

Holy Lent Spiritual Journey

Fourth week of the Holy Great Fast

Theme of the week
CONSTITUTION OF PROCESSION
THE HOLY GOSPEL



“The true worshipers will worship The Father in
spirit and **truth**; For the Father is seeking such
to worship Him”

John 4:23



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READINGS

Day	Prophecies	Matins	Mass	Know Your Bible Map
Monday	Gen 27:1-41; Is 14:24-32; Job 16:1-17:16	Psalm 55:1, 27:7-8 Luke 14:7-15	Rom 8:12-26 James 5:16-20 Acts 11:2-18 Psalm 55:16-17 Luke 16:1-9	1 Samuel 4-6
Tuesday	Gen 28:10-22; Is 25:1-26:8; Job 18:1-21, Sirach 8:1-10:1	Psalm 17:1 Matt 21:28-32	Eph 4:1-16 2 Pet 2:2-8 Acts 27:1-3 Psalm 17:6 Luke 9:57-62	1 Samuel 7-9
Wednesday	Ex 7:14-8:18; Joel 2:28-32; Job 1:1-22; Is 26:21-27:9	Psalm 18:37,40 Luke 14:16-24	Eph 4:17-32 James 3:13-4:4 Acts 11:26-12:2 Psalm 18:17-18 Mark 4:35-41	1 Samuel 10-12
Thursday	Gen 32:1-30; Is 28:14-22; Job 20:1-29; Dan 6:1-27	Psalm 12:7 Mark 3:7-12	1Cor 12:31-14:1 James 4:11-5:3 Acts 4:19-31 Psalm 48:10-11 Luke 18:35-43	1 Samuel 13-14
Friday	Deut 10:12-11:28; Is 29:13-23; Job 21:1-34; Dan 14:1-42	Psalm 28:6-7 Luke 4:31-37	Heb 13:7-16 1 John 4:7-16 Acts 22:17-24 Psalm 28:2 Matt 15:21-31	1 Samuel 15-16
Saturday	-	Psalm 142:5,7 Luke 16:19-31	Phil 4:4-9 James 3:13-4:6 Acts 24:24-25:12 Psalm 61:1,5 Matt 21:33-46	1 Samuel 17-18
Sunday	-	Psalm 32:11 Matt 22:1-14	Eph 6:10-24 James 4:7-17 Acts 25:13-26:1 Psalm 105:3-5 John 4:1-42	1 Samuel 19-20

Fasting	Metanias	Jesus Prayer
12:30	11 times /day	25 times morning 25 times night

MONDAY - SPIRIT OF THE HOLY GOSPEL

Let all Christ's faithful remember that the more purely they strive to live according to the Gospel, the more they are fostering and even practicing Christian unity; for they can achieve depth and ease in strengthening mutual brotherhood to the degree that they enjoy profound communion with the Father, the Word and the Spirit.

The Imitation of Christ, Thomas A Kempis (Book IV, Chapter 17, p367).

Orthodox Christians have great respect for the Bible. We bind it in gold and keep it enthroned upon the Altar. We kiss it in veneration. We carry it in pompous procession. We burn incense before it. We lift it up before the congregation and proclaim it to be the wisdom of God. We honour the Bible in all these ways. But do we honour it in the most important way? Do we open it to read its treasures? Do we proclaim its glorious good news from the roof tops?

"Introducing the Orthodox Church: Its Faith and Life." Anthony Coniaris(pp162).

Church Father Quote

✦ If a man does not put himself in the attitude of a sinner, his prayer will not be heard before God. "A brother said to him. "What is a sinful soul?" and the elder said. "Every one who bears his own sins, and does not consider those of his companion." Abba Moses the Strong

Practice

Utter several times a day short expressions such as: "My God! I love You. Help me to love You more and more."

TUESDAY - SPREADING THE HOLY GOSPEL

A Jewish soldier who had attended a Christian service during World War II went to a rabbi and asked him the difference between the Messiah of the Jews and the Jesus of the Christians. The rabbi explained, "The difference is that we Jews believe the Messiah is still to come, whereas Christians believe He has already come in Jesus." To this, the soldier asked a questions which could not be answered. "But rabbi, when our Messiah does come, what will he have that Jesus does not have? Will he have more love? More positive goodness? More miraculous power? More purity of life? More divine forgiveness? More perfect righteousness?" "Christ" is a Greek word which means "the anointed one". The Greek word "Christ" is equivalent to the Hebrew word "Messiah". Thus the title "Christ" means the Messiah or the

anointed one. When we speak the words “Jesus Christ” we are confessing the essence of what we believe as Orthodox Christians.

