



*The Meeting of the Lord in the Temple - www.flickr.com*

FROM FR. KOSTA

Beloved in Christ,

Forgiveness and mercy play a central role in our Christian faith, yet living according to this divine principle can be challenging. Others offend us, hurt us, and do all sorts of things against us, and our fallen human nature wants to respond with anger, hurt, pain, bitterness, self-righteousness, and withhold forgiveness. We look at how others treat us and are tempted to react similarly. We become petty and selfish because we compare ourselves to others and want to outdo each other in our silliness to feel we came out of a situation as winners.

Yet, as part of living the peace and way of Jesus Christ, we consciously decide not to take the path of wickedness. We choose not to imitate those who hurt us and commit to resisting temptation and overcoming it through the grace and power of God and letting the Holy Spirit act in us and through us.

Our Lord reminds us to look at ourselves and see our shortcomings. Compared to Christ, who among us can say we have done no wrong and are

perfect? Many of us may roll our eyes when we're told to compare ourselves to Jesus. And yet, He's the canon - the standard. We measure ourselves to Him, not each other, and when we come up short since no one is perfect, we realize we should manage ourselves correctly before trying to fix the world or seek retribution from those who offended us since we, too, have had moments where we offended others.

When we focus on communion with Christ and living with our Lord, we realize our need for God's mercy and forgiveness. Humbly turning to Him for His compassion leads us to similar compassion toward others.

One of the most common themes a priest encounters is people's unwillingness to forgive one another, which fosters anger and bitterness. How many of us know of others who haven't spoken to each other for months or years? And how many of us occasionally avoid speaking to Christ, not engaging with Him in prayer or experiencing Him through the Sacraments?

(Continued on the next page)

## SIGNIFICANT COMMEMORATIONS & FEASTS

- Meeting/Presentation of the Lord in the Temple (Feb. 2)
- Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee - Start of Triodion (Feb. 9)
- Sunday of the Prodigal Son (Feb. 16)
- Saturday of Souls (Feb. 22)
- Judgement/Meatfare Sunday (Feb. 23)



*flickr.com*

## Hymn (Kontakion) of the Prodigal Son (Tone 3).

I revolted senselessly  
out of Your fatherly glory;  
I have squandered sinfully  
all of the riches You gave  
me. Hence to You, using  
the Prodigal's words, I cry  
out, I have sinned before  
You, merciful, loving  
Father. Receive me in  
repentance, I pray you and  
treat me as one of Your  
hired hands.

## **HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH**

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## *FROM FR. KOSTA (CONTINUED)*

The spirit of the world instills in us an arrogant attitude of how we are more important than others, and we adopt misinformed opinions and ideas that we think are superior to even all-knowing God. If someone hurts us, we want justice because we, perceiving ourselves as righteous, have been offended, and others must pay for their transgressions. The world too often looks at anger, bitterness, stubbornness, and self-centred pride as acceptable responses to hurt and offence. Unfortunately, the world does not follow the Good News that our Lord brought into the world, as is evident by the daily strife and hatred in the world.

Jesus Christ teaches us to be meek by turning the other cheek when we know we can hurt someone with our words or actions. Forgiveness up to "seventy times seven" is not a suggestion but one of the keys to the Kingdom of God. This may sound impossible, but those of us who call ourselves followers of Jesus must realize that this is the spirit of His Kingdom and something we must actively pursue, even if we can't get it perfect. Living under God and striving to allow His Holy Spirit to inspire and guide us, we should realize that forgiveness and mercy is not a philosophy that "sounds nice" but a way of life and a commandment from our Master. Our Lord is meek (though not weak or helpless, as some people think it's what 'meek' means), and the life of the Church should reflect that.

We cannot do the above unless we accept that we are not the source of justice or morality, even for ourselves. We are stewards of a world that isn't ours and must conduct ourselves with that mindset. We are keepers of each other, and our conduct must reflect that reality, especially as Orthodox Christians.

The key is to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit and allow Him to guide us. We need to pray, read the Holy Scriptures, and receive the Sacraments of the Church (especially Confession and

Holy Communion) to help us "acquire the mind of Christ," which means to look at ourselves and the world through Christ's eyes and treat ourselves and the world accordingly.

Forgiveness can be challenging, and we may be tempted to ignore or hurt someone who hurt us. However, this path leads to separation from our neighbour and our Lord. Life, as it is meant to be lived—as it was designed to be lived from the moment God created us—is a life of communion with one another. Mercy, forgiveness, compassion, and kindness, rooted in faithfulness and the love of God, are the virtues we should strive to acquire.

On Sunday, March 2, at 7:00 pm, on the evening of Sunday of Cheesefare (also known as Forgiveness Sunday), we will have the opportunity and blessing to ask and offer our love and forgiveness to each other at the Vespers of Forgiveness. Before we get to that, we will begin preparing for Great Lent in February by hearing about the Publican and the Pharisee one Sunday, the following Sunday about the Prodigal Son, and finally, on the third Sunday, Christ's own words regarding the judgement of the world. The themes on those three Sundays are meekness, humility, repentance, forgiveness, love, and faithfulness. Let's all work towards those virtues and attend Forgiveness Vespers willing to open our hearts and minds to Christ, offer our mercy and love to those who will bow to us as we bow to them, and use the opportunity to be Christ-like in humility and forgiveness. May we all take these themes seriously and examine our readiness to meet the Lord in the glory of His Second Coming or at the time of our death, whichever comes first.

In Christ,  
+Fr. Kosta

## SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY 2025

<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>THE MEETING OF THE LORD IN THE TEMPLE</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN &amp; THE PHARISEE (Triodion Period Begins)</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>THE HOLY PRIEST-MARTYR HARALAMBOS</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:30 am
<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>FIRST AND MAIN SATURDAY OF SOULS</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy & Memorial Prayer 10:30 am
<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>MEATFARE SUNDAY</b> Matins 9:00 am    Divine Liturgy 10:30 am

## ΑΚΟΛΟΥΘΙΕΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΟΝ ΦΕΒΡΟΥΑΡΙΟ 2025

<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Η ΥΠΑΠΑΝΤΗ ΤΟΥ ΚΥΡΙΟΥ</b> Ορθρος 9:00 π.μ.    Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΤΕΛΩΝΟΥ &amp; ΦΑΡΙΣΑΙΟΥ (Αρχή Τριώδιου)</b> Ορθρος 9:00 π.μ.    Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΙΕΡΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΧΑΡΑΛΑΜΠΟΥ</b> Ορθρος 9:00 π.μ.    Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΑΣΩΤΟΥ ΥΙΟΥ</b> Ορθρος 9:00 π.μ.    Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΣΑΒΒΑΤΟ</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>ΠΡΩΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΚΥΡΙΟ ΨΥΧΟΣΑΒΒΑΤΟ</b> Ορθρος 9:00 π.μ.    Θεία Λειτουργία & Μνημόσυνο 10:30 π.μ.
<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΗΣ ΑΠΟΚΡΕΩ</b> Ορθρος 9:00 π.μ.    Θεία Λειτουργία 10:30 π.μ.

## WHAT IS THE TRIODION?

The Triodion, or Lenten Triodion, is a liturgical book of the Orthodox Church. It includes hymns and readings for the fasting period before Pascha (Easter) and the weeks leading up to it. The weekday Matins hymnal canons in the Triodion consist of three odes, hence the name "triodes." This book covers the period from the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee (ten weeks before Pascha) to the Midnight Office of Holy Saturday. The Triodion contains the hymns and readings for:

- The pre-lenten period, which begins on Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee.
- Great Lent, which starts on Clean Monday and ends on the evening of Holy Saturday/morning of Easter Sunday.

On Easter Sunday, we begin using the Pentecostarion book, which we continue to use until the Sunday of Pentecost.

## FASTING IN GREAT LENT

There is no fasting between the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee and the Sunday of the Prodigal Son. Meatfare (or Judgement) Sunday marks the change of diet to the fasting practice of Lent: meat is no longer eaten after Meatfare. During Meatfare week, milk and dairy products, not meat, can be consumed. The Sunday following Meatfare is Cheesefare, the last day of dairy. The next day is Clean Monday, the first day of the Forty Days of Great Lent. In Lent, meals focus on a primarily vegan diet and may exclude oil, according to each person's fasting rule set by their priest or confessor. Fasting ends on Holy Saturday night with the Easter celebration.



# Talks on Great and Holy Lent



Each Sunday of Great Lent during the second half of Coffee Hour (12:30 pm to 1:00 pm)

Starting on February 23 (~~Meatfare~~ Sunday).

Everyone Welcome.

Please bring a snack for your children and yourselves.

## WHY ARE KOLIVA IMPORTANT?

Koliva (plural) are boiled wheat berries used liturgically in the Orthodox Church for commemorations of the dead.

In the Orthodox Church, koliva is blessed during a memorial service performed on the anniversary of a person's falling asleep and on special occasions, such as the Saturday of Souls.

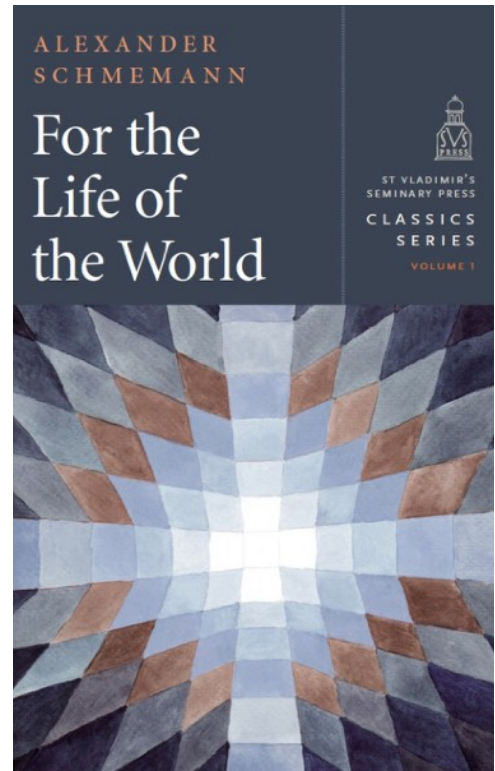
Offering koliva is a tradition in Orthodox European countries and among Christians in the Middle East. When served, the koliva mixture is shaped into a mound to resemble a grave. It is then covered with powdered sugar. A candle, usually placed in the centre of the koliva, is lit at the beginning of the memorial service and extinguished at its end. After the liturgy, those attending share in eating the koliva as they speak of the deceased and say, "May God forgive him/her."

Koliva is a beautiful and essential tradition in the Orthodox Church. On individuals' memorials and Saturdays of the Souls, each family brings a small bowl or tray of koliva to the church to be blessed as a remembrance and prayer for their loved ones who have fallen asleep.

Each family is responsible for honouring and commemorating their departed loved ones throughout the year, but especially on the anniversary of their passing and on the Saturdays of Souls.

A recipe for the Greek version can be found at [www.kalofagas.ca](http://www.kalofagas.ca).

## READING/LISTENING CORNER



In *For the Life of the World*, Fr. Alexander Schmemmann suggests an approach to the world and life within it that stems from the liturgical experience of the Orthodox Church. He understands issues such as secularism and Christian culture from the perspective of the Church's unbroken experience, as revealed and communicated in her worship and liturgy—the sacrament of the world, the sacrament of the Kingdom.

Found at:  
[store.ancientfaith.com](http://store.ancientfaith.com)  
[www.amazon.ca](http://www.amazon.ca)

The ebook is available through Apple, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble.

