a signed stewardship commitment

card (for time, talent and treasure). The Archdiocese also requires the voting member to remain current through the year on their commitments. Overall true membership in the Body of Christ, involves living daily according to His word and within His Church.

Why must I commit to give a specific amount?

Knowing the amount of your monetary participation helps our parish plan the activities throughout the year. Your

monetary stewardship is kept in the strictest of confidence.

What if I cannot fulfill my stewardship commitment?

During the course of a year, people's circumstances change. Your stewardship is valued because it is made out of your love for God and His Church. Please do not be concerned if you are unable to meet your stewardship commitment – we are glad you are a part of this parish.



CHOSEN AND APPOINTED BY GOD TO GO AND BEAR FRUIT

Our theme for 2013 is **Chosen and Appointed by God to Go and Bear Fruit** from chapter 15 of the Gospel of John. At the Last Supper, as we read in Chapter 15 of the Gospel of John, Jesus instructed His disciples, "I Am the Vine; you are the branches."

He was telling us that the purpose of our abiding in Him is to bear fruit for God in the world. "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit..." Just as the vine bears fruit through its branches, so Jesus has chosen to work in the world through us.

We are the members of His Body. We are the branches through which the True Vine must bear fruit. We bear fruit when we serve and support God and His Church.

Stewardship

Orthodox Christian Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges accountability,

reverence, and responsibility before God. A primary goal of Stewardship is to promote spiritual growth and strengthen faith.

Becoming a Steward begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. As Stewards, we affirm that every aspect of our lives comes as a gift from Him. Stewardship calls on the faithful to cheerfully offer back to God a portion of the gifts with which they have been blessed.

The Steward

An Orthodox Christian Steward is an active participant in the life of the Church. The Parish encourages all who accept the Orthodox Faith to become practicing Stewards.

Each year the Steward is expected to carefully review his or her personal circumstances and make a commitment of

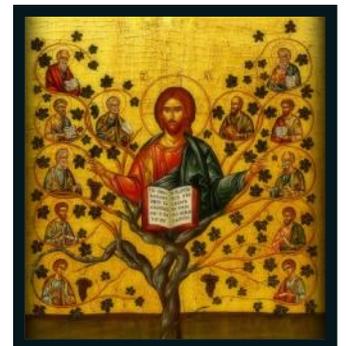
time, talent, and treasure to support the Parish and her Ministries, which in turn also support the National Ministries of our Archdiocese, Metropolises, and institutions.

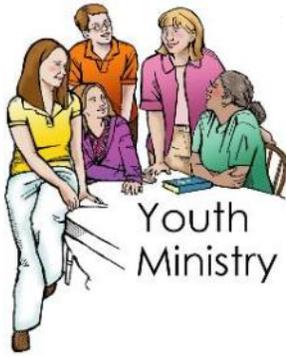
Stewardship is not about paying the bills.

The goal of stewardship is not to pay the bills of the church; the goal of stewardship is to fulfill the purpose of our lives by participating in and enabling the good works of the Church in our Community.

Stewardship is how we should live everyday of our lives, fully engaged and responsible about our life in Him. Stewardship is a practice that can re-shape our world and ourselves in such a way that we can experience God's grace, love and communion in the present. Stewardship is not about survival of the parish, is about personal and communitarian growth in Christ.

AN ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN
STEWARD IS AN
ACTIVE
PARTICIPANT IN
THE LIFE OF THE
CHURCH.





YOUTH MINISTRIES ON THE MOVE

St. John's Oratorical Festival will take place Sunday, **March 3**, following Church services. We will have about six to eight presenters. Our judges will choose the top orator from the 7-9th grade junior division and one from the 10th-12th grade senior division. These winners will proceed to the Metropolis Tournament to be held April 12-14 in Albuquerque, NM; if they advance, they will present their speeches to the Archdiocese Festival, June 7-9, in Memphis, TN. We realize there is a Philoptochos Membership Tea also being held after church services the same day. We hope this does not pose too much of a conflict. Connie Rafeledes and Karen Steffaro will once again coach our kids in the weeks leading up to the event; Judges are yet to be determined.

