

Holy Apostles Newsletter

DIOCESE OF THE WEST

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA



Holy Apostles Orthodox Mission

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From The Holy Fathers

ALMSGIVING QUOTES

...Send your treasures to the heavenly storage room. Deposit your wealth in God's Bank, distributing it to the poor, the orphans and the widows, so that you can receive a million times more in the Second coming of Christ...

- Elder Joseph the Hesychast

Almsgiving above all else requires money, but even this shines with a brighter luster when the alms are given from our poverty. The widow who paid in the two mites was poorer than any human, but she outdid them all.

- St. John Chrysostom

Feeding the hungry is a greater work than raising the dead.

- St. John Chrysostom

MAKE READY O BETHLEHEM

For us, the Nativity Fast serves to refresh the last part of the year - mystically renewing our spiritual unity with God and preparing us for the Feast of the Nativity of Christ.

St. Leo the Great wrote: "Four periods [of the year] have been set aside as times of abstinence, so that over the course of the year we might recognize that we are constantly in need of purification, and that amid life's distractions, we should always strive by means of fasting and acts of charity to extirpate sin, sin which is multiplied in our transitory flesh and in our impure desires."

According to Leo the Great, the Nativity Fast is a sacrifice to God [in return for] the gathered harvest.

The Holy Hierarch stated, "Just as the Lord has generously granted us abundance of the fruits of the earth, so should we, during the time of this Fast, be generous to the poor."

According to St. Symeon of Thessalonica, "...the Nativity Forty-day Fast represents the fast undertaken by Moses, who, having fasted for forty days and forty nights, received the Commandments of God, written on stone tablets [of the Law]. And we, fasting for forty days, will reflect upon and receive from the Virgin of the living Word - not written upon stone, but born, incarnate, and we will commune of His Divine Body."

November 15 is the starting point for a spiritual journey to the day of this great joy. This journey is one that requires our development of greater humility so we can fully appreciate what God have given to us. This is by nature an ascetic journey. Like our journey to be united with God, it is not one where we can make use of our social relationships or our material possessions. This is a journey where we must learn to surrender our souls to the will of God, relinquish our control over the journey to Him whose birth we are about to celebrate. This is the spirit we must embrace as we enter into this fast. It is a period of preparation just as the manger was prepared for Christ.

Make ready, O Bethlehem: let the manger be prepared, let the cave show it's welcome. The truth has come, the shadow has passed away; born of a Virgin, God has appeared to men, formed as we are and making godlike the garment He has put on. Therefore Adam is renewed with Eve, and they call out: 'Thy good pleasure has appeared on earth to save our kind.' TT

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Community Forum

ALMSGIVING FOR NATIVITY SEASON

This year, as a community, we will focus our almsgiving toward the Ronald McDonald House Charities located in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Ronald McDonald House Charities of Oregon and Southwest Washington provides a “home away from home” for families with seriously ill children, and supports initiatives to improve pediatric health.

To accomplish all of this, the organization relies on the generosity of thousands of donors, the ingenuity of local volunteers, and the dedication of their staff.

I was made aware of this program through another Orthodox family whose child was suffering from cancer. They had nothing but wonderful things to say about this program.

There are many ways to help including monetary donations and volunteering, however they have a wish list of things they need for families. With the exception of books and DVDs, only new, unused and unexpired items can be accepted. Environmentally friendly products are appreciated. Wish list donations can be dropped off at either house; directions are available on our website: rmhcoregon.org. Please call before delivering: 971/230-6700 (East House, on the campus of Legacy Emanuel Hospital) or 971/230-0808 (West House, near Doernbecher Children’s Hospital, OHSU and Shriners Hospital for Children).

Please see their website for items that are needed most. With the money that we save from eating less and more simply this Nativity season, let us use it to help those who need it. During the month of December bring your items to the church and before the end of the month, we will contact the program and make a delivery. If someone would like to be the person to make the delivery, this is another way of giving alms! Please let Fr. Dimitri know if you are interested in helping in this way.

MEN’S FELLOWSHIP/READING

We will continue reading “Our Thoughts Determine our Lives” by Elder Thaddeaus. We will meet for dinner on Thursday, Dec 15 at 6:30 p.m. at Perez’s. Please bring a few buck to contribute for the meal cost.

LADIES FELLOWSHIP/POTLUCK

On Saturday, December 17th, we will have an Akathist to the Theotokos followed by a potluck luncheon/Mom & Kids crafting activity at the church. More details to come from Joanna Donnor.

NATIVITY LENTEN RETREAT 2011

The Greatest of These is Love.

Holy Cross parish in Yakima, WA will host a Nativity Lenten Retreat, Friday, December 9 through Saturday, December 10, 2011. The V. Rev. Fr. Josiah Trenham will be speaking to the singles and youth on Friday night, December 9, 7:15pm. On Saturday, December 10, Fr. Josiah will speak on “I Corinthians 13 “... The Greatest of These is Love...”

Saturday, December 10

9:30am, Session #1

11:00am, Session #2

12:00-12:30pm Questions and discussion

12:30pm Lunch in the Fellowship Hall

5:00pm, Great Vespers

6:00pm, Session #3

+ Child care will be provided

+ There will be an offering to cover expenses and honorarium.

+ For guests coming from out of town please call (509) 575-0145 if you would like to stay in one of our parish homes.

Kitchen Corner

FISH PICCATA (4 servings)

2 tablespoons olive oil

4 white fish fillets (such as tilapia or sole)

1/4 cup flour

1/4 cup white wine

2 lemons, juiced

2 tablespoons capers

2 tablespoons margarine

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Heat olive oil in a large saute pan over medium-high heat. While the pan is heating, blot the fish dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Dredge in the flour, shaking off any excess. Saute the fish in the oil until just cooked through, about 4 minutes, flipping halfway through. Remove the fish to a platter. Deglaze the pan with the white wine, whisking for about 1 minute. Add the lemon juice and capers and stir. Add the butter and stir or whisk to incorporate to bring the sauce together. Pour onto the fish and garnish with the chopped parsley.