

"As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast." (Mark 2:19)

This evening, Forgiveness Vespers begins the Great Fast. Texts from the propers of Vespers include the following:

Entering into the arena of the Holy Fast, let us make every effort to humble our flesh by abstinence; in prayer and with tears let us seek the Lord our Savior, and, that we might turn away from our evil deeds, let us say to Him: we have sinned against You, O Christ our King, save us as You saved the Ninevites of old, and in Your goodness, grant us a share in the kingdom of heaven.

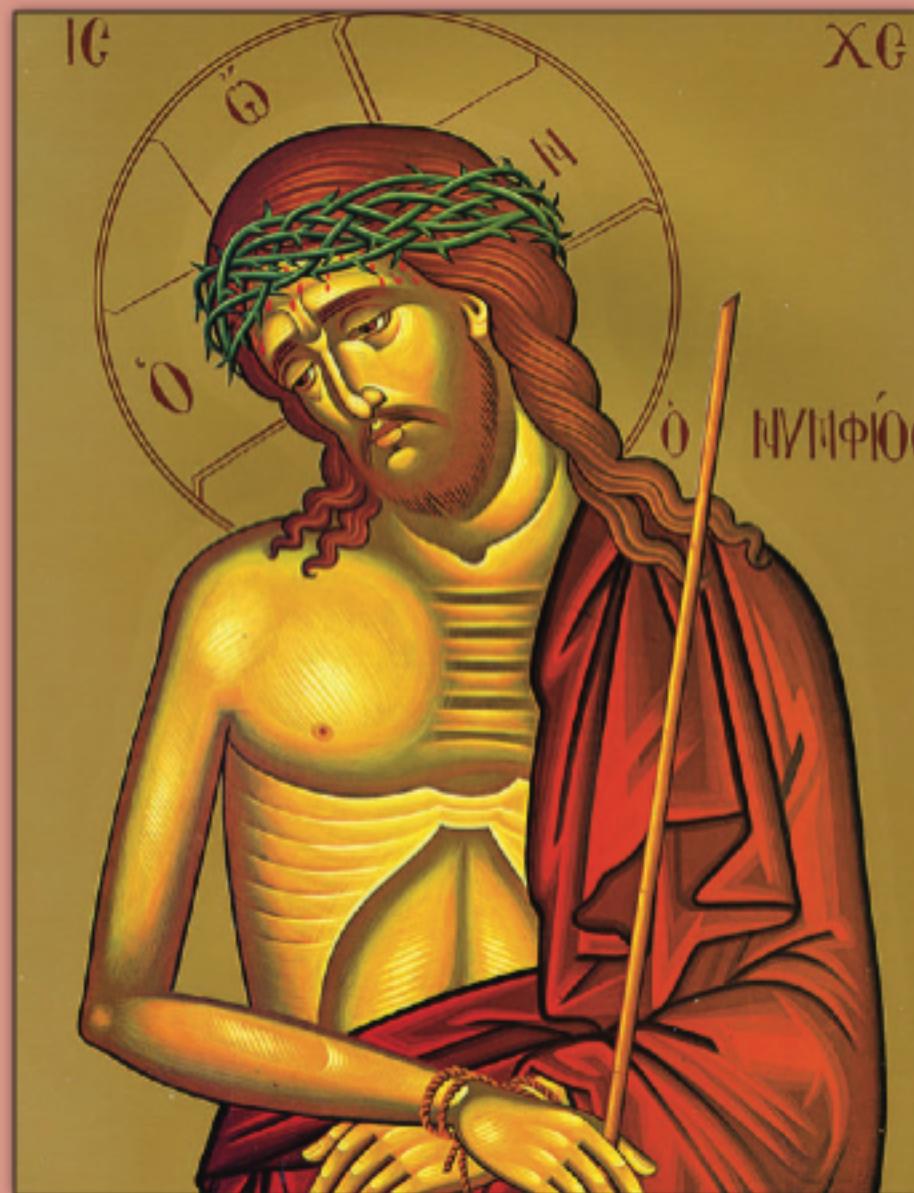
When I see my deeds that deserve such punishment, I am without hope, O Lord; for I have disobeyed Your holy commandments, and I have led a foolish

life. Therefore, I beseech You: purify me in the waters of repentance by fasting and prayer, O Savior, full of goodness; do not reject me, O Benefactor of the Universe.