The GOYA Southern Region Lenten retreat will be held April 19-21 at Sky Ranch in Van, Texas (less than 2 hours away in East Texas). Cost is \$125. See website: <http://youth.denver.goarch.org/events/2013-events/2013-southern-region-lenten-retreat>

Camp Emmanuel - our Metropolis' summer camp - will be held June 9-15 (junior division, ages 11-14) and June 16-22 (senior division, ages 15-18) at the Manzano Mountain Retreat in Torreon, NM. Regular registration is \$335 (\$315 for additional children from the same immediate family) - deadline is May 10. Early registration (10 percent discount) is due by April 5. See website for details: <http://youth.denver.goarch.org/>

[events/2013-events/2013-camp-emmanuel](http://youth.denver.goarch.org/events/2013-events/2013-camp-emmanuel)

Our spring Youth Ministries meeting will take place Sunday, March 24, following church services. We will be planning our graduation luncheon - one of our two annual fundraisers. We will also discuss finances for all things youth-related.

New members welcome!

God Bless.

Harriet Blake
YM coordinator

NOTE TO PARENTS:

OUR CHURCH SCHOOL CLASS TIME IS 45 MINUTES.

ENJOY COFFEE HOUR, AND ALLOW US TO HAVE A FULL LESSON WITH YOUR CHILD.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP AND UNDERSTANDING

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

Dear Students and Parents,

Church School has been very exciting for me to see in action. I very much look forward to working with all of those involved with our Church School. We sure have a fabulous group of teachers educating our youth!

The lower grades have been focusing on the basic customs and tenets of our Orthodox Church. The Middle School and Teen classes continue to focus on the upcoming Oratorical Festival. This is a terrific opportunity for these students to practice organizing their

thoughts and developing public speaking skills. Please encourage your students to participate in this Oratorical Festival.

***Quick Reminder: Our Church School class time is 45 minutes. Depending on the time we begin class (based on dismissal by Father Vasile) our end times do vary. Having your student be with us in Church School for 45 minutes allows us to have a small snack and complete the day's lesson. We will dismiss the children from class upon completion of the morning's lesson. Enjoy coffee hour, and allow us to have a full les-

son with your child. We appreciate your help and understanding.

***Next month you will receive information about the upcoming Lenten Retreat for the students. This is an opportunity to focus our minds and hearts in anticipation of Great and Holy Pascha, with the guidance of Father Vasile. So please mark your calendars when the date and time is announced.

Veronica Fisher



GOYA EVENTS

1. Congrats to the junior boys team who won first place in the annual GOYA Basketball Tournament. The team consisted of Sandro Zingas, Alex Genovezos, Alex Shah and Luca Tudora from St. John's; as well as boys from the Oklahoma City and Kansas City churches. In addition, the junior girls won 4th place; and the senior boys won 3rd place in their respective brackets. This was one of the best showings that St. John's has

ever had in the tournament. Bravo!

2. There is a GOYA spring retreat scheduled for the weekend of April 19-21 at Sky Ranch in Van, Texas (about 1 1/2 hours away outside Tyler, TX) Kids ages 11-18 are invited. See this link for details: <http://youth.denver.goarch.org/events/2013-events/2013-southern-region-lenten-retreat>

3. Ionian Village summer camp in Greece is open to teenagers who have completed grades 8 through 12.

There are two sessions: June 23-July 12; and July 20-Aug. 8. Fr. Evagoras (Evans) Constantinides (the son of Holy Trinity's priest, Fr. Chris) is the program director. For deadlines and fees, see

<http://www.ionianvillage.org/>



GOYA NEWS

Thanks for showing your love by supporting our February 17th bake sale. We are scheduling another Fundraiser before Lent at The Texas Star Grill, 6101 Rufe Snow Dr. Watauga, TX 76148. The owner, George Kallinikos, will donate to our GOYA a percentage of that day's receipts. It's a Tuesday night, but the exact date is yet to

be determined.

