

Fourth Sunday of the Great Fast; Commemoration of St. John Climacus

Our Venerable Father Benedict of Nursia –
Benedict was born in Italy around the year 480.
He is the father and legislator of Western
monasticism. He died in 547. *Great Fast Day 28.*

**** Sunday, March 14th, 2021****

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***The Most Holy Trinity Parish Public
Liturgical Services Postponed until
further notice***

Please join Holy Eucharist Cathedral (New
Westminster) for live-streamed coverage of liturgical services
**** Sundays **** at 8:30 a.m. Divine Liturgy (Eng.) and at
10:30 a.m. Божественна Літургія (Укр.).***

<https://www.facebook.com/holyeucharistcathedral/>

Youtube https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPp1JaDotlj_4h3aAJq0Srg

Telus TV channel by tuning to channel 876 on TELUS Optik.

Also * Live streaming from the Exaltation of the Holy
Cross Parish, Surrey - 09:00 AM & 11:00 AM -**

<https://www.facebook.com/crossparish>



The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is celebrated today.

Troparion, Tone 8: You came down from on high, O Merciful One, * and accepted three days of burial * to free us from our sufferings. * O Lord, our life and our resurrection, * glory be to You.

Troparion, Tone 1: O John, our God-bearing father, * you were shown to be a citizen of the desert, * an angel in bodily form, * and a worker of miracles. * Through fasting, prayers and vigils you received heavenly gifts * to heal the sick and the souls of those who, in faith, run to you. * Glory to Him who gives you strength. * Glory to Him who crowned you. * Glory to Him who works healing for all through you.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Kontakion, Tone 4: On the heights of true abstinence, * the Lord established you as a reliable star, * giving light for guidance to the ends of the earth, * O father John, our teacher.

Prokeimenon, Tone 8 - Pray and give thanks to the Lord our God.

verse: In Judea God is known; His name is great in Israel.

Prokeimenon, Tone 8

verse: The venerable ones will exult in glory* and they shall be joyful in their beds. (*Psalm 149:5*)

Epistle - Hebrews 6:13-20

Brothers and Sisters, when God made a promise to Abraham, because he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, saying, "I will surely bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Human beings, of course, swear by someone greater than themselves, and an oath given as confirmation puts an end to all dispute. In the same way, when God desired to show even more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it by an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God would

prove false, we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us. We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Alleluia, Tone 8 - Come, let us rejoice in the Lord; let us acclaim God our Saviour.

verse: Let us come before His countenance with praise and acclaim Him with psalms. (*Psalm 94:1,2*)

verse: They who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. (*Psalm 91:14*)



Gospel - Mark 9:17-31;

At that time, someone from the crowd came to Jesus, bowed before him, and said, “Teacher, I brought you my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, but they could not do so.” He answered them, “You faithless generation, how much longer must I be among you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him to me.” And they brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. Jesus asked the father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us.” Jesus said to him, “If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes.” Immediately the father of the child cried out, “I believe; help my unbelief!” When Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You spirit that keeps this boy from speaking and hearing, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!” After crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse, so that

most of them said, “He is dead.” But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he was able to stand. When he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” He said to them, “This kind can come out only through prayer.”

They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and three days after being killed, he will rise again.”

Hymn to the Mother of God

In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices: the angelic ranks and all the human race. Sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, virgins’ pride and boast, from whom God is made flesh and became a little Child; and He who is our God before all ages, He made your womb a throne, and He made it wider than all the heavens. In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices. Glory be to you.

Communion Hymn - Praise the Lord from the heavens; * praise Him in the highest. (*Psalm 148:1*) * The just man shall be in everlasting remembrance; * of evil hearsay he shall have no fear. * Alleluia, alleluia, * alleluia. (*Psalm 111:6*)

**** ANNOUNCEMENTS ****



Dear Parishioners, please be assured of my prayers and well wishes in this continuing time of battle with the coronavirus.

Public church services continue to be postponed. Please continue participating in online or televised services and remain united with each other in thought and prayer. Keep up the phone calls and don't forget those who may not receive many calls, emails, texts, etc.



**** To Ponder – The Fathers & Mothers Speak *****

“Fasting is a weapon against the armies of demons: “For this kind doesn’t go out except by prayer and fasting.... But don’t limit the goodness of fasting by abstaining only from foods. For true fasting is the enemy of evil. “Loose the chains of injustice!” Forgive your neighbor’s offense, and forgive his debts. Don’t “fast unto judgment and strife” (Isa 58:4). You don’t eat meat, but you eat your brother. You abstain from wine, but stubbornly hold on to insolence. ... Fasting is the proper decorum of a city, stability of the marketplace, peace of homes, saving of possessions. Do you want to see its dignity?” St. Basil the Great

“We need to give Christ a chance to make use of us to be His word and His work. If we do not radiate the light of Christ around us, the sense of darkness that prevails in the world will increase. The people around us should be able to recognize Him by our union with God.” St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

CATECHETICAL SUMMARY

In the Epistle appointed for this Sunday, we learn about the “oath” which God has made with us. What is an oath? Saint Paul tells us in the epistle that it is a “promise,” a “guarantee,” a “sure and firm anchor of the soul,” the “final settlement” of disagreements.

