

# Ambo

ST. THEODOSIUS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

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10:00AM-2:00PM

Paul Zawolowycz  
Ambo Editor

## Divine Services

Eve Sundays & Feast Days

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Great Vespers

Sundays and Feast Days

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hour

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Please check weekly schedule  
for specific days (last page).

Previous Ambos on website.

Articles for publication  
should be submitted to:

[ambo-theodosius](http://ambo-theodosius)

[@googlegroups.com](https://www.google.com/groups)

FEBRUARY 22, 2026

SUNDAY OF CHEESEFARE

THE EXPULSION OF ADAM  
AND EVE FROM PARADISE



As we begin the Great Fast, the Church reminds us of Adam's expulsion from Paradise. God commanded Adam to fast (Gen. 2:16), but he did not obey. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and lost the life of blessedness, knowledge of God, and communion with Him, for which they were created. Both they and their descendants became heirs of death and corruption.

Let us consider the benefits of fasting, the consequences of disobedience, and recall our fallen state. Today we are invited to cleanse ourselves of evil through fasting and obedience to God. Our fasting should not be a negative

thing, a mere abstention from certain foods. It is an opportunity to free ourselves from the sinful desires and urges of our fallen nature, and to nourish our souls with prayer, repentance, to participate in church services, and partake of the life-giving Mysteries of Christ.

At Forgiveness Vespers we sing: "Let us begin the time of fasting in light, preparing ourselves for spiritual efforts. Let us purify our soul, let us purify our body. As we abstain from food, let us abstain from all passion and enjoy the virtues of the spirit...."

**1st Saturday of Great Lent:  
The Miracle of the Boiled Wheat**

Today we remember the miracle of Saint Theodore the Recruit and the boiled wheat. Fifty years after Saint Theodore's martyrdom, Emperor Julian the Apostate (361-363), devised a plan to corrupt the Christians during the first week of Great Lent. He knew that Christians purify themselves through fasting, especially during this week (which is why it is known as Clean Week). Therefore, he ordered the Polemarch (military leader) of Constantinople to go secretly and sprinkle all the food in the marketplace with the blood of animals which had been offered in sacrifice to idols. Saint Theodore appeared to Archbishop Eudoxios in a dream, telling him to assemble all the Christians on Monday morning and tell them that they must not buy any food from the marketplace; instead they were to boil some kollyva and to eat it with some honey during that week. The hierarch asked Saint Theodore what he meant by kollyva. He replied, "Kollyva is what we call boiled wheat in Euchaita." Thus the scheme of the idol-worshipping emperor was thwarted and the pious people were preserved undefiled during Clean Week.

Ever since the middle of the fifth century, the Orthodox Church has honored the holy Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit on the first Saturday of Great Lent. On Friday evening, at the Divine Litur-

gy of the Presanctified Gifts following the prayer at the Ambo, the Canon to the holy Great Martyr Theodore, composed by Saint John of Damascus, is sung. Afterward, kollyva is blessed and distributed to the faithful. The commemoration of the Great Martyr Theodore on the first Saturday of Great Lent was established by Patriarch Nektarios of Constantinople (381-397).



The Troparion to Saint Theodore is quite similar to the Troparion for the Prophet Daniel and the Three Holy Youths (December 17 and Sunday Before the Nativity).<sup>1</sup> The Kontakion for Saint Theodore, who suffered martyrdom by fire, reminds us that he also had faith as his breastplate (see 1 Thessalonians 5:8).<sup>2</sup>

Saint Theodore the Recruit is also commemorated on February 17.

<sup>1</sup> The term "water of rest" comes from Psalm 22:2 (LXX). It is also found in the Troparion for the Prophet Daniel (perhaps from Daniel 1:12). The Hypakoe (in Tone 2) for December 17 mentions that an angel "turned the furnace into a place of rest" for the Three Holy Children.

In today's troparion (and that of Feb. 17), we should not say sweet bread, because of the term "sweetbread," which is made from unappetizing parts of animals.