## **THE MEETING (OR PRESENTATION) OF GOD IN THE TEMPLE (Feb. 2)**

On February 2nd, we remember Mary and Joseph taking the 40-day-old baby Jesus to the Temple to fulfill the Law and make an offering to God for newborn Jesus. This remembrance prompts us to examine the relationship between the Saviour Son of God, the Torah, and the Temple on this Feast day. In the Gospel, Simeon proclaimed upon looking at Jesus that he saw God's promise and the salvation of humanity. Salvation is not an event in history, but Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God.

On this celebration, let's consider the following:

In the Jewish faith, the Temple had a spiritual significance that went beyond being the place where God dwelt on earth. It was where God dwelt and revealed Himself to His people, connecting the divine with the earthly. In the person of Jesus Christ, God fulfills all the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament. He also unites all creation, especially humanity, with Heaven since Jesus Christ is God and man. In Christ, time and eternity are united. God reveals the Kingdom of God in the person of Jesus Christ. As much as the righteous Simeon witnessed and recognized the infant in his arms, Christ revealed much more to the world as an adult, things that Simeon maybe even foresaw as he remembered the prophecies and gazed upon the face of his God.

Jesus Christ's presentation in the Temple reveals a tremendous theological truth: the church building is not the temple per se. We, the people - those who are baptized and grafted onto the Body of the Christ - are the temple because just as God dwells in Jesus Christ, so He dwells in us who have received the Holy Spirit and partake of the Body and Blood of the Word of God in the Eucharist. God dwells in His people, not a building. The church building is a sacred space, but it is nothing if the Church does not gather in it, for Christ dwells in the Church (the people). Even when we are in the world, outside of the church building, we are still the temple of the Holy Spirit, no matter where we go and what we do. The Body of Christ can be apart from each other but is never divided. Like Christ, who is "broken but not divided" and distributed to those who will receive Him, we are constant members of His Body.

Realizing that the people are God's temple and that each of us individually is a temple of God, we remain faithful to Him no matter where we are or what we do. When we are faithful to Him, we bring God wherever we go and keep the temples of God, our bodies, undefiled and sacred. Therefore, when illness or circumstances prevent us from going to church, we remember that God still dwells in us, that we are not alone or abandoned, and that we will return to the Sacraments as soon as possible. Despair has no place in a Christian heart, but neither does despondency or indifference towards the holy things of God. To remain temples of God, we must stay in Him through the Sacraments, communal worship, and proper living of the Body of Christ. As St. Paul reminds us, "...we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (2 Corinthians 6)

Finally, in the person of Jesus Christ, we see a foreshadowing of the Kingdom of God at the Second Coming. The Kingdom has no temple building since God will be our temple. We will live in Him, and He will live in us eternally and without any distortion to our communion with Him. In this temporal world, we, the Church, become the temple of God, but in the world to come, it is God who becomes our temple, where we will live, glorify, and rejoice in Him into eternity. The Saints and all the righteous who have fallen asleep and await the general resurrection are getting a foretaste of this already, and we await to receive our reward as faithful stewards of the things entrusted to us by our Lord.

## IN MEMORIAM THIS MONTH

This month, we remember and pray for the souls of our following departed Orthodox brothers and sisters who lived in Thunder Bay. The following list is based on our church's Registry Book of Deaths and Funerals entries.

Please inform our priest if there are any errors or omissions.

May the Lord our God rest the souls of  
His servants:

Triantafilia (Rose) Sidere (1957)  
Georgios Valakas (1960)  
Panagiota Ioannidou (1963)  
Apostolos Dimitrakopoulos (1970)  
Spyridon Andreou (1975)  
Nicholas Daskalopoulos (1980)  
Maria Louka (1980)  
Aristotelis Soulias (1982)  
Domna Braka (1985)  
Christina Pappas (1989)  
Helen Demetracopoulos (1996)  
Nicholas Sakellaris (2003)  
Zoran Zelickovic (2004)  
Haralambia Panagoulas (2005)  
Georgios Loukas (2010)  
John Pavlou (2017)  
Stefan Bradatanu (2020)  
Filitsa (Phyllis) Amorgianos (2023)  
Leonidas Portis (2024)

*With the Saints, give rest, O Christ, to  
Your servants' souls where there is no  
pain, sorrow, or lament, but life  
everlasting.  
May their memory be eternal.*

—  
*Μετά των Αγίων ανάπαυσον Χριστέ  
τας ψυχάς των δούλων Σου, ένθα ούκ  
εστί πόνος, ου λύπη, ου στεναγμός,  
αλλά ζωή ατελεύτητος.  
Αιωνία αυτών η μνήμη.*

## GOD BLESS OUR COMMUNITY'S STEWARDS

"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep, and my sheep know me."  
(John 10:14)

### 2024

1. Angie Amorgianos
2. Steve Amorgianos
3. Phyllis Amorgianos
4. Sheila Amos
5. Joyce Avgeropoulos
6. Peter Avgeropoulos
7. Nick Balina
8. Toni Biniaris
9. George Biniaris
10. Katerina Biniaris
11. George Biniaris
12. Athena Blieske
13. Edric Blieske
14. Alex Bradatanu
15. Iuliana Bradatanu
16. Ourania Biniaris
17. Anastasios Catanzaro
18. Gus Chimbakis
19. Helen Chimbakis
20. Bill Comminos
21. Angela Damianakos
22. Athena Damianakos
23. Bill Damianakos
24. Vicki Dowhos
25. Paul Dowhos
26. Lori Florindo
27. Maria Forget
28. Joanne Frisky
29. Tara Giardetti
30. Peter Giardetti
31. Harry Glymitsas
32. Dimitra Glymitsas
33. Jennie Hartviksen
34. Sotirios Hatzis
35. Theodora Hatzis
36. Bill Hatzis
37. Stella Hatzis
38. Penny Kahramanos
39. Lisa Kahramanos
40. Andreas Karanasos
41. Despina Kargatzis
42. Faye Karoutas
43. Nick Koukos
44. Joyce Koukos
45. Peter Koukos
46. Ray Leino
47. Virginia Leino
48. Jack Lotsios
49. Effie Lotsios
50. George Lotsios
51. Dolores Maki
52. Chrysoula Mayer
53. Smaragde Mellas
54. Georgina Mellas
55. Maria Mellas
56. Bess Melville
57. Despina Metsopoulos
58. Achileas Metsopoulos
59. Angela Metsopoulos

60. Theresa Meyer
61. Penny Millionis
62. Maria Morakis
63. Florina Nisioiu
64. Peter Pantoulas
65. Helen Pantoulas
66. Nikki Pantoulas
67. Jim Pazianos
68. Tom Pazianos
69. Leila Pazianos
70. Olivia Pietrangelo
71. Sahar Qeer
72. Imad Qeer
73. Effie Saïtes
74. Maria Sancartier
75. Katerina Scocchia
76. Steven Scolie
77. Irene Binaris
78. Marinos Spourdakis
79. Constantin Todasia
80. Manuella Todasia
81. Elaine Tsekouras
82. Harry Tsekouras
83. Lily Tsekouras
84. Constantine Tsekouras
85. Jane Tsekouras
86. Ahileas Tsekouras
87. Paul Tsekouras
88. Sylvia Tsekouras
89. John Tsekouras
90. Daniel Vasiliu
91. Christine Vlotaros
92. Peter Vlotaros
93. Theodora Voulgaris
94. Georgina Voulgaris
95. Pat Welbourne
96. Chris Welbourne
97. Austin Williams

### 2025

1. Toni Biniaris
2. George Biniaris
3. Katerina Biniaris
4. Nick Koukos
5. Joyce Koukos
6. Peter Koukos
7. Ray Leino
8. Virginia Leino
9. Nikki Pantoulas
10. Leila Pazianos
11. Tom Pazianos
12. Olivia Pietrangelo
13. Jane Tsekouras
14. Constantine Tsekouras
15. Lily Tsekouras
16. Harry Tsekouras
17. Ahileas Tsekouras
18. Paul Tsekouras
19. Sylvia Tsekouras
20. Austin Williams

## CHILDREN IN THE DIVINE LITURGY

**To the parents and grandparents of our young children, may we suggest...**

Relax! God put the wiggle and curiosity in children; don't feel you must suppress it. All are welcome! Sit somewhere that is easier for your little ones to see and hear what is going on—even if that means you sit at the front. They tire of seeing the backs of others' heads. We know how hard it is to have small children in Liturgy. Please don't be discouraged. We love you and want you here.

If you need to give your child a break, that's fine too. Usually, a walk outside, in the church hall, or the narthex is enough to help them refocus.

**Quietly explain the Liturgy to your children:**

### **The Small Entrance**

The Gospel (the Good News) coming into the world

### **The Epistle and Gospel Readings**

Our message for the day

### **The Sermon/Homily**

The clergy speaks about the Bible readings, the Saints, and the Holy Days.

### **The Offering (Anaphora)**

Bowing to our King and offering Him our gifts, that He may change them into His Body and Blood and offer them back to us

### **Holy Communion**

Christ is in us, and we are in Him. It's not just bread and wine, but the Mystical Body and Blood of our Lord.

Sing hymns, pray, and respond with the chanters and congregation. Children learn liturgical behaviour by imitating adults. Remember, we worship Christ. If you temporarily need to step out with your child, please return after they've calmed down. As Christ said, "Let the children come to Me." We also encourage visits to the church and Fr. Kosta with your children when there's no service to explain the church to them. Sometimes, children appreciate the church more when they have it to themselves.

**To the members of our Community,** the presence of children is a gift to the Church and a reminder that our Community is growing. Please pray for our children and welcome them by giving a smile of encouragement to their parents. Remember that how we welcome children in the Church directly affects how they respond to the Church, Christ, and one another. Let them know they are home!

## THE PARABLE OF THE PUBLICAN & THE PHARISEE

St. Nikolai Velimirovich



flickr.com

Imagine now that we are patients in this hospital of the world. The sickness that every one of us is suffering from has the same name – unrighteousness. The word includes all the passions, all lust, all sins – all the weakness and enervation of our souls, our hearts and our minds.

The sick are one thing at the beginning of their illness, another at its peak and yet another in its healing. But such are the characteristics of these illnesses of the inner

man that only those who are healed are aware of the terrible sickness from which they had been suffering.

The sickest are the least aware of their illness. In physical illness, a man with a high fever is unaware of himself or his illness. Neither does a madman say of himself that he is mad. Beginners in unrighteousness feel ashamed of their sickness for a while, but repeated sinning swiftly leads to the habit of sin, and this to the inebriation and delirium of unrighteousness in a state in which the soul has no longer any sense of itself or its sickness.

And just imagine a doctor going into a hospital and asking: "What is wrong with you?" Those whose illness is in the early stages are ashamed to admit they are sick, but will say: "Nothing!" Those whose illness has reached its peak will be angered by such a question, and will not only say: "Nothing's the matter with us!" but will begin to boast of their health.

Only those who are on the way to healing will sigh, and reply to the doctor: "Everything is wrong with us! Have mercy on us and help us!" Tertullian says, in a homily on repentance: "If you are afraid to confess your sins, look at the flames of hell that confession alone can extinguish."

Ponder, then, on all this; listen to Christ's parable and decide for yourself how apt it is. If you say in amazement: "This parable does not apply to me", then this means that you are sickened in the illness known as unrighteousness. If you protest: "I am righteous; this applies to the sinners around me", then this means your sickness has reached its peak. If, though, you beat your breast in repentance and reply: "It's true; I'm sick and need a doctor", then this means you are on the way to healing. Don't be afraid then; you'll get well.

