

MARCH/APRIL 2022

SAINT INNOCENT MONTHLY

Official Newsletter of Saint Innocent Orthodox Church
Macon, Georgia

A Word with Father Theophan

Most Orthodox Christians have at least a surface understanding of the spiritual practices of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving during Great Lent. In general, it is known that we are called to fast, pray more, give more alms, read more, cut out entertainment, partake of the Mystery of Confession, and go to the Lenten services as much as we can. Of course, some decide that they do not need such disciplines to be close to God so they ignore the season as though they are somehow spiritually above Lenten exercises. Some are tempted to reduce Great Lent to a weight loss program. Some are tempted to spend a lot of time trying to make Lent taste good or to be nutritionally balanced. Yet others, with exacting consciences, are compelled to fulfill every jot and tittle of the Lenten practices, as though the spiritual tools the Church has given us are ends in themselves. There are many ways to misunderstand the season and it is easy for our fallen nature to get distracted and lose sight of the goals of Great Lent or to simply substitute our own goals.

At the heart of our Lenten practices is our desire to grow closer to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Like the Forerunner and Baptist John, we need to decrease so that Christ may increase (John 3:30). The disciplines of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving are only tools that we use to empty ourselves of our self-centeredness and worldliness. Our goal in using these tools is a deeper encounter with the Living God. Lenten practices are also meant to fan the flame of our desire for God. Our efforts are offered in hope of God's forgiveness, grace, and mercy which can reorient our perspective from this world to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Given that the goal of Great Lent is growth in Christ, what can we expect as we journey to Pascha? When we take away those things that we are comforted by such as food and entertainment it allows other things in our lives to come to the surface of our conscience. Some report that during Lent uncomfortable thoughts and feelings bubble up, temptations, feelings of emptiness, boredom, and frustration with others often arise in the heart. When we eliminate our distractions, all the well-fed, irrational animals that lurk in our souls make themselves known. In the Mystery of Confession we are given the opportunity to name these animals and offer them to God that He might transform us.

It is only as we encounter ourselves as we truly are and offer ourselves as we truly are that we can encounter the Living God. It has been said that there is a "bright sadness" that permeates Great Lent. The sadness is our brokenness, the brightness is that we know in facing ourselves that God can transform and heal us. If we are willing to take up our cross, we may also be given the grace to experience the resurrection in Christ.

As we journey through Great Lent may God help us to use the tools the Church has given us to fan the flame of the love of God in our hearts. May He help us avoid the temptation to make Lent a self-centered experience or to worship the tools the Church has given us. May he give us the endurance to see ourselves clearly and offer our brokenness in return for His forgiveness and grace.





Lenten Musings

Special Lenten Services

Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

On Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday of the first week of Great Lent we serve Great Compline with the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete. The canon is a dialog between St. Andrew, his soul, and God. The theme is an urgent exhortation to change one's life. St Andrew always mentions his own sinfulness placed in juxtaposition to God's mercy and uses literally hundreds of references to good and bad examples from the OT and NT to "convince himself" to repent. The service is beautiful, sobering, and prayerful.

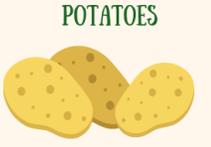
Presanctified Liturgy

Because Great Lent is a season of repentance, fasting, and intensified prayer, the Orthodox Church regards more frequent reception of communion as especially desirable at that time. However, the Divine Liturgy has a festal character not in keeping with the season. Thus, the Presanctified Liturgy is celebrated instead on weekdays. At St. Innocent, we generally celebrate this service each Wednesday during Great Lent. The service consists of Daily Vespers combined with additional prayers and communion. The Faithful are asked to fast in preparation for Holy Communion at least 6 hours before.

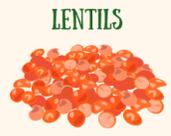
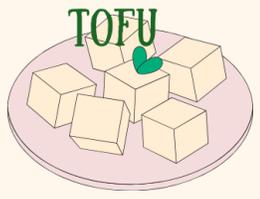
RESTAURANTS WITH LENTEN OPTIONS

- Mellow Mushroom:
multiple Lenten options
- Chipotle: multiple Lenten options
- El Sombrero:
Shrimp/Veggie enchiladas
- Subway: Veggie Delight
- Taco Bell:
Fresco Bean Burrito or Fresco Black Bean Crunchwrap

LENTEN SHOPPING LIST



VEGETABLE BROTH FOR SOUPS



Lenten Book Club
How to be a Sinner
By Peter Bouteneff
via Zoom, begins March 15



Parish Life



Ladies' Lenten Tea Party

Saturday, April 9 2022

Saint Innocent Parish Hall • 10:30 AM

Bring your favorite Lenten dish

Hats Welcome!

GET TO KNOW Tribby Tdzerda

Hometown: Augusta, GA

Favorite Non-Patron Saint: St. Herman of Alaska because he helps me through my work days

First Car: Susie Subaru

Favorite thing about SIOC: Christ is in our midst so powerfully

Random Fact about you: I used to be an Emissary of Divine Light member

Help build the SIOC Lenten Cookbook!