<sup>2</sup> The term "breastplate" is an exact translation from the Greek. It is not a "shield," or any other thing.

**Coffee Hour Quarter 1 2026**

Questions/Concerns/volunteer? call Cathy Weber (412-215-1928)

January 4 Mary (anonymous sponsor)	February 8 Cathy & Tammy	March 8 (Great Lent) Heather Openshaw
January 11 Sarah & Mike Brennan	February 15 (Meatfare) Wayne, Gayle, & Shawna	March 15 (Great Lent) Cathy & Tammy
January 18 Joyce & Judy	(anonymous sponsor)	March 22 (Great Lent) Wayne, Gayle, & Shawna
January 25 Nikol	February 22 (Cheesefare) <b>Parish Potluck</b>	March 29 (Great Lent) Chris & Emiko Strah
February 1 Mary	March 1 (Great Lent) Joyce & Judy	



February 23, 2026

02/001

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, beloved children in the Lord:

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

First, please be assured of my prayers for you, my flock throughout North America, as we enter into this great and holy season of the Fast. May God grant each of you his aid and support, comfort and blessings, as we all take up our Lenten podvig.

In our present media-mad, ever-online cultural atmosphere, opinion often appears to be our society's highest value, both morally and economically. To hold and express an opinion on all manner of "issues" is cast as the highest form of self-realization. In the meanwhile, the so-called attention economy coddles our biases in order to peddle us all manner of products. Many of you, beloved in the Lord, will know that I have written of this before, but I do so again because the reign of opinion has only become more firmly entrenched, and the spiritual dangers which this situation presents have become only more pervasive.

However, I exhort you to remember, especially during this sacred season of the Holy Forty Days, that, no matter how entrenched or pervasive these realities have become, we find in our Orthodox Christian tradition spiritual medicines, therapies, and inoculations for every temptation, sin, trial, and affliction. Thus, against the background of the technological and social developments and trends that have led us to the present moment, the sacred tradition of Orthodox Christianity appears more distinct perhaps than ever before. In marked contrast to our society's lionization of opinion and constant public self-expression, our faith highlights the spiritual value of dispassion, restraint, sobriety, balance, and discernment.

This is not to deny that our faith may sometimes call us to speak and act. Rather, it is a reminder that our starting point should be, not certainty of our own moral superiority and clarity of judgment, but rather humility and self-examination. As the spiritual classic *Unseen Warfare* points out, we must be suspicious of any thought of ours, no matter how apparently good it may be on the surface. We do not blindly trust our every notion; rather we submit all our thoughts to a process of discernment, in accordance with St. Paul's exhortation: "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves" (2 Cor. 13:5).

If we try to make this practice our own, we will find that, perhaps unexpectedly, such sobriety and restraint do not limit our God-given freedom, our human agency, but rather increase it. After all, the opinionated person is battered by the winds of change, forced to react to every event and controversy, forced to take a

stance on every issue and topic. On the other hand, the sober-minded person, the practitioner of discernment, is free from the shackles of the news cycle, free from the expectation and compulsion to take a stance on the issue du jour. He who is accustomed to restraint is free to form his own opinions—or not—and to do so in his own time, with recourse to prayer, reflection, and unhurried reasoning.

In the end, however, we do not practice discernment, self-examination, restraint, and dispassion as an end in and of themselves. Yes, they may help to liberate us from the whirl of current events and the churning waves of controversy, and this can bring us a measure of temporal peace and well-being. But as Christians we desire not merely to be free from evil, but to be free for good. From this perspective, restraint and sobriety are simply spiritual tools—albeit invaluable spiritual tools—and we use these tools to draw nearer to Christ, or rather, to allow Christ, in his great mercy and love for mankind, to draw closer to us. As the holy apostle James says, “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you” (Jam. 4:8). For, if we are obsessed with our own opinion, what room do we leave for understanding and acting in accordance with God’s will? If we are loudly pointing out the wounds of others, what time and space do we leave for Christ to tend our wounds?

