

April 4, 2021: The Third Sunday of Lent (Of the Holy Cross)

Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:1-6:

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. Because of this he is required as for the people, so also for himself, to offer sacrifices for sins. And no man takes this honor to himself, but he who is called by God, just as Aaron was. So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, but it was He who said to Him: "You are My Son, today I have begotten You." As He also says in another place: "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

Gospel: Mark 8:34-38; 9:1:



When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power."

Just as the pilgrim who embarks on a long journey needs, after a while, to stop and replenish his/her energy, the same is true with us, the Orthodox Christians who embark every Spring on the spiritual journey of Great Lent, whose destination is the Lord's Resurrection or Pascha. The Fathers of the Church have wisely decided to give us the opportunity to stop, on the third Sunday of Lent, rest in the shade of the Tree of life (the Cross), ponder and continue our journey with renewed determination and faith.

The Cross, the instrument of Christ's victory over death and the evil forces, is a reminder of the fact that, on one hand we should understand our Lenten journey and even our entire life in the context of Christ's suffering on the Cross, and that in order to receive the light of Resurrection we must carry our own cross, experience our personal Golgotha, on the other hand. In other words, there is no Resurrection without the Cross.

This is why the gospel reading of this Sunday begins with the Lord's invitation: *“Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*

The purpose of our Lenten journey is to cleanse ourselves spiritually and physically as part of our preparation for the voluntary and redeeming Passion of our Savior and His third day Resurrection, aware all the time that the soul is the most valuable part our being, as the Lord teaches us today: *For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*

Fr. George Bazgan

We are live streaming the Liturgy

**As we continue to operate under these restrictions, we are
live streaming the Divine Liturgy on You Tube.
To access the Sunday Services, [click here.](#)**

Holy Liturgy on Saturdays

**The Divine Liturgy will also celebrated every Saturdays until Easter.
This, so that we don't exceed the allowable number of people in Church
on Sundays. We ask those who have memorial services to limit the
amount of food offered in memory of the departed and make donations
to various charities: Hope Mission, Mustard Seed, etc.**

Thank You!

Sunday Service Attendance

Due to the continuing State of Emergency, and the recent measures imposed by the provincial authorities, the maximum number of people attending Church services is 20.

In order to give more people a chance to attend, we ask those who attended last Sunday, to skip this upcoming Sunday, establishing some sort of a rotation system. Also, only one person from the same family, please!

We apologize for this inconvenience and hope that the restrictions will continue to be relaxed in the near future.

Those who attend, are kindly asked to observe the recommendations of the experts, such as: wearing a mask, washing hands, social distancing, etc.

Thank you all and may God keep us safe!

SPECIAL SERVICES DURING GREAT LENT:

Friday at 6:00 PM: AKATHIST TO THE HOLY VIRGIN.

Saturday at 5:00 PM: VESPERS.

CONFESSION WILL BE HEARD AFTER EACH OF THESE SERVICES.

MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Directors extends a warm appeal to all supporters of our parish, asking them to pay their membership before Easter.

This way we can ensure that we have the necessary funds to fulfill our financial obligations during the Summer months and for the rest of the year as well.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
St. Mina, St. Ephrem the New and St. Gerasim of Kefalonia, Blainville, QC



Founder Pillar of the Church: \$5000 and more

Founder: \$1000 - \$4999. Donor: up to \$999.

The founders remain forever in the records of the church; they are commemorated in the Divine Liturgy and, during the Proskomedia, a particle is taken out for

them.

Project: Buying the CHURCH where we perform Holy Services regularly, located at: 3550 Montée Gagnon, Blainville, QC J7E 4H5.

We invite you to join those who support us in carrying out the project **by making donations to the account Romanian Orthodox Parish ST. MINA, TD Canada Trust (004) 4383- 5026649 (bank transfer; Pay-Pal; cash; send checks to the office of St. Mina Parish: 573 Rue Des Asters, St.- Eustache, Qc., J7P 5W4)**

“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” (Matthew 6:19-21).

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Romanian Orthodox Parish St. MINA <http://www.misiuneasfintulmina.com/>

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

REAL FASTING

I speak not of such a fast as most persons keep, but of real fasting; not merely abstinence from most meats, but from sins as well. For the nature of a fast is such that it does not suffice to deliver those who practice it unless it is done according to a suitable law. So that when we have gone through the labor of fasting we do not lose the crown of fasting, we must understand how and in what manner it is necessary to conduct the business since the Pharisee also fasted, but afterward went away empty and destitute of the fruits of fasting. The Publican did not fast, and yet he was accepted in preference to him who had fasted in order that you may learn that fasting is unprofitable unless all other duties accompany it.

Fasting is a medicine. But like all medicines, though it be very profitable to the person who knows how to use it, it frequently becomes useless (and even harmful) in the hands of him who is unskillful in its use.

I have said these things not that we may disparage fasting, but that we may honor fasting. For the honor of fasting consists not in abstinence from food, but in withdrawing from sinful practices, since he who limits his fasting only to abstinence from meats is one who especially disparages fasting

THE PROOF OF FASTING

Do you fast?

Give me proof of it by your works.

If you see a poor man, take pity on him.

If you see a friend being honored, do not envy him.

Do not let only your mouth fast, but also the eye, and the ear, and the feet, and the hands, and all the members of your bodies.

Let the hands fast, by being free of avarice.

Let the feet fast, by ceasing to run after sin.

Let the eyes fast, by disciplining them not to glare at that which is sinful...

Let the ear fast... by not listening to evil talk and gossip...

Let the mouth fast from foul words and unjust criticism.

For what good it is if we abstain from birds and fishes, but bite and devour our brothers?

Prayer at the time of pandemic

O Lord, our God, who are rich in mercy and, with Your wise care, guard our lives, listen to our prayer, receive our repentance for our sins, stop this pandemic, as You have ceased the punishment of the people in the days of King David. You who are the Physician of our souls and our bodies, give healing to those contaminated with this disease, hastily raising them from their bed of suffering, to glorify You, the Most Merciful Savior, and protect those who are healthy from any disease.

Bless, strengthen and shield, O Lord, with Your grace, all those who, with love of people and sacrifice, care for the sick at their homes or in hospitals. Remove all disease and suffering from the people and teach us to value life and health as gifts coming from You.

Grant us, O God, Your peace, and fill our hearts with unwavering faith in Your protection, with hope in Your help, and with love towards You and our neighbor.

For Yours is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and to You we give glorify: Father and Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen!