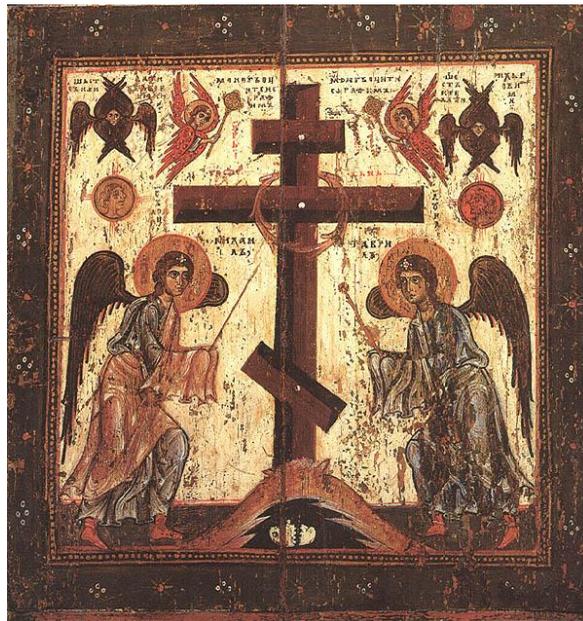


**SAINT
INNOCENT**

**ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN
CHURCH**

**Sunday, April 4, 2021
Third Sunday of Great Lent
Sunday of Life-Giving Cross**



**7301 Rivoli Road, Macon, GA 31220
478-994-1648, www.st-innocent.org
Priest Theophan Buck**

Troparion and Kontakion

Tone 2 **Troparion** (*Resurrection*)

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life immortal, Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead. And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out:// “O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to Thee!”

Tone 1 **Troparion of the Cross**

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance! Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of Thy Cross,// preserve Thy habitation!

Tone 7 **Kontakion** (*Cross*)

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross. The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for Thou, O my Savior, hast come and cried to those in hell:// “Enter again into Paradise!”

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6

¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. **5** For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things *pertaining* to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. ² He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. ³ Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer *sacrifices* for sins. ⁴ And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron *was*. ⁵ So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but *it was* He who said to Him: “*You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.*” ⁶ As He also says in another *place*: “*You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek*”

Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1

³⁴When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." ⁹And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

GREAT LENT A SCHOOL OF REPENTANCE

*Its Meaning for Orthodox Christians
By The Rt. Rev. Alexander Schmemmann*

HOW CAN WE KEEP GREAT LENT?

4. Change of Life

And, last but not least: there must be an effort and a decision to **slow down** our life, to put in as much quiet, silence, contemplation, meditation. Radio, TV, newspapers, social gatherings – all these things, however excellent and profitable in themselves, must be cut down to a real minimum. Not because they are bad, but because we have something **more important** to do, and it is impossible to do without a change of life, without some degree of **concentration** and discipline. Lent is the time when we **re-evaluate** our life in the light of our faith, and this requires a very real effort and discipline. Christ says that a **narrow path** leads to the kingdom of God and we must make our life as narrow as possible. At first the natural and selfish man in us revolts against these limitations. He wants his usual "easy life" with all its pleasures and relaxations. But once we have tasted of such spiritual effort, once we have made by it one step towards God, the reward is great! We discover a joy that cannot be compared to any other joy. We discover the reality of the spiritual world in us. We begin to understand what St. Paul meant by "the joy and peace