From our vantage at the beginning of the Great Fast, all of this serves to remind us that our entire Lenten effort, indeed our entire Christian life-long struggle, is ultimately directed toward joy – not the passing joys that stimulate our passions, but the everlasting joy of communion with God the Father, in Christ, through the Holy Spirit. The path of repentance may indeed lead us through valleys of sorrow and up rocky slopes of adversity, but the end of the path is true freedom, true happiness, true delight, true love, true existence.

Therefore, when we draw the contrast between the world and its opinions and Christian sobriety, we do not offer our moralism in place of excitement and expression. Instead, Christ offers us every good gift—now and eternally—if we desire to receive those gifts. Instead of being dragged along in the wake of shifting events, the Lord shows us the way toward lasting peace of mind and heart: through dispassion, yes, but ultimately through his own presence in us: the true Peace of God in our hearts and in our midst, now and ever.

To him, our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, our Peace and our Salvation, be all honor and glory, together with his Father and his Holy Spirit, the Comforter, now and always and unto endless ages of ages.

Once again, please be assured of my prayers for you during this sacred season, and may God sustain all of us as we prepare, through our Lenten struggle, to meet the supreme feast of his radiant Pascha.

Yours in Christ,

+ Tikhon  
Archbishop of Washington  
Metropolitan of All America and Canada

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*Orthodox Church in America*  
**DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST**

Wednesday, 18 February 2026  
*Saint Leo the Great, Bishop of Rome*

№. 16

**ARCHPASTORAL MESSAGE OF THE MOST REVEREND DANIEL**  
**ARCHBISHOP OF CHICAGO AND THE MIDWEST**  
**AT THE BEGINNING OF GREAT LENT**

**To the Clergy, Monastics, Faithful and Friends of the Diocese of the Midwest**

Beloved in the Lord,

I greet all of you with love as we enter into the grace-filled season of Great Lent. As the Doors of Repentance are opened to us, I ask your forgiveness for any way in which I have sinned against you as your Bishop and Archpastor, as your Father in Christ, and as your brother in the Lord.

Every year, at the beginning of Great Lent, the Church encourages and reminds us of the traditional practices we have at our disposal in order to continue growing in holiness and to focus most especially on our preparation for the great celebration of the Lord's three-day Paschal mystery which we commemorate in Holy Week and on Holy Pascha. In the sixth chapter of the Gospel of Saint Matthew, we are told of how we should behave in our practices of fasting, almsgiving, and prayer:

“When you give alms, sound no trumpet before you. When you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

“When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”

“If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

“When you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret...”

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven... for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

As we hear in these words, it is the Lord Himself who counsels us on how we are to proceed in the season of repentance and renewal that lies ahead of us. Almsgiving. Prayer. Fasting. Focus, or refocusing on the things of

heaven and not on the things of this world. These are the keys that open for us the doors of repentance, the doors that lead us into the Kingdom of Heaven.

In our Orthodox Christian tradition, we look to the weeks ahead of us as a holy, sacred time. Indeed, we look to Great Lent as a time during which we embark upon a journey. Great Lent takes us on a journey during which we are guided by the Church, supported by one another in maintaining our focus and our purpose through the very practices of which the Lord Jesus speaks. We understand this journey not merely as a time of dietary restrictions, fasting, more prayer, reaching out to those in need, and re-setting our priorities. This is a season in which we cleanse our hearts, minds and souls. We deepen our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ through prayer. We focus on the needs of others before our own needs in order to serve Christ by serving our neighbors. And we work to establish the right relationship between the “things” of this world and the treasures that await us in the Kingdom that is to come.

During these forty days, the Church invites all of us to:

Fast with humility - not as an expectation or inconvenience, but as a way to free the soul from passions.

Pray with sincerity - always seeking God’s mercy and guidance in every moment.

Give generously - remembering that love for others is inseparable from love for God.

Repent wholeheartedly - turning away from sin and the concerns of the world and placing our eyes on the things that really matter and so be embraced by the Father; and,

Refocus intently on the things that matter most.