Send Your Meat/Dairy-Free Recipes to Nicole Thomae by March 15 (no desserts, please)

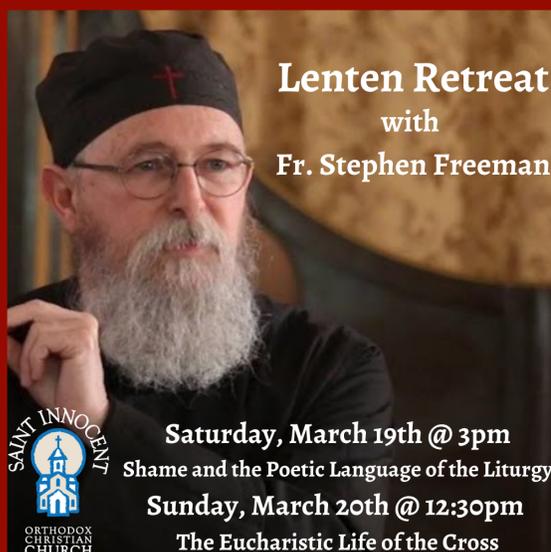


MANY YEARS!

Birthdays in March

- 1 Molly Croft
 - 1 Link Scouten
 - 2 Paul Guest
 - 5 Mark Dorogy
 - 10 Dena Sue Watts
 - 11 Hannah Magnusson
 - 12 David Marble
 - 14 Lana Hough
 - 15 Mark Olsen
 - 19 Thomas Kehayes
 - 22 Eliza Buck
 - 23 Elias Werner
- Anniversaries
- 19 Gary & Dora Cox

Lenten Retreat with Fr. Stephen Freeman



Saturday, March 19th @ 3pm
Shame and the Poetic Language of the Liturgy
Sunday, March 20th @ 12:30pm
The Eucharistic Life of the Cross

Remember your first time at Saint Innocent?



Greeters make the difference!

To join the Greeter Team, see James Andrews



Final Thoughts

Parish Council Updates

- The PC reelected Gary Cox as the parish Warden. Andrew Ennis was re-elected as secretary and Dave Marble was made our new treasurer. We thank Diane for her many years of service as treasurer of SIOC.
- The PC was also tasked with appointing the Standing Cemetery Committee which is now composed of David Marble as the Chair, Eric Olson as a member, and the Cemetery Sexton, and Colin Croft.
- The Iconography and Evangelical outreach committee were reactivated.

Opportunities for Fellowship

- Warner Robins fellowship is meeting regularly again
- Ladies Book Club, Stand by for next date!
- SIOC Book Club via Zoom, begins March 15
- Weekly Coffee Hour

Recommended Reading for Lent

- The Prologue of Ohrid
- Fasting as a Family by Melissa Naasko
- Meditations for Great Lent by Vassilios Papavassiliou
- Pilgrimage to Pascha by Steven Belonick



ST. INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH
7301 Rivoli Road - Macon, Georgia 31210



MARCH 2022						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Feb 27 Last Judgment 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	Feb 28 Beginning of the meat fast	1 7pm Book Study	2 6:00pm Lenten Vespers	3 7pm WR Fellowship	4	5 1:30pm Catechism 5:00pm Sacrament of Confession 6:00pm Great Vespers
6 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Forgiveness Vespers 12:30pm Food and Fellowship	7 Great Lent Begins 6:30pm Compline with Canon of St. Andrew	8 6:30pm Compline with Canon of St. Andrew	9 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	10 6:30pm Compline with Canon of St. Andrew	11 6:30pm Akathist Service	12 5:00pm Sacrament of Confession 6:00pm Great Vespers
13 Sunday of Orthodoxy 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy with Icon procession 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:30pm Church School?	14	15 7pm Book Study	16 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	17 7pm WR Fellowship	18 6:30 Akathist Service	19 3-5 pm Lenten Retreat 5 pm Confession 6:00pm Great Vespers
20 St. Gregory Palamas 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:20am Lenten Retreat Continued	21 7pm Man of God	22 7pm Book Study	23 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	24	25 ANNUNCIATION 10am Vespersal Divine Liturgy for Annunciation 6:30pm Akathist Service	26 5:00pm Sacrament of Confession 6:00pm Vigil for the Ven. Cross
27 Ven. Precious Cross 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	28	29 7pm Book Study	30 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	31 7pm WR Fellowship	Apr 1 6:30pm Akathist Service	Apr 2 5:00pm Sacrament of Confession 6:00pm Great Vespers



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APRIL 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Mar 27 Ven. Precious Cross 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	Mar 28	Mar 29	Mar 30	Mar 31	1	2
3 St. John Climacus 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 St. Mary of Egypt 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:30pm Church School	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 PALM SUNDAY 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy with Palm Procession 11:45am Food and Fellowship	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 PASCHA 12:00am Matins of Pascha 1:00am Pascha Divine Liturgy 2:30am Blessing of the Pascha baskets 1:00pm Agape Vespers 2:00pm Pascha Picnic	25	26	27	28	29	30