Great to see all the GOYAns helping Philoptochos at their annual Valentine's Day Luncheon. Thanks for all of you that stayed to serve and clean up. Follow this link to stay up to date on youth ministries of the Denver Diocese. <http://youth.denver.goarch.org/>

youth.denver.goarch.org/

March 3rd is our next meeting and we will be holding elections. If you would like to run for an office and need more information you can contact me. Please plan on attending.

John Molhoek
GOYA President

PHILOPTOCHOS HOSTS COUPLES RETREAT

SAT. APRIL 5
9:30-4:30,
WITH VESPERS
FOLLOWING AT 5PM

PHILOPTOCHOS HOSTS COUPLES RETREAT

Philoptochos Hosts Couples Retreat

Saturday, April 5, 9:30-4:30 with Vespers following at 5pm.

The Holy Meeting of Joachim and Anna Apostolia Ministry is co-founded and co-directed by Father David and Presbytera Vasiliki Eckley, current living near Austin, TX. Its purpose is to study issues of relationship and life-style in today's world, considering the power of The Holy Orthodox Tradition to inform these issues. This retreat will focus on married couples.

We will host the retreat at our facilities. The cost is \$50 a couple. Please register early since there is a limit of 30 couples in

attendance. No babysitting will be provided (due to space limitations) but we are going to supply a list of available babysitters from the GOYA.

A lunch and snack are included in the day long event which will begin at 9:30 and end at 4:30 with Vespers at 5pm. A no-host dinner at a local restaurant will follow Vespers.

We will extend an invitation to the parishioners of Holy Trinity and St. Demetrios also, so do not delay in registering.

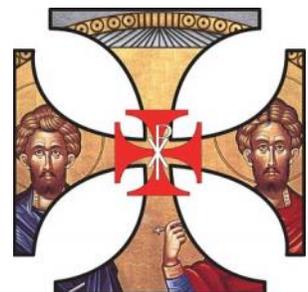
In Other Philoptochos News:

On March 22, we will have our first Lenten Soup Supper. They occur every other Friday, so the

second one is April 5 and the last one is April 19.

Our membership Tea was held on March 3 at the home of Barbara Vittas. Our guests were National Board Member and Metropolis of Denver Philoptochos President Marian Catechis; and National Assistant Treasurer and Metropolis Treasurer Martha Stephanidakis. Please consider becoming a part of St. Irene Philoptochos. It is the Philanthropic arm of the Church. And in our works, we have a rich fellowship among the women members – a treasure indeed!

Joanie Ruppel, President, St. Irene Philoptochos





St. Isaac the Syrian

MUSIC
MINISTRY,
CHOIR AND
CHANTERS
PAGE

CHOIR NOTES

This month's choir notes is written by John Mavias, who sings tenor in our choir~

I love to sing in church and I think its a very important part of the service. I sing and

praise Him constantly with my words and with my life. Worship music is a wonderful chance to enter into the spiritual presence of God. Singing praise to the LORD is a won-

derful experience. I love singing, and I believe it has its place. Singing is to get us ready to worship.

THE SPACE BETWEEN US: INTERVALIC RELATIONSHIPS IN THE HISTORY OF ORTHODOX MUSIC (2)

Last month, we briefly discussed Pythagoras, and his system of musical intervals and tuning. Again, we must realize that for the most part, it was not until Bach, who died roughly 2300 years after Pythagoras(!), that this ancient Greek's system became falling completely out of use. Some adjustments had been made of course, but in general, his guidelines for tuning were frequently used. I guess a good question to ask is "why?"

