MARCH 9, 2008
41ST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
FORGIVENESS SUNDAY
CHEESEFARE SUNDAY

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
In the year 313 St Constantine the Great issued an edict granting Christians religious freedom, and officially recognizing Christianity as equal with paganism under the law. But his co-ruler Licinius was a pagan, and he decided to stamp out Christianity in his part of the Empire. As Licinius prepared his army to fight Constantine, he decided to remove Christians from his army, fearing mutiny.

One of the military commanders of that time in the Armenian city of Sebaste was Agricola, a zealous champion of idolatry. Under his command was a company of forty Cappadocians, brave soldiers who had distinguished themselves in many battles. When these Christian soldiers refused to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods, Agricola locked them up in prison. The soldiers occupied themselves with prayer and psalmody, and during the night they heard a voice saying, "Persevere until the end, then you shall be saved."

On the following morning, the soldiers were again taken to Agricola. This time the pagan tried flattery. He began to praise their valor, their youth and strength, and once more he urged them to renounce Christ and thereby win themselves the respect and favor of their emperor.

Seven days later, the renowned judge Licius arrived at Sebaste and put the soldiers on trial. The saints steadfastly answered, "Take not only our military insignia, but also our lives, since nothing is more precious to us than Christ God." Licius then ordered his servants to stone the holy martyrs. But the stones missed the saints and returned to strike those who had thrown them. One stone thrown by Licius hit Agricola in the face, smashing his teeth. The torturers realized that the saints were guarded by some invisible power. In prison, the soldiers spent the night in prayer and again they heard the voice of the Lord comforting them: "He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live (John 11:25). Be brave and fear not, for you shall obtain imperishable crowns."

On the following day the judge repeated the interrogation in front of the torturer, but the soldiers remained unyielding.

It was winter, and there was a severe frost. They lined up the holy soldiers, threw them into a lake near the city, and set a guard to prevent them from coming out of the water. In order to break the will of the martyrs, a warm bath-house was set up on the shore. During the first hour of the night, when the cold had become unbearable, one of the soldiers made a dash for the bath-house, but no sooner had he stepped over the threshold, than he fell down dead.

During the third hour of the night, the Lord sent consolation to the martyrs. Suddenly there was light, the ice melted away, and the water in the lake became warm. All the guards were asleep, except for Aglaius, who was keeping watch. Looking at the lake he saw that a radiant crown had appeared over the head of each martyr. Aglaius counted thirty-nine crowns and realized that the soldier who fled had lost his crown.

Aggias then woke up the other guards, took off his uniform and said to them, "I too am a Christian," and he joined the martyrs. Standing in the water he prayed, "Lord God, I believe in You, in Whom these soldiers believe. Add me to their number, and make me worthy to suffer with Your servants." Then a fortieth crown appeared over his head.

In the morning, the torturers saw with surprise that the martyrs were still alive, and their guard Aggias was glorifying Christ together with them. They led the soldiers out of the water and broke their legs. During this horrible execution the mother of the youngest of the soldiers, Meliton, pleaded with her son not to persevere until death.

They put the bodies of the martyrs on a cart and committed them to fire. Young Meliton was still breathing, and they left him to lay on the ground. His mother then picked him up, and on her own shoulders she carried him behind the cart. When Meliton drew his last breath, his mother put him on the cart with the bodies of his fellow sufferers. The bodies of the saints were tossed in the fire, and their charred bones were thrown into the water, so that Christians would not gather them up.

Three days later the martyrs appeared in a dream to St Peter, Bishop of Sebaste, and commanded him to bury their remains. The bishop together with several clergy gathered up the relics of the glorious martyrs by night and buried them with honor.

There is a pious custom of baking "skylarks" (pastries shaped like skylarks) on this day, because people believed that birds sing at this time to announce the arrival of spring. Forty "skylarks" are prepared in honor of the Forty Martyrs.
ILL-AFFLICTED:
Archpriest Pavel Soucek
Betty Balasz
Helen Baldner
Helen Barski
Carol Bohurjak
Martha Bondor
John Clements
John Conrad
Michelle Dunn (cousin of Sonia Vorell) 
Joseph Gammalo
Henry & Julia Grabowski
Bertha Gracenin
Maria Hanzel
Christina Helle

PRAYER REQUESTS

Jason Kleps (cousin of Maca Tyler)
Jason is in Kirkuk, Iraq
Basil & Marian Kluchnik
Dorothy Laskovich
John Matson
Olga Michailuk
Michael Mytrohovich
Grace Mary Parhamovich (Karen Felon’s mother)
Tammy Ponomarenko
Marshall Prock
Rebekah Samol
Julia Sankovic(child)
James Shehan
Mary Ann Silberhorn
William J. Spurlock
June Stuchlak
Elsie Sudnick
Jeanne Twitchell
Harrison Ward (Child)
Christine Witnik
Edward & Carol Jacak & Unborn Child
Tom & Nancy Mitchell & Unborn Child
Nathan & Chelsea Pozderac & Unborn Child
Robby & Jacqui Prock & Unborn Child
William & Petra Turko & Newborn Nicholas

COFFEE HOUR & GREETERS SCHEDULES

Coffee Hour Hosts:  Greeters:
3/9/08 Joyce Tabeling/Albert Casey  Debbi Pinta/ Tom Broslawik
3/16/08 Patti Sankovic/Natalia Pricinovskis  Maca Tyler/Sonia Vorell
3/23/08 Debbi Pinta/Joyce Tabeling  Maca Tyler/Judy Schwind
3/30/08 Wojnicz Family  Eileen Bondor

STEWARDSHIP WORKSHOP

There will be a stewardship workshop for all Parish Council Members, Committee chairs and any and all leaders of the Parish; and any member of the parish who may be interested.

The Workshop will be on Saturday, March 22, 2008, 1:00PM., at the Parish Hall. Mr. Joe Kormos, the Parish Health Facilitator for the Midwest Diocese, will lead the workshop.

This is very important for the future growth of our parish; both spiritually and otherwise.  Fr. John

Welcome to Our New Members

James & Constance Onest
James & Constance have recently joined our parish community and live in Sagamore Hills.
God bless them and grant them many years with us!

SAVE THE DATE
Bright Saturday, May 3.
St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, welcomes you to Frederica Mathewes-Green, author and speaker.
For additional information call: 440-835-2348

St. Theodosius Orthodox Cathedral Ambo - Page 3
Weekly Schedule
GREAT LENT

Sunday, March 9
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
6:00 PM Forgiveness Vespers

Monday, March 10
6:00 PM Great Canon

Tuesday, March 11
6:00 PM Great Canon

Wednesday, March 12
6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy and Potluck

MARCH SPECIAL
COLLECTION REPAIR OF
PARISH HALL ROOF

Thursday, March 13
11:00 AM Faith Enrichment
@ Ridge Manor
6:00 PM Great Canon

Friday, March 14
6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy and Potluck
Tremont Art Walk

Saturday, March 15
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Bible Study following Divine Liturgy
6:00 PM Great Vespers

Sunday, March 16
Sunday of Orthodoxy
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
6:00 PM Sunday of Orthodoxy Pan-Orthodox Vespers @ St. Demetrios Church

St. Theodosius Orthodox Cathedral
733 Starkweather Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44113