*johnsanidopoulos.com*



## WEDDINGS & BAPTISMS

Our website provides basic information on the Sacraments. Still, please speak with Fr. Kosta directly regarding dates, sponsors (Koumbaroi), preparations, and any other questions about booking a Sacrament or a funeral.

Please ensure the church and the Priest are available for weddings and baptisms before booking reception venues.

### **Dates a Wedding cannot be performed:**

- Any evening that comes before one of the Twelve Major Feasts
- Nativity Fast (Nov. 15 – Dec. 24)
- Great Lent (dates change each year)
- Apostles' Fast (the Monday after All Saints to the feast day of Sts. Peter and Paul on June 29)
- Dormition Fast (Aug. 1 – Aug. 14)
- Aug. 28/29 (the Beheading of St. John the Baptist)
- Sept. 13/14 (the Exaltation of the Holy Cross)

### **Dates a Baptism cannot be performed:**

- Christmas Day through the Feast of Theophany (December 25-January 6)
- Holy Week (dates vary each year)
- Great Feast-days of the Lord

### **Please note:**

- Parents, godparents, couples, and sponsors must be financially current by paying their stewardship for the past two years. Please consult our treasurer. A breakdown of fees and stewardship amounts can be found in this bulletin.
- Brides, grooms, godparents, and wedding sponsors (koumbaroi) must be in good standing in the Orthodox Church by being baptized Orthodox, having their marriages blessed in the Orthodoxy Church, and not having participated in Sacraments outside the faith. Out-of-town sponsors and godparents need a letter from their priest affirming their eligibility for participation in an Orthodox Sacrament.
- Couples must make an appointment to speak with the priest before booking venues or making other arrangements.
- Couples with one non-Orthodox partner must speak with the Priest before deciding to get engaged or at least a year before booking a wedding.

## FUNERALS

An Orthodox funeral is offered to all who are baptized Orthodox Christians and are not canonically impeded from receiving an Orthodox Funeral Service.

Orthodox Christian funeral customs reflect core beliefs about life, death, resurrection, and the eternal Kingdom of God. These traditions honour the deceased and comfort grieving families, reinforcing community bonds. The rituals during an Orthodox funeral express mourning and demonstrate faith, viewing death as a passage rather than an end. Understanding the canonical rules of an Orthodox funeral beforehand is essential.

## MEMORIAL SERVICES

Memorial Services are offered for Orthodox Christians, typically on the fortieth day after death, six months after death, and the anniversary of death. They are usually held on Sundays at the end of the Divine Liturgy or may also be held as separate services on weekdays at the church or the grave. Please speak with our Priest if you have any questions regarding Koliva or to arrange for a Memorial Service.

### **Items needed for a memorial at the church:**

- Koliva (boiled wheat tray) - Recipes can be found online or through our Priest.
- Prosphoro and red wine (Mavrodaphne or a red dessert wine)
- The names of the persons commemorated.

### **Memorials cannot be held on the following days:**

- Feast Days of the Lord (Christmas, Theophany, Easter, Presentation, Transfiguration, etc)
- All Feast Days of the Mother of God (Nativity of the Theotokos, Entrance into the Temple, Dormition, Annunciation, etc)
- From the Saturday of Lazarus up to and including the Sunday of Thomas, which is the Sunday following Easter)
- Sunday of Pentecost

***If you're planning a Sacrament, making funeral arrangements, or have questions about Sacraments or Funerals, please don't hesitate to contact Fr. Kosta to arrange a private and confidential meeting. Waiting until you need to book the church or until someone passes away can lead to unnecessary stress that can be avoided.***



## ON PRAYING FOR THE DEAD

Praying for the dead is self-evident to us as Orthodox Christians. Some people question or reject it, thinking it is not biblical. As Orthodox Christians, we should understand why we pray for the dead (1 Peter 3:15).

The Orthodox pray for the dead because the Bible tells us to. As members of the Church, the Body of Christ, we are exhorted to pray for one another (James 5:16). Whether we live or die, “we belong to the Lord” (Romans 14:8). For we are “members of His Body, of His flesh and of His bones” (Ephesians 5:30). The Church is “the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God.” As such, she includes “tens of thousands of angels” and “the spirits of righteous people made perfect” as well as those of us alive on earth (Hebrews 12:22-24).

Because of Christ’s resurrection and victory over death, death does not end our membership in the Body of Christ. For neither “death nor life [...] will separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:38-39). We remember that God “is not the God of the dead, but of the living – for all are alive to Him (Luke 20:38). Therefore, we pray for both the living and the “dead in Christ” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Perhaps Judas Maccabaeus and Saint Paul the Apostle are the most notable examples of prayer for the dead in Scripture.

Judas Maccabaeus offered sacrifices and prayers for his fallen soldiers with the future resurrection of the dead in mind. He said: “It is therefore a good and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, so they may be set loose from their sins” (2 Maccabees 12:39-46). Secondly, we have the Apostle Paul, who prays for his departed friend Onesiphorus. He writes: “May the Lord grant that he find mercy from the Lord” on Judgment Day (2 Timothy 1:16-18). And so the Orthodox do likewise!

We can see from the verses above that we remain alive to God and part of His Church, even if we are dead to this world. Death is the parting of our souls and bodies, not the end of our existence or the obliteration of our personhood. The Bible bears witness that our souls live on after death, conscious and active after our earthly lives (Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 6:9-10). For this reason, the Church speaks biblically of the dead as those who have “fallen asleep” (1 Corinthians 15:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16), for they are destined to awake and rise on Judgment Day. Looking toward the resurrection of the dead and the life of the age to come, we ask God, Who gives life to the dead, to keep them in His eternal memory and grant them mercy, peaceful rest, the forgiveness of their sins, and a good answer for themselves before the dread judgment seat of Christ. As Orthodox Christians, we have hope in Christ both in this life and in the age to come. As He tells us: “I am the One who lives, and became dead, and behold I am alive for ages and ages [...], And I hold the keys of death and death’s underworld” (Revelation 1:18-19). So, the Church prays to Him for both the living and the dead, as the church has always done.