First, Pythagorean tuning is based off of one essential principle: the ratio of 3:2. This means that if you play two notes together, such as an A and E, the upper note will vibrate three times in the same timespan in which the lower pitch vibrates twice. What is inherently flawed about this system was that, sparing math that even I struggle with, it left some gaps between notes that made it sound out of tune depending on your context.

This may silly to have thousands of years caught up in a somewhat imperfect tuning system. Let us not forget, however, that to an ancient Greek philosopher, whose

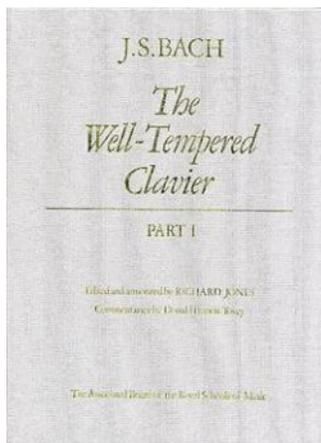
primary job was finding truth (the Logos), a mathematical system of tuning musical instruments was not flawed. How can a system based on sound reason and mathematics be flawed? To an ancient Greek, it cannot.

You may be wondering, "Well, how did people write music if it was out of tune all the time?" First of all, for roughly 1000 years, music which we have record of, in both the west and the east, was (to put it flatly) less complex than the four-part choral arrangements we are used to hearing with vocal ensembles today. This essentially changed in the Renaissance and became codified through the Baroque. However, music didn't sound out of tune, but instruments were tuned to fit the needs of the key they were playing in. A piece in C would not sound as good in Ab (with four flats) for example.

Musical lines in the Baroque (roughly 1600-1750) were much more complex than the music of say, the year 1100. Instead of music being centered around one key or mode for a whole piece, or set of pieces, composers began flexing their musical muscle.

Dated in 1772, J. S. Bach published his famous solo keyboard collection *The Well-Tempered Clavier* which used a type of tuning that somewhat resembles equal temperament. Equal temperament is the system we currently use, and here to stay it seems, which means that every single half step is tuned exactly the same distance from each other.

It took thousands of years to develop the system of equal temperament, which really was not completely standard until roughly the mid-1800s. It is a system we are most accustomed to in our musical worlds, but one unused to any composer before Beethoven. So in music, if you consider music's incredible timeline, it is new! Next month, we will delve into the Church's tradition and that of the west.



LENT: AN INTIMATE JOURNEY TO GOD (CONT.)

(Continued from page 3)

dom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.?? For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

Beside bringing us the most known prayer of Christianity, the Lord's Prayer, we discover here that just as fasting and alms, prayer is yet another personal, intimate encounter with God. Prayer is not about shouting our love for God in the streets but shutting the door of our hearts and finding God there, in the silence of a simple prayer. This makes prayer a very private affair and an experience difficult to share. This is why whenever asked how to pray the Holy Fathers rather gave a command than an explanation: "Pray and the prayer will teach you how to pray". This is not to say that we shouldn't participate in community prayer, by the set rules of the Church Typicon, the Great Lent gives us plenty of opportunities we should participate in, this is to invite us to take an extra step in our personal encounter with God, in the privacy of our icon corners at home.

Here, unhindered by the regards of other people, we can uncover another important aspect of prayer particularly underlined during Lent: the

importance of involving the body in prayer. Man is not just spirit but also body, so to pray earnestly, to pray with your entire being means to get the body to pray also through kneeling, prostrations, standing etc. In this way the whole man participate in the glorification of God by taking part in the ascetic struggle.

A Fourth Pillar

A house is more stable with four columns. Therefore to the three pillars above, for added stability, we should add a fourth one: repentance. Jesus Christ spoke about Repentance at the very beginning of His missionary activity. The reason why is simple: we can't get on the road of perfecting ourselves in the New Covenant with the same baggage we were carrying in the old one, there has to be a change. Repentance helps us get rid of our baggage of confusion, misunderstandings, trespasses, uncertainties, unhealthy attachments and so on. This involves careful examination of conscience based on the commandments of Christ through participation in the mystery of Holy Confession, another personal and private encounter with God.

