

## *March 13, 2016: 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 who 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:

**Corbu Adrian & Maria  
Cobuz Viorel & Mușă  
Diaconu Constantin & Mariana**

**Thank you all very much!**

## **PEROGY SUPPER**

On Friday, March 11, 2016, the Ladies Auxiliary  
will organize a Perogy Supper at the Romanian Center,  
between 4:30 – 7:30 PM.

## **Donation Receipts**

The 2015 tax-deductible receipts are now available at the church.  
Please come in and talk to our Treasurer, Mrs. Corina Sasu.  
Thank you for your support!

## ***Spread the word***

**We make an appeal to all of you, subscribers to our weekly electronic Bulletin, to invite your family members and friends to submit their email address and join the list of our parish subscribers.**

**This is so we can reach as many people as possible.**

***Thank you for your help!***

## ***Our Family***

**We would like to add something new to our website.  
All members and supporters are asked to send in a picture  
of their family, with the names of all members.  
All pictures will available under this category: *Our family*.**

***Thank you for your participation!***

## ***The Teachings of the Orthodox Church***

The Orthodox Church throughout the ages has maintained a continuity of faith and love with the apostolic community founded by Christ and sustained by the Holy Spirit. Orthodoxy believes that, from the time of the Apostles, she has preserved and taught the historic Christian Faith free from error and distortion. She also believes that there is nothing in the body of her teachings which is contrary to the truth or which inhibits the real union with God. The air of antiquity and timelessness that often characterizes Eastern Christianity is an expression of her desire to remain loyal to the authentic Christian Faith.

Orthodoxy believes that the Christian Faith and the Church are inseparable. It is impossible to know Christ, to share in the life of the Holy Trinity, or to be considered a Christian apart from the Church. It is in the Church that the Christian Faith is proclaimed and maintained. It is through the Church that an individual is nurtured in the Faith.

### **THE REVELATION**

According to the Orthodox Church, God is the source of faith. Orthodoxy believes that God has revealed Himself to us, most especially in the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom we know as the Son of God. This Revelation of God, His love, and His purpose, are constantly made manifest and contemporary in the life of the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Orthodox Faith does not begin with man's religious speculations, or with the so-called "proofs" for the existence of God, or with a human quest for the Divine. The origin of the Orthodox Christian Faith is the Self-revelation of God. Each day the Church's Morning Prayer affirms and reminds us of this by declaring: *"God is the Lord and He has revealed Himself to us."* While the inner Being of God always remains unknown and unapproachable, God has manifested Himself to us; and the Church has experienced Him as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which is central to the Orthodox Faith, is not the result of pious speculation, but the overwhelming experience of God. This doctrine affirms that there is only One God in whom there are three distinct Persons. In other words, when we encounter either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Spirit, we are truly experiencing contact with God. While the Holy Trinity is a mystery that cannot be fully comprehended, Orthodoxy believes that we can truly participate in the Trinity through the life of the Church, especially through our celebration of the Eucharist and the other Sacraments, as well as the non-sacramental services.