The tradition of making and blessing memorial wheat (Koliiva) is a prime example of how Orthodox Christian worship engages all five senses to heighten our awareness of God’s truth, grace, and life. During prayer services for the deceased, we bless and share Koliiva. The recipes for memorial wheat differ by region and family, but each one includes at least three essential ingredients: boiled whole wheat kernels, dried fruit, and sweeteners such as sugar or honey.

The wheat kernels remind us of Christ’s words about death and resurrection: “Unless a kernel of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains a single seed, but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit” (John 12:24). Secondly, the fruit symbolizes the risen Christ, the “first fruits” of the dead, whose resurrection brings our own (1 Corinthians 15:22-24). And the sweetener reminds us of the sweetness of the afterlife that awaits those who follow Christ, the Wisdom of God. “For wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, there is future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off (Proverbs 24:14).

When we eat our serving of wheat, we offer a brief prayer for the person being remembered: “May God forgive them.”

Praying for the dead is biblical and has been part of Christian life for millennia. The Orthodox Church keeps this practice alive today by blessing and eating Koliiva (memorial wheat). These things remind us of the power of Christ’s resurrection—that death is not the end for those who believe in Him.

## STEWARDSHIP & FEES

We truly appreciate all the financial and volunteer support our church receives. We kindly invite you to renew your stewardship and continue to support our church with an annual commitment, ensuring we can thrive together!

The treasurer must receive fees at least two (2) weeks before a Sacrament or event by cash, cheque, or e-transfer at [holytrinity@tbaytel.net](mailto:holytrinity@tbaytel.net).

### Annual Stewardship ("Membership")

- Family (couple): \$600
- Single Regular Members (Age 18+) & Seniors: \$300/person
- University/College Students: \$100
- Associate Members (non-Orthodox spouses): \$150

### Funerals

- Up-to-Date Members: No Fee
- Not Up-to-Date Members: \$300 for each year of no membership paid, up to 2 years

### Hall Rentals

- Members: \$150
- Non-Members: \$400

### Sacrament/Services Fees

Wedding: \$250      Baptism: \$150

## STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION

If you'd like to assist with replenishing consumables regularly used in worship, there are various items our church needs to restock throughout the year, such as:

- Phosphoro (Bread used for the Eucharist)
- Charcoal disks
- Incense
- Candles
- Oil & Oil Lamp Wicks
- Red Wine for Holy Communion (Mavrodaphne or other red dessert wines)

Ways to assist our church in preparing for major Feast Days and throughout the year:

- Washing the Holy Communion cloths
- Ironing the coverings for the Altar table and the icon stands.
- Decorating the church for major Feast Days
- Helping organize retreats and events.

Please speak with our priest regarding your involvement in the church's life.

## MEMBERS AND STEWARDS

### Who is a Member?

An Orthodox Church member is anyone baptized and chrismated by its rites, but not all members are Stewards.

### Who is a Steward?

A Steward is a baptized Orthodox Christian aged 18 or older, self-supporting, committed to their local church, and invests their time, talent, and treasure to advance the Church's mission. These commitments embody Stewardship and reflect active faith, but not every Steward is active.

### Who is an Active Steward?

The Active Steward lives their faith by contributing treasure and time. They attend Divine Liturgy, participate in Holy Communion and Confession, and offer their talents while adhering to Orthodox teachings and avoiding Sacraments outside the Orthodox Church. This steward is a "member in good standing with the Orthodox Church."

### What is Stewardship?

Stewardship involves contributing time, talent, or treasure to our Church without perfect but with active participation. It is based on biblical teachings that outline the Four Fundamental Principles of Stewardship:

1. **Ownership:** God created and owns everything. Everything we are and have is a gift from God. [Psalm 24:1; Deuteronomy 8:28]
2. **Responsibility:** We have been entrusted with managing and administering God's gifts, making us Stewards. Therefore, Stewardship is committing ourselves and our blessings to advance the Ministry of Christ and remain faithful to Him. [Mt. 25:14-30]
3. **Accountability:** Having been entrusted with this sacred responsibility, the Parable of the Talents reveals that each of us will be called to give an account of how we managed God's gifts given to us personally and as a community. [Mt. 25:14-30]
4. **Reward:** St. Paul reminds us, "Whatever [we] do, work it with all your heart as working for the Lord, not for man since you know you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." [Colossians 3:23-24; Prov. 18:16; Lk. 6:38]

Example of a breakdown for weekly Stewardship:

Weekly Income	Monthly Contribution			
	10%	5%	4%	2%
\$500	\$50	\$25	\$20	\$10
\$750	\$75	\$37	\$30	\$15
\$1000	\$100	\$50	\$40	\$20
\$1500	\$150	\$75	\$60	\$30
\$2000	\$200	\$100	\$80	\$40

## CHURCH ETIQUETTE

Food and drink, including gum, are not allowed in the church. Phones should be silenced and not used, and conversations should be avoided during services.

Irreverent behaviours include hands in pockets, wearing sunglasses or earbuds, crossing legs, and having private conversations during services.

Arrive before Divine Liturgy or any service. Please wait to enter the nave during the following:

- Small and Great Entrance, or other Processions
- Scripture readings and sermon
- Anaphora (offering) and when kneeling
- Recitation of the Creed and Lord's Prayer
- When the priest offers incense
- When the priest faces the congregation

We cross ourselves when entering the nave, hearing the Holy Trinity or a Saint's name, or walking in front of the Altar.