Confession is a truthful reflection of us just as we are, not as we imagine ourselves to be when we glance into the mirror in the morning. Confession is about taking the courage to trust someone (God, not the Confessor who is just a witness) so much that you can be vulnerable and show your not so glamorous side. This is the only way to progress, to know as weak we are as men so we can become stronger in Christ.

When we raise from Confession, unbothered by the weight of our conscience and receiving the necessary guidance for our journey, we can look now with hope to a future that rises up to God. Failing to receive this Mystery is like refusing to ask for directions in a foreign land: one might find the road by chance, but the odds are slim because our load is heavy and the road is treacherous and full of enemies.

Fasting, almsgiving, prayer, repentance. These are the basics of our life in Christ that we should act upon at all times, not just in Lent. Lent is like a boot camp, a concentrated effort that should develop our taste for a higher responsibility to our spiritual development. We are not saved by them alone, but they help us be more receptive to the grace of God, to understand Him more not just through intellectual exercise but through direct participation.

After all Lent is an a journey to an intimate encounter with God that happens not in far away galaxies, but right in the center of our being: the heart. Through its various therapeutic means Lent helps mediate this encounter and restore us in the grace of God. The journey of Lent is a journey of personal re-discovery, is a return to our formal selves, is personal quest to regain our formal glory lost through sin and self-centricity but regained through virtue and charity accomplished by union with Christ.

Have a blessed Lent!

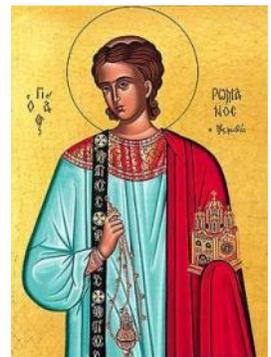
Kali Sarakosti!



Archangel Gabriel

By Photios Kontoglou

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St. Roman the Melodist



SACRAMENTS IN THE PAST MONTH

Baptisms: Lauralee Knight (Mary Magdalene)

Chrismations: Monty Truit (Michael), Bert McKee (Daniel), Travis Province (Columcille)

GLADSOME LIGHT DIALOGUES

On Wednesday March 13 we will start a new Series of Glad- some Light Dialogues entitled “A Journey through the Holy Lent”

We will start after Paraklesis/ Presanctified and we will meet in the conference room.

Stay tuned for more informa- tion. In the meantime please visit us for the latest articles on the web at [Glad- some Light](#)

AGELESS WONDERS

Since we had to cancel our Feb- ruary meeting, we will try again to have lunch and a movie on **Tuesday, March 12, 2013.** Time and place TBA.

I want to encourage everyone to support the fundraiser for our Church on **Sunday, March 10** at Strato's Taverna in Dallas.

Please mark your calendars for **Saturday, June 15;** we are planning our annual trip to Lone Star Park and we'll have to make reservations far in advance .

Margaret

GLADSOME LIGHT DIALOGUES “JOURNEY THROUGH HOLY LENT” STARTS MARCH 13 AFTER PARAKLESIS

USHER SCHEDULE (2/21)

1st Sunday: Tim Cline, Jeremy Ellis

2nd Sunday: Hope File, Michael Eftimie

3rd Sunday: Chris Geil, Larry Leeders

4th Sunday: Nina Sullivan, Raj Shah

5th Sunday: Nancy Medvic, Barbara Vittas

Fill-in: Harry Karegeannes

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

1st Sunday: Bennett Kerbow, Jackson Wright, Alex Genovezos, Caleb Ellis, Luca Tudora

2nd Sunday: Michael Beebe, John Molhoek, Alex Shah, Chris Eftimie, Joseph Berca

3rd Sunday: James Seals, Alex Genovezos, Caleb Ellis, Luca Tudora, Matei Tudora

4th Sunday: Michael Beebe, John Molhoek, Alex Shah, Chris Eftimie, George Manos

5th Sunday: Michael Beebe, James Seals, Alex Genovezos, Alex Shah , Luca Tudora

COFFEE HOUR DUTIES

SETUP

Arrange pastries/food in a desir- able manner on the appropriate tables in the parish hall.

