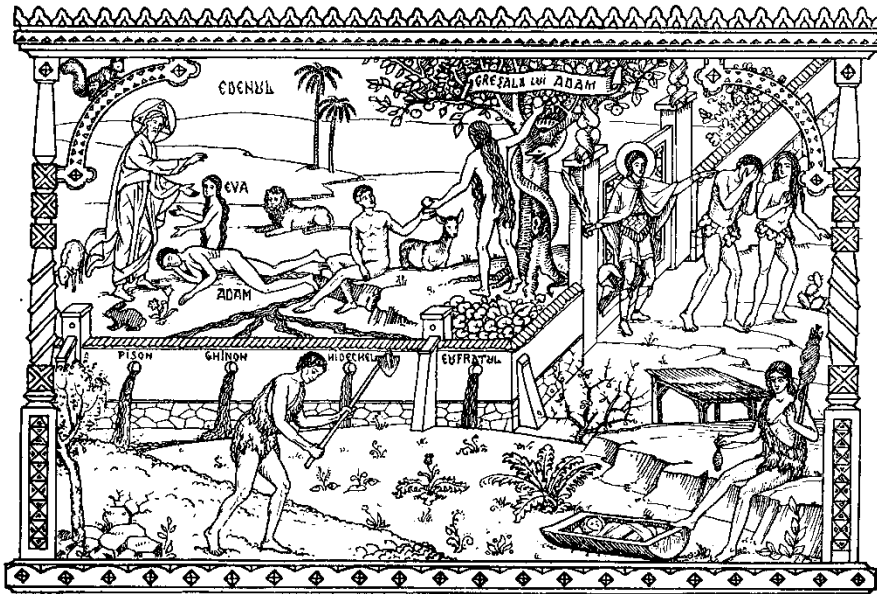


## February 22, 2015: The Cheese fare Sunday

### Epistle: Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4:

*And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.*

### Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21:



*“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. “Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their*

*faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;*

*but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

On the eve of Great Lent, the Cheesefare Sunday, the Epistle reading reminds us that the time of preparation is over and the season of spiritual renewal is already upon us: *"The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."*

The Orthodox Church teaches us that we should never let our (spiritual) guard down, but be constantly on the look out for the temptations of life. If we were to heed the teaching of the Church, these special seasons, such as Great Lent, would constitute a progression to a higher level of spiritual transparency, rather than a start from the bottom: *"Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."*

In the same context, the Gospel reading of this Sunday teaches us how we can benefit the most of our spiritual journey to Pascha, the Spring of our spiritual renewal;

First, we have to be at peace with our fellow human beings, forgiving their wrong doings against us in order to receive forgiveness from God: *"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*

Second, our fasting should be enshrouded in humility, not seeking praises and compliments from other people: *"But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly."*

Third, our focus in life should be the acquisition of good deeds, as opposed to being obsessed with the material things which have only temporal value: *"but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

May God make our spiritual journey a fruitful one and bless us with the gift of forgiveness!

**Fr. George Bazgan**

## **Sunday Fellowship**

The following families are scheduled to look after  
this Sunday's fellowship:

**Morariu Iulian & Cristina  
Nanu Claudiu & Irina  
Bratu Marius & Alina**

**Thank you all very much!**

## **VESPERS SERVICE**

Vespers Service will be served every  
**Saturday, at 5:00 PM,**  
until Palm Sunday.

**CONFESSION WILL BE HEARD AFTER.**