When two people swear an oath, they are promising to be of one mind regarding the thing promised. The oath is the outward sign of the interior union of the two parties. In the case of Jesus,

the oath and promise that he makes with us is that he will take us with him beyond the “veil,” and make us partakers of the divine nature.

In other words, Jesus promises us that He will give us His life. Today the Lord swears an oath to us that if we willingly die to our old selves through “prayer and fasting” and promise to give ourselves to him, then the demons of our former life will be cast out, that our sins will be washed away, and that we will rise with him in His resurrection on the third day.

We have hope then, having promised our life to the Lord, that when the day of Pascha arrives, we who have died with him will receive a new life in him.

Commentary on the Sunday Gospel Reading:

<https://godwithusonline.org/reflections/the-sunday-of-st-john-of-the-ladder-ukrainian/>



Please Pray for health of ... All those affected

by the coronavirus, and: Joe M., Ambrose Sh., Jennie H., Robert M., Dave & Betty C., Krzysztof W., Matt D., Alexandra & Oleh K., Mirosław G., John N., Fr. John N., T.W., Bill P., Thomas H., Bohdan R., Lawrence & Ping B., Peter O., Gladys O., Alex S., Jessica N., Olga P., Sharon B., Zonia R., Brian K., Jayne & Ernie P., Mary W., Sam D., Ray O., Mary E., Sharon & Al L., Joe S., Jeanne R., Emily H., Lisa M., Michael L., Greg H., Melynda S., Ann D., Joyce K., Suzanne C., Clay B., Maria W., Anne D., all sick brothers and sisters in our families and parish community. Please let Fr. Andrzej know if you would like to add names to the prayer list and also notify him about any sick and/or hospitalized parishioners and family members.



Thank you to all our Supporters

– **Дякуємо** – Our gratitude to everyone for your prayers & ongoing financial support of our parish and for all other ways in which you




assist our church community.

Spiritual Journey during Covid-19 Closure – Time of Personal Prayer & Confession - dear brothers & sisters in Christ, although our churches are closed for public liturgical services, it is still possible to come for private prayer and the Sacrament of Confession & to receive Holy Communion by appointment only, during which the protocols of social distancing will be adhered to. Please call Fr. Andrzej to arrange a time. Also the faithful will be able to receive the Eucharist after their confession.

Clergy of New Westminster Eparchy – during this year’s Lenten season, New West clergy will participate in two online programs: 1. **Each Tuesday** from 10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. (until March 30) “JP33” (Jesus Prayer 33) Prayer Challenge & 2. **Each Friday** from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (until March 26) “Making Friends with the Fathers: Patristic Texts on Pastoral Ministry, an online study for Clergy”.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul, OLPH, Kamloops – will hold their next monthly zoom meeting tomorrow, **Monday, March 15th** at 11:00 a.m.

Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Monthly Zoom Meeting – will take place on **Thursday, March 18th** at 7:00 p.m. 

Join The Conversation With The Ukrainian Catholic Church - Thursday nights at 4:00 – 6:00 p.m. Join us weekly to dialog with Bishop Brian Bayda, clergy and featured speakers. Follow us on [Tranquillight Calling YouTube channel](#). Email your questions and receive the zoom link: uccconversation@gmail.com

Online Lenten Resources:

Ascension Press Presents: The Bible in a Year with Fr. Mike Schmitz <https://media.ascensionpress.com/category/ascension-podcasts/bibleinayear/>

Dynamic Catholic Best Lent Ever - A daily email with a short video to help you reconnect with yourself and your God. <https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/lent/best-lent-ever.html>

Lenten Reflections with Bishop Barron:

<https://www.lentreflections.com>

A Lenten Webinar Series Presented by the Eparchy of Edmonton

The journey through the Great Fast is one of discovery. Discovery of the image of God, within ourselves and others. Discovery of God's infinite love for us on the cross and discovery of the gift of grace that can lead us from darkness into the light of spring.

We are the soil. We work to care for the soil of our hearts so that we may produce fruit for His Kingdom. Join us as we explore the wisdom of the Fathers and Mothers of the Eastern Church to discover the treasure within our hearts. We prepare the soil, we sow the seeds and we bear the fruit.