You are responsible for making the coffee. Make two pots: one regular, one decaf. Plug in be-



fore going into church. The instructions are in the kitchen.

Prepare a tray with sugar, creamer, sugar substitute, mix- ing straws, a few spoons. Set with trash bucket.

Put donation basket out with appropriate sign.

CLEAN UP

Wash all dishes soiled, including coffee pots.

Return sugar tray to kitchen and replenish it.

Wash off hall tables and kitchen counters.

Thank-You

St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church
MARCH 2013

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
<p><u>Fasting Symbols:</u></p> <p><i>Fast Free</i></p>  <p><i>Fish allowed</i></p> 	<p><i>Wine/oil allowed</i></p>  <p><i>Strict Fast</i></p> 					 <i>Great Vespers</i> 5:00 PM
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<p><i>17th Sunday of Luke (Prodigal)</i> <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM St. John's Oratorical Festival Philoptochos Membership Tea</p>			 <i>Paraklesis</i> 6:00 PM		 <i>Vespers</i> 6:00 PM	<p><i>The Holy 40 Martyrs of Sebastia</i> <i>Saturday of Souls</i></p> <p><i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM <i>Memorial Service</i></p> <p><i>Great Vespers</i> 5:00 PM</p>
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<p><i>Judgment Sunday (Meatfare)</i> <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM</p> <p>Luncheon at Stratos, Dallas</p>	<p><i>Dairy & Fish allowed</i></p>	<p><i>Dairy & Fish allowed</i></p> <p>Ageless Wonders Lunch / Movie</p>	<p><i>Dairy & Fish allowed</i></p> <p><i>Paraklesis</i> 6:00 PM</p> <p><i>Gladsome Light Dialogues</i> 7:00 PM</p>	<p><i>Dairy & Fish allowed</i></p>	<p><i>Dairy & Fish allowed</i></p>	<p><i>Dairy & Fish allowed</i></p> <p><i>Shishkova Baptism</i> 3:30 PM</p> <p><i>Great Vespers</i> 5:00 PM</p>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<p><i>Dairy & Fish allowed</i></p> <p><i>Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare)</i> <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM General Assembly</p> <p><i>Forgiveness Vespers</i> 6:00 PM</p>	 <i>Great Compline w/Canon of St. Andrew</i> 6:00 PM	 <i>Great Compline w/Canon of St. Andrew</i> 6:00 PM	 <i>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</i> 6:00 PM	 <i>Great Compline w/Canon of St. Andrew</i> 6:00 PM	 Lenten Soup Supper <i>Akathist Hymn</i> 6:00 PM	 <i>Great Vespers</i> 5:00 PM
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<p> <i>Sunday of Orthodoxy</i> <i>Orthros</i> 8:30 AM <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 9:30 AM Youth Ministries Vigil 6:00 PM</p>	<p> <i>Anunciation</i> <i>Divine Liturgy</i> 6:00 AM <i>Great Compline</i> 6:00 PM</p>	<p></p>	 <i>Pre-Sanctified Liturgy</i> 6:00 PM	 <i>Gladsome Light Dialogues</i> 7:00 PM	 <i>Akathist Hymn</i> 6:00 PM	 <i>Great Vespers</i> 5:00 PM



**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

303 Cullum Dr.
Euless, TX 76040
Tel 817 283-2291

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Sponsorship for This Month's Forerunner



**WE'RE ON THE WEB AT
[HTTP://STJOHNDFW.INFO](http://stjohndfw.info)**



THE FORERUNNER

Vol. XXIX No. 3 March 2013



Annunciation
March 25th