Let us begin the time of this bright fast, giving ourselves over to spiritual struggle. Let us sanctify our soul and purify our flesh. Let us not fast only from food; let us also abstain from every passion and cultivate spiritual virtues. And let us faithfully persevere in this, so that we may be worthy to see the holy passion of Christ our God and the joy of His holy Resurrection.

*Text from the Lenten Triodion,
Sisters of Saint Basil, Uniontown, PA.*

SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE



Icon of Christ the Bridegroom



Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Parish

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Pastor: Fr. Thomas J. Loya, STB, MA
Deacon: J. Timothy Tkach

February 15, 2026 Sunday of Cheese-Fare Schedule of Services

Sunday	15	<u>Sunday of Cheese-Fare</u> 9:00 AM Matins 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy - Health & Salvation of Parishioners 1:30 PM Forgiveness Vespers (Lent Begins)
Monday	16	<u>St. Andrew of Crete (Part 1)</u> - 7:00 PM First Day of Lent: Strict Fast - No Meat or Dairy Today
Tuesday	17	<u>St. Andrew of Crete (Part 2)</u> - 7:00 PM
Wednesday	18	<u>St. Andrew of Crete (Part 3)</u> - 7:00 PM
Saturday	21	5:00 PM Vespers
Sunday	22	<u>1st Sunday of the Great Fast</u> 9:00 AM Matins 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy - Health & Salvation of Parishioners

We pray for the sick and homebound of our parish, especially:

Dot Wochok	Mary Ann Baran	Mary Ann Horne	Francis Hughes
Gary Dorencz	Michele Lewis	Kim Hughes	Ken Hrusosky
James Forkal	Fran Zeimetz	Katelyn Fuentes-wc	Joel Super

Annunciation of the Mother of God Byzantine Catholic Parish

In all decisions regarding parish membership and Sacramental life, the pastor exercises the final decision and the confidentiality of the persons involved must be respected.

Parish Membership is determined by three things:

1. Being registered in the parish for a sufficient amount of time
2. Faithful and consistent participation in the liturgical life of the parish especially on Sundays and Holy days.
3. Regular financial support of the parish. Use of offertory envelopes by parish members is required for weekly donations

The Sacred Mysteries of Baptism, Chrismation and Matrimony are available only to those persons who comply with the above requirements of parish membership.

A Biblically based stewardship is part of the vision of Annunciation parish. Parishioners are encouraged to practicing tithing and also to consider Annunciation parish in planned giving such as trust funds, etc.

Couples who are planning to be married at Annunciation parish must be free to be married in the Church and must contact the pastor at least six months prior to their proposed wedding date. Persons applying for annulments of a previous marriage should not set a Church wedding date unless their annulment has been granted.

Couples who are cohabitating or involved in same sex civil unions or so-called same sex "marriages," as well as couples who are contracepting are asked to seek the pastor's help in understanding the Church's teaching and in conforming their lives to the moral teaching of the Church. Such persons **cannot receive Holy Communion** until their lives are reconciled with the Church.

Parish members entering the hospital or who are home-bound should contact the pastor or parish business office.

Prior to undergoing surgery or going under anesthesia parish members should contact the pastor.

No eulogies or public addresses by laity are permitted during funeral services.

Cremation is permitted but not encouraged. Ashes are not permitted in the church. Funeral services with the body of the deceased in the church must take place prior to cremation. Ashes are to be buried according to the burial rite of the Church. Ashes cannot be scattered or kept in homes.

Appropriate behavior and dress are required for all liturgical services. No audible conversations, or waving across the church. Electronic devices must be turned off. No food, candy, or gum chewing. Dress code is formal and modest for all services.

Abstinence from meat is to be observed every Friday. If this is not possible an equivalent penitential practice is to be observed.

FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Forgiveness Vespers 1:30pm	16 Andrew of Crete 7pm	17 Andrew of Crete 7pm	18 Andrew of Crete 7pm	19	20	21 Pysanky Class
22	23 Chotki Knotting 7pm	24	25 Pre-Sanctified 7pm	26	27 Pre-Sanctified w/ All Souls 7pm	28

Prayer of Saint Ephrem (the official Byzantine Lenten Prayer)

O Lord and Master of my life, spare me from the spirit of indifference,
despair, lust for power, and idle chatter.

Instead, bestow on me, your servant, the spirit of integrity, humility, patience, and love.

Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins and not judge my brother and sisters;
for you are blessed forever and ever. **Amen**

FASTING "REGULATIONS"

STRICT ABSTINENCE

The law of strict abstinence forbids the use of meat, eggs and dairy products or any of their byproducts. **All faithful adults, who receive Eucharist, are obliged to observe strict abstinence on the first day of the Great Fast (Monday 2/16), on Great and Holy Friday as well as all day on Holy Saturday, until midnight.** The traditional observance of strict abstinence in the Byzantine Catholic Church is observed for the entire 40 days of Lent.

This 40 Day observance is voluntary.

SIMPLE ABSTINENCE

The law of simple abstinence forbids the use of meat or meat byproducts, permitting the use of eggs and dairy products. *All faithful adults, who receive Eucharist, are obliged to observe simple abstinence on all Wednesdays and Fridays during the Great Fast.*

THOSE WHO ARE EXEMPT FROM THE FASTING REGULATIONS

Expectant and nursing mothers, infants, those with serious health conditions, and those under physicians orders are exempt from the laws of strict abstinence.

Explanation of Lenten practices in the Byzantine Church

The 40 Days

Byzantine Lent begins on the Sunday evening (which begins Monday) before what in the Latin Church would be Ash Wednesday. The forty days of Lent are counted continuously including Saturday and Sunday from Monday up until Great Week (Holy Week). Great Week is a separate penitential week in itself.

Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

This is a Matins service but usually celebrated in the evenings during Lent. Through poetic and poignant verses the Great Canon takes us through the entire Bible denoting instances of sin, repentance and redemption.

Pre-Sanctified Liturgy

Since the Divine Liturgy has a Resurrectional element, the Byzantine tradition abstains from celebrating the Divine Liturgy during the weekdays of Lent. But since the Eucharist is essential to our spirituality, the Byzantine tradition celebrates the Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts where we receive the Eucharist that has already been consecrated during the prior Saturday or Sunday Divine Liturgies.

MARCH

The Great Fast Calendar of Lenten Services

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
1	2	3	4 Pre-Sanctified 7pm	5	6 Pre-Sanctified w/ All Souls 7pm	7 Communion Bread Class	
8	9	10	11 Pre-Sanctified 7pm	12	13 Pre-Sanctified w/ All Souls 7pm	14 Pysanky Class	
15 Parish Luncheon	16	17	18 Pre-Sanctified 7pm	19 Andrew of Crete 7pm	20 Akathistos 7pm	21 Lenten Movie	
22	23	24	25 Divine Liturgy Annunciation 7pm	26	27 Pre-Sanctified 7pm	28 Divine Liturgy LAZARUS 8am	
29 Palm Sunday	30	31	GREAT AND HOLY WEEK <i>There will be a seperate schedule for this week</i>				4



Chotki Knotting

Mon, Feb 23rd
7pm - 9pm

Learn the basic knot used to make your own chotki (prayer rope). Classes are limited to 3 people due to the complexity of the knot. Please see sign-up sheet in the narthex.

Pysanky Classes

Learn the venerable art of Easter egg decorating

No experience required. You are welcome to come any time but do plan to stay for a couple of hours. Please also bring a lunch.



Sat. Feb 21st & Mar 14th
10am to 3pm
(Rectory lower level)

Prospora Class



Learn the art of making Prospora (Communion Bread). This will be a hands on experience where you will help to make the bread that will eventually become the **Body of Christ!**

Sat. Mar 7th - 10am to 4pm
this will be an all afternoon class
please bring lunch will be provided

The Annual Cleaning of the Pews

Join us as we prepare the church for Pascha

Saturday
March 28th

starting at
10:00AM