Details: Thursday, March 18. Time: 7:00 – 8:00 pm.

Bearing Fruit. The fruit of all this is love. Our interior work must be reflected in our actions towards others and all of God's creation. We turn to God in repentance, we fast, we receive the body of Christ. Our spiritual work feeds our ability to bear the fruit of love.

Presenter: Sr. Dr. Zoe Bernatsky SSMI

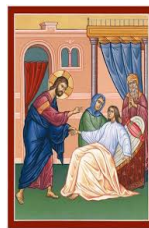
Register here and a zoom link will be sent to you prior to the sessions: <https://eeparchy.com/2021/02/18/lenten-webinar-series/>

Email education@edmontoneparchy.com if you have questions.



Prayer During the Coronavirus Outbreak

Lord, Our God,
We thank you for the life that is your gift,
For the providence that sustains us,
And for your wisdom that directs the course of our
days. The threat of an infection of coronavirus is upon us
today. This disease causes fear among us and has claimed
lives.
We humbly beg you, loving Lord, dispel our fear and deliver
us from this and other diseases.
Heal those who are afflicted and stop the spread of the virus.



Strengthen us in charity to care for one another.
For You are a God of mercy, kindness, and
love, and we glorify You Father, Son, and
Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.



Prayer of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in these Holy Gifts!
I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my
soul.

Since I cannot receive You now, I place before You my whole
life and hope, O loving Master; and I ask, pray, and entreat You:
Make me worthy to partake in a mystical way and with a pure
conscience of Your awesome and heavenly Mysteries:
for forgiveness of sins, for the pardon of offenses, for communion
of the Holy Spirit, for the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven,
for confidence before You, and not for judgment or
condemnation.

I embrace You as You enter and abide in me, and I unite myself
completely to You. Permeate my soul and body, and never permit
me to be separated from You. Amen.



This Sunday, the Church calls our attention to
Saint John Climacus (of the Ladder), who lived in
7th century and realised in his own life the ideal of
penitence on which we should fix our eyes during
the Great Fast. He wrote a spiritual book, *The
Ladder of Divine Ascent*, which is a guide for ascetic persons
who are living a spiritually disciplined life. There Saint John
writes about 33 rungs of the ladder we climb in our ascent to
heaven. Each rung represents a different Christian virtue
(obedience, repentance, love, humility, etc.). He teaches,
*“Prayer is a continuous ascension to heaven... Repentance is
the daughter of hope and the denial of despair.”*



We might wonder what value and meaning there is personally
for us, Christians living today, in depriving ourselves of food
amongst other things, which in themselves are good and useful

for our bodily sustenance. The Sacred Scriptures, tradition and the entire orthodox teaching of the Catholic Church through all the centuries teach that fasting is a great help to avoid sin and all that leads to it. For this reason, the history of salvation is replete with occasions that invite fasting.



Lenten Scriptural Readings for this week

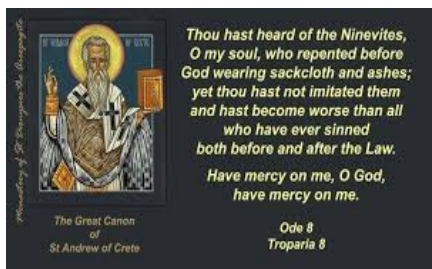
Monday: Genesis 13:12-18; Proverbs 14:27-15:4; Isaiah 37:33-38:6

Tuesday: Genesis 15:1-15 Proverbs 15:7-19 & Isaiah 40:18-31

Wed.,: Genesis 17:1-9; Proverbs 15:20-16:9 & Isaiah 41:4-14

Thurs.,: Genesis 18:20-33; Proverbs 16:17-17:17 & Isaiah 42:5-16

Friday: Genesis 22:1-18; Proverbs 17:17-18:5 & Isaiah 45:11-17



The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

"Where shall I begin to lament the deeds of my wretched life? How do I begin, O Christ, my present

lamentation?" (Canon)

The conscientious and faithful observance of the Great Fast to the very end demands from every Christian great strength of spirit and will. Holy Church, desiring that we finish our fasting as zealously as we began it, proposes certain special devotions designed to induce us to fast and do penance during the Forty Days Fast. The observance of the Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross as well as those of Matins with Prostrations provide these inducements. The Sixth Ecumenical Council decreed that this Matins service, in which the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete occupies the central place, be celebrated on Thursday of the fifth week of the Great Fast. Customarily, however, this celebration takes place on Wednesday evening.