Since “Jesus” is a name and “Christ” is a title, when we put them together and say “Jesus Christ” we are confessing our faith that Jesus is the Messiah or the One anointed by God to save His people.

“Introducing the Orthodox Church: Its Faith and Life.” Anthony Coniaris (pp18)

I listen; He is the one who speaks. I am enlightened; He is true Light. I am the ear; He is the Word.

St. Augustine

Church Father Quote

❖ There are no bad days and good days there are days with prayer and days without prayer. Those days without prayer are empty and void. Pope Kyrillos VI

Practice

Take it calmly when people speak ill of you and remember that it is God’s judgment which alone matters.

WEDNESDAY - PEACE OF THE HOLY GOSPEL

During the Prayer of Reconciliation, when the deacon says to the congregation, “Pray for perfect peace, for love, and for the pure apostolic kisses,” the congregation responds by saying, “Lord have mercy.” We ask the Lord to have mercy by giving us these great divine graces; the grace of perfect peace for the church externally and internally, the grace of perfect peace within our homes and families so that troubles and conflicts may end and wounds may heal. And for the grace of love, which is the bond of perfection of the children of the church with each other. If peace and love dwell within us, then the exchange of holy kisses will be like those of the apostles in the first Church; unlike the kiss of Judas which was false and deceptive, shrewd and evil hearted.

While the deacon is chanting this response, why don’t you, my beloved, request peace and love for yourself, your family, your neighbours and your friends, and especially those who are suffering from various conflicts and trials. Mention them by name, ask for them in persistence at these moments and God will be able to do by your prayers more than wise men can do. In the second part of the Prayer of Reconciliation, the priest asks God to fill our hearts with His Divine

Peace that surpasses the mind, to keep our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus, the King of Peace. And when He reigns in our hearts we can live peacefully with ourselves and others, bearing all their weaknesses, and we will have peace with God who is a loving Father for all of us. Hence, we will also enjoy psychological and physical health, and make us live in heaven while still being on earth.

"How to benefit from the Holy Liturgy", His Grace Bishop Matthaous (pp95-96).

Church Father Quote

❖ God for your sake humbled Himself, and you will not be humbled for your own sake?! St. Macarius the Great

Practice

Place your hope of peace not in men but in God alone.

THURSDAY - LIGHT OF THE HOLY GOSPEL

Above all the noise of the multitude Jesus heard the lonely prayer of the blind beggar and He stopped. The Almighty Lord and Master of the universe is stopped by the prayer of a poor, blind forgotten beggar! He commands the beggar to be brought to Him. Let us talk briefly about the prayer that stopped Jesus: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." For certainly if this prayer stopped Jesus then, it can stop Him today.

The blind man's prayer, altered but slightly, is known today as the Jesus prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner." It is one of the most commonly used prayers in the Orthodox Church... The power of the Jesus prayer lies in the name Jesus, "the name that is above every name."... The Jesus prayer can give us the power to resist every evil thought and temptation with which Satan attacks us. When Satan knocks on the door of the mind seeking entrance through some evil thought, send Jesus to the door and he will flee. Resist every temptation with the Jesus prayer... Let the last words you utter each night be the Jesus prayer. Fall asleep with these words on your lips. What better way to end a day than with Jesus? And when you wake up in the morning, let the first words you utter be the Jesus prayer. What better way to greet a new day than with Jesus? During the day, whether you are talking, sitting or walking repeat the Jesus prayer or the name of Jesus alone in love and adoration. As Princess Illeana of Romania said, "I sleep, but my heart, as it beats, prays on: 'Jesus'".

Church Father Quote

❖ An elder said: “If you see a brother who has sinned, do not blame him for it, but (blame) the one who fights against him, and say: “As he was defeated, so too could I be”. Weep and seek the help of God. Nobody wants to sin against God but we are all led astray. Sayings of the Desert Fathers

Practice

Avoid arguments and turn from the strife of men that God’s truth may be heard more clearly.

FRIDAY - FAITH IN THE HOLY GOSPEL

Two thousand years ago a certain Samaritan woman would draw water regularly from Jacob’s well for drinking and cleaning. One day, Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty.” (v 13). Deep in her heart, the woman had desired something more than the well water. According to the Bible, she had five husbands and the man she was living with was not her husband. All the time she was longing for true love, acceptance, satisfaction and meaning in life, which she could not find.

Like this woman, people today are looking for something to satisfy their needs and solve their problems. They may turn to their heritage, tradition, culture, knowledge or religion – as symbolized by Jacob’s well. Unfortunately, these are not the ultimate solution for people’s problems. The prophet Amos said, “The days are coming,” declares the Sovereign Lord, “when I will send a famine through the land – not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the Lord.” (Amos 8:11).

Jesus understood this and offered the woman another kind of water. The living water He gives can quench her thirst eternally. Living water refreshes and flows endlessly, and would satisfy her deepest needs. So she said to Him, “Sir, give me this water so that I won’t get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.” (v15 NIV). Life changes when one encounters the Messiah – Christ, for He will give us abundant life which will be for all eternity. “Then the angel showed me the river of water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city.” (Revelation 22:1-2a NIV).

Church Father Quote

❖ If you happen to fall into temptation, do not let the guilt of sin be an obstacle to prayer. If you cease praying till you repent, you will never repent, for prayer is the door to genuine repentance. Pope Kyrillos VI

Practice

Turn your ear to God and He will speak to you of the things that bring you peace.

SATURDAY - WORKS & FRUIT OF THE HOLY GOSPEL

One of the finest tribute sever paid to the Bible was that of Coleridge the Poet. He said simply, "It finds me." It finds me in my wrongdoing and convicts me of sin. It finds me in my loneliness and brings to me the companionship of God. It finds me in my need and brings the divine answer to that need. Are we giving the word of God a chance to find us? How often do we open the door to God's presence? The two disciples who had been walking with the risen Christ on the Road to Emmaus did not know it was Jesus. They thought He was a stranger until the end when He revealed Himself to them in the breaking of the bread. Then, looking back on the experience they said, "Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked to us on the road, while He opened to us the Scriptures?" (Luke 24:32). If we walk with the risen Christ today and let Him open the Scriptures to us, our hearts and minds too will burn with new light, new understanding, new power, joy and hope.

"Introducing the Orthodox Church: Its Faith and Life." Anthony Coniaria(pp160).

"And I, humble Seraphim...go through the Gospel daily. On Monday I read St. Matthew, from beginning to end; on Tuesday, St. Mark; on Wednesday, St. Luke; on Thursday, St. John; the other days I divide between the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of the Apostles. And I do not for a single day neglect to read the daily Epistle and Gospel, and also the readings of the Saints. Through this not only my soul, but even my body rejoices and is vivified, because I converse with the Lord. I hold in my mind His life and suffering and day and night I glorify and give thanks to my Redeemer for all His mercies that are shed upon mankind and upon me, the unworthy one." St. Seraphim of Sarov.

Church Father Quote

- ❖ As health comes from the bitter medicine, so too does the salvation of souls come from bitter experiences. St. Paisios of Mt. Athos

Practice

When suffering comes your way, accept it as a cross given by Jesus.

SUNDAY - GLORY OF THE HOLY GOSPEL

There was an encounter face-to-face between the evasive human soul (the Samaritan Woman) and our Lord Jesus Christ. The human soul is seeking happiness and has envisaged that such happiness could be attained through dissipation and realization of worldly passions, even to the extent of having five husbands. Encounter with Christ indicated a valuable truth, the human soul living in desires of the flesh is not satisfied but it is thirsty. Confession is the only way to encounter God.

The woman's confession enabled her to acquire the bliss of living water. Confession reveals the evasiveness of the human soul.

Following confession there comes satisfaction. In fasting you should drink to your satisfaction from the living water. Meditation is a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Prayer is a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Love of Christ is a well.

After confession and satisfaction comes prostration in prayer. In the pilgrimage of fasting the Church stresses prostration (matanias) which means submission and subjection to Christ's sovereignty.

"The Pilgrimage of the Holy Days of Fasting." Father Tadros Malaty (pp12).

Repentance (Type II) - The Samaritan woman repented in response to Christ's love towards her. If we can not return ourselves the Lord will come and fetch us, by different means. It shows that the grace of God can visit us in the 12th hour and moves sinners to repentance. It declares that our Lord is thirsty and hungry for our salvation. The repentant lady preached in the town and she led her people to the salvation of Christ. The Pauline epistle asks us to be armed with the word of God. The Catholic epistle tells us to submit to God and resist the devil. The Acts encourages us to be like St. Paul who spoke boldly and preached the gospel to the Jews and the Gentiles.