### Holy Communion

Those who are baptized Orthodox and in good standing may receive the Sacraments. If you have questions, speak with our priest before Sunday.

If you aren't receiving Holy Communion, kindly stand reverently at your pew.

Please remove your lipstick before approaching the Chalice.

Hold the Communion cloth under your lower lip to prevent spills, and wipe your lips gently. Do not kiss or touch the Chalice.

### Antidoron (blessed bread)

Cup the bread in your hand while eating to avoid crumbs. If you see pieces of Antidoron on the floor or left behind, pick them up and toss them outside for birds. Antidoron is blessed; do not throw it in the trash or leave it in inappropriate places.

### Dress Code

Please be respectful in your outfit. Do not wear hats, shorts, tank tops, flip-flops, or clothing with disrespectful or inappropriate logos or writing.

When in doubt, err on the side of caution. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact our priest.

## DIGITAL CHANT AND CHURCH SERVICES RESOURCE

The services for all Sundays and significant feast days of the year are available in Greek and English in PDF format—what many of our churches use for their services. Visit their website or download their Digital Chant Stand app.

[dcs.goarch.org](https://dcs.goarch.org)

## I'M ORTHODOX; WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

This booklet answers the fundamental questions about what it means to be an Orthodox Christian. It is available on the website below or through our Priest.

[goarchdiocese.ca](https://goarchdiocese.ca)

## PRAYER BOOKS

We have prayer books printed by our Archdiocese available. The books include prayers for morning and evening, meals, and various occasions and circumstances. Please speak with Fr. Kosta about whether you'd like a prayer book for your home or if you'd like to discuss prayer at home, icon corners, and other aspects of practical Orthodoxy.

## WHICH SEAL IS PROPER FOR PROSPHORO?

The symbols in the Prosporo (Offering Bread) Seal convey theological and doctrinal truths, and it is, therefore, essential for them to be correct. The correct seal bears the lettering ICXC NIKA or ΙΧΧ NIKA.



## COMMON QUESTIONS BY VISITORS OR INQUIRERS

### **Q: What does "Greek Orthodox" mean?**

The term Greek Orthodox may refer either to the Orthodox Church as a whole, to the churches of the Eastern Roman Empire or "Byzantine" areas, or to Orthodox Christians of Greek descent. However, "Eastern Orthodox" is a more correct term for the whole Church. Greek Orthodox also refers to the style of liturgical rite used in the Church.

### **Q: What language are your services in?**

Our Divine Liturgy is conducted in Greek and English, with English being the predominant language. Prayers are said in English. The hymns chanted by the cantors are usually balanced between Greek and English. Vespers and Matins (Orthros) are chanted in both Greek and English. The sermon is given in English.

### **Q: Do I have to be Greek or Orthodox to attend services?**

You do not have to be Orthodox or Greek to attend services. Everyone is welcome to visit and inquire about our theology and liturgical practices. We often have visitors in our Church.

\* Please note that you must be baptized as an Orthodox Christian and in good standing with the Church to receive the Sacraments. Our Priest is available if you have any questions about attending our Church. Don't hesitate to contact him via text or email a few days before your visit, and he'll answer them.

### **Q: What worship service can I attend if I've never been to an Orthodox service?**

It would help if you spoke to the Priest beforehand about attending a service so you will be prepared for what to

expect. You're always welcome to participate in Sunday Divine Liturgy and speak with our priest during coffee after the service.

### **Q: How will I fit in your congregation if I'm not Greek?**

You will fit in just fine. Our congregation is comprised of people of different nationalities. Orthodoxy is universal. You do not need to be Greek to attend our church. You're encouraged to come to the church hall for coffee hour after the Sunday Divine Liturgy and have a coffee with Fr. Kosta and the rest of the congregation.

### **Q: I'm an Orthodox Christian but visiting for the first time. What should I do?**

Please inform the Priest that you are visiting, especially if you wish to receive Holy Communion.

### **Q: Can I speak with the Priest privately regarding learning more about the Orthodox Church?**

Of course! Our Priest is available to speak with you most days and at all times. Please feel free to contact him. His contact information is in this bulletin.

### **Q: What's the most significant difference between the Orthodox Church and other denominations?**

Apart from the liturgical, theological, and visual differences, the mentality and way we approach God, the Saints, spirituality, and sin differ from some, if not most, "Western" theological approaches. Our approach to the Bible and Holy Tradition may vary from one's experience. Depending on one's background, the above can be of the more considerable differences and the most significant adjustments for those exposed to the Orthodox

approach to the Saints, life, death, and God.

### **Q: Can I receive the Eucharist at Holy Trinity if I belong to the Oriental (Non-Chalcedonian) Orthodox Churches?**

Since Thunder Bay is relatively isolated, if your church is not located in the Thunder Bay area, you may receive Holy Communion upon permission from your priest or bishop. Our Archdiocese has granted this special exemption, as the Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian churches are still not in full communion. However, to make our church your permanent spiritual home or to continue receiving the Sacraments for a long time, you must discuss this with our priest.

### **Q: Do you rent your church to other denominations or faith groups?**

We do not rent our church. The policy is that only our parish priest can celebrate worship services unless another canonical Orthodox Priest is visiting, has written permission from his bishop and our Archdiocese, and has discussed it with our priest to lead services.

The church hall is available for rent as long as the event does not contradict the spirit of the Orthodox Christian faith.

*Orthodox services can be overwhelming or confusing for those experiencing them for the first time. Feel free to speak with our Priest after the Service regarding your experience. We'd love for you to join us in the church hall after Sunday's Divine Liturgy for fellowship and coffee.*



**MANY THANKS TO OUR BULLETIN SPONSORS  
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Olivia Pietrangelo JD, is a member in good standing with the Greek Orthodox Holy Trinity Church in Thunder Bay. She also works as a lawyer at Larson Lawyers.

