

ST. INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH

FEBRUARY 2025 NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR



UNITY AND DIVERSITY

A REFLECTION FROM
FATHER THEOPHAN

This month, we have our Annual Parish Meeting on Sunday the 2nd, where we will review everything happening in the parish. I have repeatedly thought there is so much to say and too little time. With that in mind, one thing we should consider is what it means to be in the Body of Christ.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, the Apostle Paul speaks of the unity and diversity within the Church. St. Paul uses the metaphor of the Church as the Body of Christ with Christ as its Head (Colossians 1:18). According to

this metaphor, each baptized believer is a member of this Body, which is held together by Christ, and enlivened by the Holy Spirit.

Using the metaphor of a body, we can understand that each Christian has different spiritual gifts and roles given by God to benefit the Church. As a body, we depend on each other; our lives are interwoven just as the physical parts of our Body work together. As a Church, we want to be a healthy body that functions and lives according to the Holy Spirit.

On the one hand, we are dogmatically and spiritually united in the Eucharist, in our Christian praxis. As we live out our faith in Jesus Christ and His Gospel, we are called to participate in the unity of the Body of Christ. How do we participate in the unity? The first way is by prioritizing worshipping together. It is in worship that we become one in Christ. Another unifying practice is our home devotional life of mediating on the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church. In his letter to the Magnesians, St. Ignatius of Antioch tells us to *"Strive to be established in the doctrine of our Lord and the Apostles, that whatsoever you do may prosper in body and spirit, in faith and love, in Son, and Father, and Spirit, together with your most reverend bishop, and that so you may become perfectly one with Christ, who is our true life."* In short, as Orthodox Christians, it behooves us to know and practice what we believe and confess because it unifies us as one Body.

On the other hand, we are diverse because we have different gifts (spiritual and natural), personalities, and callings. How do we participate in the diversity of the Body of Christ? One aspect of being diverse

is easy; each of us is different in many ways, so we each bring a unique experience and perspective to our life in Christ. The more challenging part of diversity is searching to discover the natural and spiritual gifts that we are meant to offer to the Church. The Holy Spirit gives different gifts to believers for the building up of the Church —wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, prophecy, etc. In addition to the spiritual gifts, many of us are gifted in other ways from our upbringing, profession, or studies.

I thank God repeated that we have so many people involved and working to build up the life of our Church! But it goes without saying that as we grow, we all need to be reminded and challenged to remember that we should be actively seeking ways of using our gifts for the life of the Church. This reminder is primarily about being healthy. Serving Christ by serving in the Church is good for the Christian soul. Additionally, imagine if one of your organs stopped working or if your hand or eyes decided not to offer their services to your Body. If some of the cells and organs are not fulfilling their calling, it leaves the rest of the Body to stretch themselves thin compensating for the missing members.

God has been good to St. Innocent Orthodox Church. As a local incarnation of the Body of Christ, let's recommit ourselves to living the Orthodox spiritual life to remain unified. Additionally, we should all be asking ourselves about what our part is in the Body and what talents and gifts can be used for the upbuilding of the Kingdom of Heaven in Middle Georgia. May our Lord continue to bless us and help us be healthy and holy!

SPECIAL EVENTS THIS MONTH

Annual Parish Meeting

Sunday, February 2nd at 12:15

The Annual Parish Meeting is an opportunity for us to review our parish's Mission and Ministries and connect with all that is going on in our community as a whole. An email will be sent out with the agenda, budget, and nominations, along with a voting members list. Not everyone is a voting member, but all are welcome to be present. Your participation and input will help shape the direction of our parish for the future.

Sacred Alaska Movie Night

Saturday, February 15th at 7pm

The Youth Group will be hosting a Movie Night for the Parish. Did you know that we had started a Youth Group? Join us that night for a great movie and information about the SIOC Youth Group.

For more info you can contact Ellie Pelt or Leah Truhn

Many Years! Birthdays

February

Lynn Johnson - 3
Elliana Ennis - 8
John C. Savage - 11
Jonathan Teel - 13
Marianne Savage - 13
Lincoln Douglas - 18
Sondra Franceil - 19

Coffee Hour Teams

February

Team 5 - Feb 2nd
Team 6 - Feb 9th
Team 7 - Feb 16th
Team 8 - Feb 23rd

Thank you to everyone who is working to make Coffee Hour a success!

Theophany House Blessings

February

House Blessing have already started and will continue through February wrapping up March 3rd for the start of Lent. If you have not signed up yet, don't wait! Check your email for the Link

SPECIAL EVENTS NEXT MONTH

Living Orthodoxy **A Lenten Retreat with Dr Eve Tibbs**

**Author of: A Basic Guide to Eastern Orthodox Theology:
Introducing Beliefs and Practices**















Saturday, March 15th
12:00 - 5:30

Join us for a special Lenten Retreat.

We are excited to have Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church joining us for this event. The retreat will be followed by Great Vespers at 4:30 pm.

During the retreat, Dr. Tibbs will be presenting three engaging sessions:

1. First Presentation (12-1 pm): "The Church: A Forest and a Single Tree" - Discover the unity in our worship practices and why we cherish them.
2. Second Presentation (1:20-2:20 pm): "Great Lent: A New Hope" - Explore the significance of the Annunciation and the powerful Akathist Hymn.
3. Third Presentation (2:40-3:40 pm): "Seeing the Gospel" - Dive into the beauty of icons depicting Holy Week and Pascha, reflecting the God who desires to reveal Himself to us. We look forward to a day of learning, reflection, and fellowship with you. Come join us for an enlightening and inspiring retreat!