As we gather in our churches throughout the Diocese of the Midwest, I encourage you to participate in the Lenten Divine Services and join in prayer with our Orthodox sisters and brothers within the diocese and throughout the world; as we fast together and pray together and repent of our sins, as we minister together with all those who are in need. Let us do so, always being of one mind and heart, professing our faith in the One Who has saved us.

Please be assured that I share with you in all the spiritual challenges of the weeks that lies before us. Let us pray for one another that our efforts will benefit not only ourselves, but indeed, will bring blessings to the entire local Church, our diocesan family.

May this Great Lent, be for all of us a season of peace, forgiveness, healing, and spiritual renewal so that with full hearts we may all greet with joy the bright and radiant feast of Pascha.

Be assured of my prayers and blessings for you, your families, and all your loved ones.

With love in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**DANIEL**

**Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest**



## The Greater Cleveland Slavonic Chorus

will present a Concert of Sacred Music  
of Lenten and Paschal Hymns  
Sunday, March 22, 2026  
3:00 pm.

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church  
6822 Broadview Road, Parma  
A free-will offering will be taken  
towards the continued restoration of  
St. Theodosius Cathedral

Musical Director: Michael Pilat  
milo4451@gmail.com

Business Manager: Kenneth Kovach  
coachicbc@gmail.com

# Bringing America Back to Life *Convention*



**Scott Klusendorf**  
Friday, March 13th



**Lara Logan**  
Saturday, March 14th

**Registration is Now Open!**  
**[bringingamericabacktolife.org](http://bringingamericabacktolife.org)**

# EASTERN ORTHODOX WOMEN'S GUILD OF GREATER CLEVELAND

Unity Through Participation

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN,  
FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED.

~MATTHEW 5:4



*Theotokos of Vladimir*

## MEMORIAL SERVICE

Saturday, March 14, 2026 @10:00AM

Archangel Michael Orthodox Church

5025 East Mill Road

Broadview Heights, Ohio 44147



- ❖ Divine Liturgy with Father John Memorich
- ❖ Discuss May's Pan-Orthodox Luncheon - "Festival of Nations"

***PRAYER REQUESTS***  
2/22/2026

***Deceased***

**Ivan** Lavrisyuk

***Special Intentions:***

**Subdeacon Theodore** Lentz

**Subdeacon Leon** Felon

**Reader Frank** Tkacz

**Reader Daniel** Morris

**Horia** Dascalescu (*Lavinia's brother*)

**Janice** Tkacz

**Eleanor** Wachovec (*friend of Karen Felon*)

**Rachel** Ohlin (*relative of Tatiana*)

**Jeffrey** Parhamovich (*brother of Karen Felon*)

**Margaret** Parhamovich (*sister-in-law of Karen Felon*)

**Jean** Woycitzky Thompson (*Frank's cousin*)

**Debra** Parhamovich (*sister of Karen Felon*)

**Robert** Martin Prock

**Valentina** Zawolowycz (*mother of Paul Z*)

**Child McKenna** Kranek

**Betty** Balasz

**Elisabeth** Lavrisiuk

**Phyllis** Gindlesperger

**Jerry** Czajkowski

**Christopher** Magee (*Brother of Erin Z*)

**Barbara** Sheean

**Tamara** Ponomarenko

**Paige** Benjamin (*Niece of Una Alexandrovic*)

**Sara** Wilmot (*friend of Tim Clos*)

**Catherine** (*niece of Judy Schwind*)

**Kathleen** Spickler

**Elena** Rich

**Please submit names to the Prayer List by  
emailing them to Fr. Jan Cizmar  
[st.theodosiuscathedral@gmail.com](mailto:st.theodosiuscathedral@gmail.com)**

Or calling at 1 (440) 732-8182  
Names remain on the list for 30 days unless  
requested otherwise.

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## BIWEEKLY SCHEDULE 2026

### Sunday, February 22

*Sunday of Cheesefare*

#### **The Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise**

Uncovering of the Relics of the Holy Martyrs at the Gate of Eugenius at Constantinople (395-423)

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour

*Restoration Meeting to follow*

5:45 PM Panichida for Paul Pangrace

6:00 PM Forgiveness Vespers

### Monday, February 23

*Great Lent Begins*

Hieromartyr Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (167)

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

### Tuesday, February 24

First (4th c.) and Second (452) Finding of the Honorable Head of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

### Wednesday, February 25

St. Tarasius, Archbishop of Constantinople (806)

4:30 PM Confessions

5:30 PM 9th Hour & Typica

6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy

### Thursday, February 26

“Mezhetsk” Icon of the Mother of God

St. Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza (420)

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

### Friday, February 27

Repose of St. Raphael, Bishop of Brooklyn (1915)

4:30 PM Confessions

5:30 PM 9th Hour & Typica

6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy

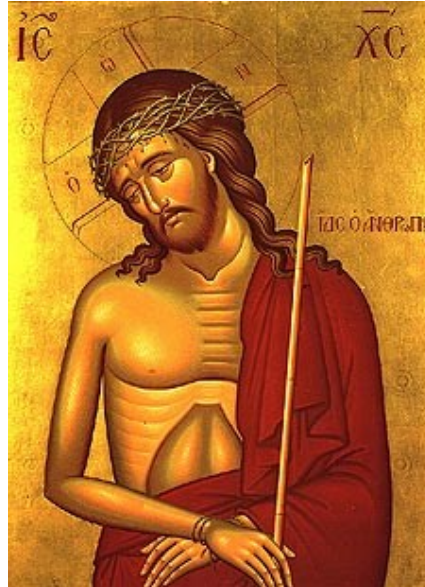
### Saturday, February 28

*First Saturday of Great Lent*

Commemoration of St. Theodore the Recruit and the Miracle of the Boiled Wheat

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Great Vespers



In the Orthodox Church, the last Sunday before Great Lent—the day on which, at Vespers, Lent is liturgically announced and inaugurated—is called Forgiveness Sunday. On the morning of that Sunday, at the Divine Liturgy, we hear the words of Christ:

“If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses...” (Mark 6:14-15).

Then after Vespers—after hearing the announcement of Lent in the Great Prokeimenon: “Turn not away Thy face from Thy child, for I am afflicted! Hear me speedily! Draw near unto my soul and deliver it!”, after making our entrance into Lenten worship, with its special melodies, with the prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian, with its prostrations—we ask forgiveness from each other, we perform the rite of forgiveness and reconciliation.

### Sunday, March 1

*First Sunday of Great Lent*

#### **Sunday of Orthodoxy**

Martyr Eudokia of Heliopolis (ca. 160-170)

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour

### Monday, March 2

Hieromartyr Theodotus, Bishop of Cyrenia

(ca. 320)

### Tuesday, March 3

Martyr Eutropius of Amasea, and with him

Martyrs Cleonicus and Basiliscus (ca. 308)

### Wednesday, March 4

Ven. Gerasimus of the Jordan (475)

4:30 PM Confessions

5:30 PM 9th Hour & Typica

6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy

### Thursday, March 5

Martyr Conon of Isauria (1st c.)

### Friday, March 6

The 42 Martyrs of Ammoria in Phrygia, including: Constantine, Aetitus, Theophilus, Theodore, Melissenus, Callistus, Basoës and others (ca. 845)

4:30 PM Confessions

5:30 PM 9th Hour & Typica

6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy

### Saturday, March 7

*Second Saturday of Great Lent*

*Memorial Saturday*

The Holy Hieromartyrs of Cherson: Basil, Ephraim, Capito, Eugene, Aetherius, Elpidius, and Agathodorus (4th c.)

4:45 PM Church School

5:00 Confessions

5:30 PM Memorial Service

6:00 PM Great Vespers

### Sunday, March 8

*Second Sunday of Great Lent*

#### **St. Gregory Palamas**

Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev

Caves Lavra

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Coffee Hour