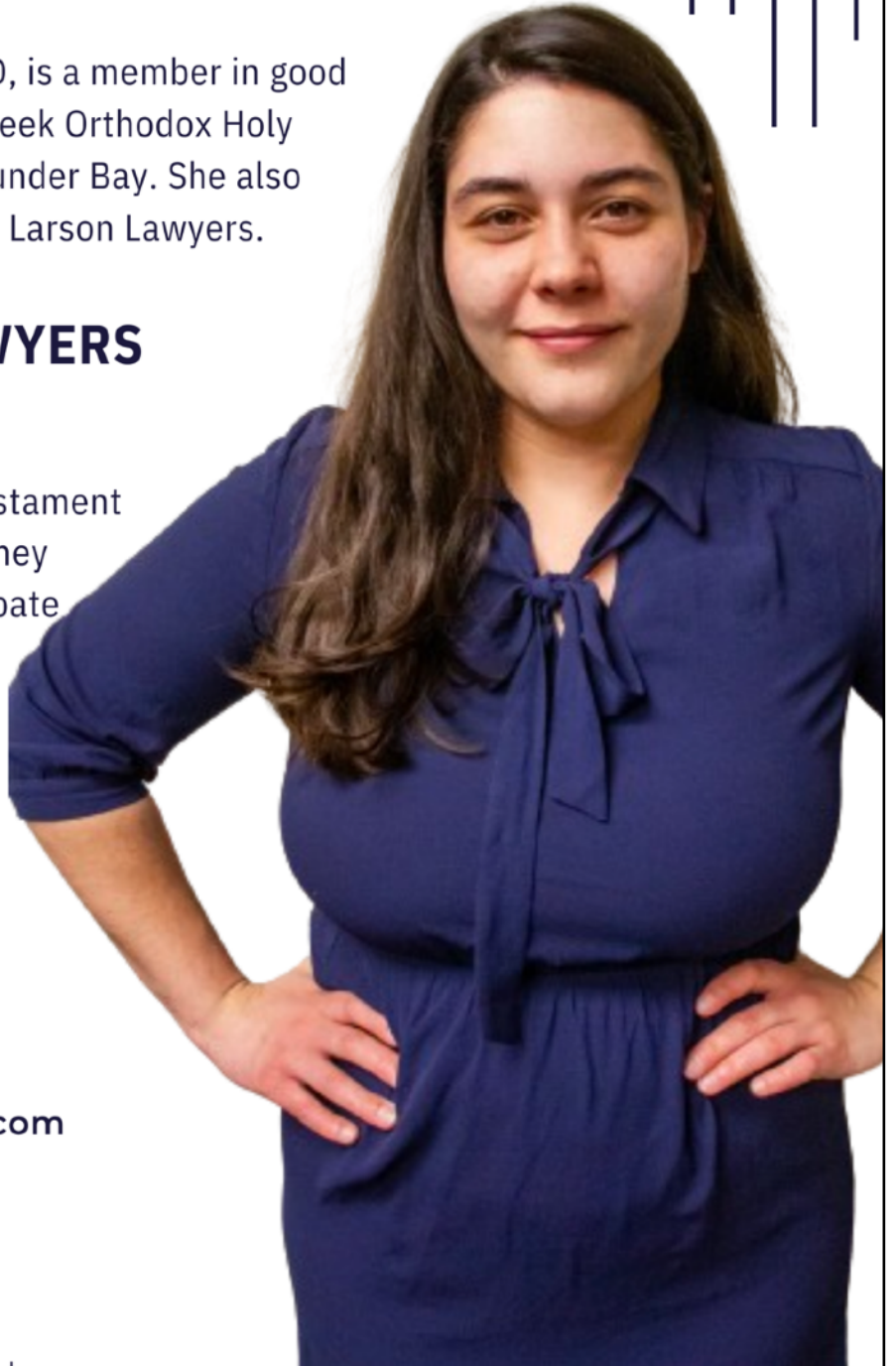
## LARSON LAWYERS SERVICES

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## CONTACT US

☎ 807-285-7777

🌐 [LarsonLawyers.com](http://LarsonLawyers.com)



## STEWARDSHIP ("MEMBERSHIP") RENEWAL / INFO UPDATE (Please Print Clearly)

**Thank you** for your commitment to financial stewardship and faith-building in the coming year.  
Together, we can form an even stronger Greek Orthodox Christian community!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle/Maiden) (Last)

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status (Single, Married, Widowed): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone : \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse (If Applicable): \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle/Maiden) (Last)

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Affiliation (If not Orthodox Christian): \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Anniversary: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Children and Church Affiliation (If not Orthodox Christian):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

STEWARDSHIP TYPE (Please check the options that apply):

Single Adult ☐

Married Couple/Family ☐

University/College Student ☐

Tax Receipt Made Out to (if different from the information above): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make cheques payable to Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church.**  
**You can also e-transfer to [holytrinity@tbaytel.net](mailto:holytrinity@tbaytel.net) and email us the above info.**

## VISITORS

We're so glad to have you in our community! Thank you for taking the time to join us this Sunday morning or for stopping by during the week. If you have any questions at all, we would absolutely love to hear from you. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you'd like us to reach out with any information you need!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a guest of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check all that apply:

☐ I'm a first-time visitor.

☐ I'm a returning visitor.

☐ I'm Orthodox but new to this community/city

☐ I want to learn more about Orthodoxy.

☐ I want to speak to the priest.

☐ I want to be included in the email list for the monthly bulletins and other communications.

☐ I want to receive email updates regarding the Souvlaki Take-Out.

**You may detach this page and return it to our priest or drop it off at the church office or mailbox. You may also email us the above info directly at [holytrinity@tbaytel.net](mailto:holytrinity@tbaytel.net).**