JOURNEY TO PASCHA 2025		
SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READINGS	HOW TO PARTICIPATE
FEBRUARY 2nd Normal Fast Week	 Zacchaeus Sunday Epistle: Hebrews 7:7-17 Gospel: Luke 2:22-40	Our lenten journey begins with a recognition of our own sinfulness. Correct your actions and try to make amends for the consequences of our evil actions. It is time to prepare for spiritual effort and growth.
TRIDION WEEKS BEGIN		
FEBRUARY 9th Fast-Free Week	 Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
FEBRUARY 16th Normal Fast Week	 The Prodigal Son Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
FEBRUARY 23rd Meatfare	 The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
MARCH 2nd Cheesefare	 Forgiveness Sunday Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed
GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS		
MARCH 9th 1 st Sunday of Lent	 Sunday of Orthodoxy Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
MARCH 16th 2 nd Sunday of Lent	 St Gregory Palamas Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
MARCH 23rd 3 rd Sunday of Lent	 Venerable Holy Cross Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
MARCH 30th 4 th Sunday of Lent	 St John Climacus Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Everytime you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
APRIL 6th 5 th Sunday of Lent	 St Mary of Egypt Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
APRIL 12TH SATURDAY	 Lazarus Saturday Epistle: Hebrews 12:28 - 13:8 Gospel: John 11:1-45	Glorifying Christ as "the Resurrection and the Life" who, by raising Lazarus, confirmed the universal resurrection of mankind even before His own suffering and death.
HOLY WEEK BEGINS		
APRIL 13th	 Palm Sunday Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
APRIL 18th	 Holy Friday Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:18 - 2:2 Gospel: Matthew (composite)	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
APRIL 20th FEAST OF FEASTS!	 PASCHA!! Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!



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7301 Rivoli Road - Macon, Georgia 31210



FEBRUARY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Jan 26 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:30pm Catechism	Jan 27 (Office Closed)	Jan 28	Jan 29 6:00pm Daily Vespers 7:00pm Orthodoxy 101	Jan 30 Three Holy Hierarchs 9:00am Divine Liturgy	Jan 31	1 9:00am Loaves and Fishes 9-4pm House Blessings Macon 6:00pm Great Vespers with Litya
2 MEETING OF THE LORD 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Festal Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:15pm Annual Parish Meeting	3 (Office Closed)	4	5 6:00pm Daily Vespers 7:00pm Orthodoxy 101	6	7	8 2:00pm IOCC Operation Homefront 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
9 Publican & Pharisee 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship Church School	10 (Office Closed)	11	12 6:00pm Daily Vespers 7:00pm Orthodoxy 101	13 (Office Closed)	14 (Office Closed)	15 4:00pm Wedding Rehearsal 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession 7:00pm Movie Night
16 Prodigal Son 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 2:00pm Wedding	17 <i>President's Day</i> (Office Closed)	18 (Office Closed)	19 (Office Closed)	20 (Office Closed)	21 6:00pm Memorial Saturday Vespers	22 Memorial Saturday 9:00am Memorial Saturday Liturgy 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
23 Last Judgment (Meatfare) 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	24 (Office Closed)	25	26 6:00pm Great Vespers St. Raphael of Brookline 7:00pm Orthodoxy 101	27 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. Raphael of Brookline	28	Mar 1 9:00am Loaves and Fishes 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession

Please consult the Sunday bulletin for changes to the monthly calendar.



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MARCH 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Feb 23 Last Judgment (Meatfare) 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	Feb 24 (Office Closed)	Feb 25	Feb 26 6:00pm Great Vespers St. Raphael of Brookline 7:00pm Orthodoxy 101	Feb 27 9:00am Divine Liturgy St. Raphael of Brookline	Feb 28	1 9:00am Loaves and Fishes 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
2 Forgiveness Sunday (Cheesefare) 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	3 Lent Begins 6:30pm Compline with the Great Canon of St. Andrew	4 6:30pm Compline with the Great Canon of St. Andrew	5 6:15pm 9th Hour 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	6 6:30pm Compline with the Great Canon of St. Andrew	7 6:30pm Akathist to the Theotokos	8 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
9 Sunday of Orthodoxy 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship 12:20pm Family Church School	10 (Office Closed)	11	12 6:15pm 9th Hour 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	13	14 6:30pm Akathist to the Theotokos	15 12:00pm- Lenten Retreat 4:30pm Great Vespers 5:15pm Sacrament of Confession
16 St. Gregory Palamas 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	17 (Office Closed)	18	19 6:15pm 9th Hour 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	20	21 6:30pm Akathist to the Theotokos	22 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
23 Venerable Cross 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	24 6:30pm Vigil for Annunciation	25 Annunciation 9:00am Vespers Liturgy for the Annunciation	26 6:15pm 9th Hour 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	27	28 6:30pm Akathist to the Theotokos	29 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession
30 St. John Climacus 9:40am 3rd and 6th Hours 10:00am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Food and Fellowship	31 10:00am Presanctified Liturgy for St. Innocent's Repose	Apr 1	Apr 2 6:30pm The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete with the Life of St. Mary	Apr 3	Apr 4 6:30pm Akathist to the Theotokos	Apr 5 9:00am Loaves and Fishes 6:00pm Great Vespers 6:45pm Sacrament of Confession

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