A special feature of this service is the triple bow prescribed after every troparion of every Ode of the Canon by the Typicon. According to the custom of the Ukrainian Church, however, only one profound bow to the ground occurs. In all, 250 prostrations or profound bows are prescribed. For this reason, the Ukrainians call this Matins service simply "Prostrations". More than any other, perhaps, this service symbolizes the spirit of penance in our Eastern Church.

What Do We Mean by the Word 'Canon' in General?

A significant portion of every matins service is arranged according to definite rules. For this reason, this section of the morning service is called 'canon', a Greek word meaning "rule", "measure", 'norm". Biblical hymns are the basis of the canon which includes nine odes, the second of which, because of its penitential nature, occurs only during the time of the Great Fast. The originator of the canon is generally believed to be St. Sophronius, patriarch of Jerusalem (+638). At first, the canons were small in content because they consisted of two or three odes. Each ode has an irmos and several verses called troparions. The number of troparions in an ode varies and may be any number from two or three to over ten. St. Andrew of Crete was the first to compose canons consisting of nine odes.

The Author of the Great Canon

St. Andrew of Crete wrote the Great Canon. Who is he and what did he contribute to the Church? St. Andrew was a native of Damascus in Asia Minor. As a young man he made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and there in the year 678, he entered the monastery of St. Sabbas. His piety and keen intellect drew the attention of Theodore, Patriarch of Jerusalem; as a result, the Patriarch made him his secretary. St. Andrew, acting as the representative of the Patriarch of Jerusalem, participated in the Sixth Ecumenical Council, that met at Constantinople. After the Council he served for a time as a deacon at the Cathedral of St. Sophia in Constantinople and had care of the orphans. Later the Patriarch of Constantinople consecrated him archbishop of the city of

Gortyn on the Island of Crete. For this reason, he is called St. Andrew of Crete. The date of his death is uncertain. Some writers give the year 712 as the date of his death; others give 740. His memory is celebrated in the Eastern Church on the fourth of July.

St. Andrew distinguished himself as an excellent preacher, church writer and poet. He composed many church hymns, sticheras and especially canons, of which the Great Canon is the most prominent.

The Characteristic Features of the Great Canon

This canon bears the title "Great" not only because of its truly vast content, for it has as many as 250 troparions, but also because of its profound reflections, deep penitential spirit, and its moral and ascetical significance. The protracted and sad singing of the irmoses and troparions of the canon, along with the many prostrations, imparts to the entire service a profoundly penitential mood. For this reason, the synaxary of this day justifiably says that "it is indeed of all the canons the most sublime", and goes on to point out that it "is so grand and melodious that it is capable of moving the most hardened heart, and of inspiring it with great courage." Already the opening troparions of the canon induce a serious and prayerful mood: "Where do I begin to lament the deeds of my wretched life? How do I begin, O Christ, my present lamentation? But You, O Merciful One, forgive me my offences."

"Go, wretched soul along with your body and confess to the Creator of all. In the future leave your past foolishness and bring to God tears of repentance." (Ode I).

A good or bad example has great influence upon each and everyone of us. For this reason, St. Andrew sets before us many examples and events of the Old and New Testaments, beginning with Adam and Eve to the Ascension of Christ. Using these examples and events he reconstructs the whole history of the fall, the conversion and the contrition of every soul:

"I brought before you, my soul, all the figures of the Old Testament as examples. Imitate the words of the righteous, which

are pleasing to God, and flee from the sins of the wicked. "

The profound moral strength and significance of the Great Canon lies precisely in the fact, that while leading us to meditate on our own sins, it does not plunge us into despair and hopelessness, but after inducing sincere sorrow and contrition, it consoles us, lifts us up, inspires us with hope, and points out to us a sure means of salvation — the mercy of God and the intercession of the most Pure Virgin Mary: "Although I have sinned, O Saviour, I know You are the Lover of mankind. You punish with love and You show mercy graciously. You see my tears and You hasten to me like the father of the Prodigal Son." (Ode I)

At the end of each ode of the canon, two troparions honor the venerable Mary of Egypt. Later, another author added a third troparion in honor of St. Andrew of Crete.

The Sixth Ecumenical Council prescribed that at this Matins service of the Great Canon, the biography of the venerable Mary of Egypt (+521), written by St. Sophronius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, be read. Venerable Mary of Egypt was born in Alexandria, Egypt. For years she led a sinful life until, during a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, she repented of her sinful life and was converted, and retired into the desert where she spent the rest of her life in prayer, sorrowing for her sins and atoning for them. The Church commemorates her on the first of April.

The reading of her life during the matins service is designed, as is the entire Great Canon, to give us an inspiring example of conversion, sorrow and atonement for sin. On the fifth Sunday of Lent the memory of this same Saint is recalled.