
*Awake my Soul!
A Journey through the Psalms*



**GREAT LENT
REFLECTION JOURNAL**

**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
TAMPA, FL**



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**The cover icon of the Crucifixion is from the iconostasis of
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INTRODUCTION TO THE JOURNEY OF GREAT LENT

My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast! I will sing and make melody! Awake, my soul! Psalm 108:1

The Orthodox Church provides the season of Great Lent as a structured period of fasting, increased number of services, solemnity, personal repentance and inward spiritual growth. It requires a decision by each individual to look deep within themselves and commit to the Christian journey, to a deeper relationship with Christ and following Him. The theme of this journal *Awake My Soul: A Journey through the Psalms*, can be an effective tool in this journey. The Psalms touch every human emotion, praise the glory of God, address human sinfulness, and celebrate spiritual joy.

Great Lent and Holy Week give us seven weeks to prepare for Pascha: the Feast of Feasts, the Festival of Festivals. Pascha commemorates the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, His triumph over death, and His granting of life to those in the tombs. The Feast of Pascha is not just a one-day event in the Orthodox Church. Pascha is followed by forty days of celebrating, beginning with Bright Week, with each day having the same joy as Pascha itself.

It is our hope that you will use this journal, which includes Lenten prayers, weekly themes, and daily Psalm verses to reflect on. You are encouraged to write down your thoughts so they will guide you in your personal repentance and recommitment of your life to Christ our God. We believe that this journal will help you mark a more reflective and purposeful period of the Great Lent and Holy Week, and bring you to Pascha and the ensuing Bright Week with more spiritual joy. We hope that the theme of *Awake My Soul* will provide a spiritual awakening of your soul, as well as the souls of your family and those in our community.

We wish you a blessed period of the Great Lent, in anticipation of Holy Week and the Resurrection of Christ. Kali Sarakosti and Kali Anastasi! Have a blessed Lent and a joyful celebration of Pascha!

With love in the Crucified and Risen Lord,
+Fr. Stavros N. Akrotirianakis



A GUIDE TO USING THIS BOOK

This guidebook contains an introduction to fasting, a schedule of our Lenten services, Orthodox prayers, an explanation of the Lenten Sundays and the days of Holy Week, and a journal with weekly themes and daily Psalm verses for reflection. A note on the numbering of the Psalms follows on the next page. A daily reflection question has been included to inspire you as you meditate on the verses. Use these as discussion with your family, roommates, friends, or use them as journal prompts. There is a theme for each week of Lent, and the psalm verses were chosen to reflect that weekly word. The daily verses continue through Holy Week and Bright Week.

There are three possibilities in reflecting on the Psalms offered for your consideration:

- You may choose to read and meditate on one Psalm verse a day for the 40 day Lenten period.
- You may choose to read and meditate on the entire Psalm which includes the verse of the day for the 40 day Lenten period.
- If you wish to read the entire book of Psalms during Great Lent, additional chapters are listed daily at the bottom of each page, so that all 150 chapters are read over the course of the forty days.

This booklet was planned for those who wish to journal thoughts throughout Lent, have a focused study, and connect with others throughout the Lenten period. You are invited and encouraged to bring this book with you to all of our Lenten services.

We pray that it enhances your Lenten journey individually and as part of our community and allows an opportunity to sing as the psalmists did to *Awake My Soul* as we journey through the Psalms this Lent.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF PSALMS

There are 150 chapters in the book of Psalms.

Who wrote the Psalms?

73 are attributed to King David, 12 to Asaph, 11 to the sons of Korah, 2 to Solomon, 1 to Moses, and 49 are anonymously written.

THERE ARE 7 SECTIONS IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Books 1-2	Introduction	
Books 3-41	Book One	The foundation of Covenant Faithfulness
Books 42-72	Book Two	Hope for the Messianic Kingdom
Books 73 - 89	Book Three	Hope for the Messiah after the exile
Books 90-106	Book Four	The God of Israel as King of all creation
Books 107 - 145	Book Five	Includes Psalms of Ascent 120-135
Books 146-150	Book Six	Psalms of Praise

A NOTE ABOUT THE NUMBERING OF THE PSALMS

The Orthodox Church (including the Orthodox Study Bible) primarily uses translations from the Greek version of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint. The Septuagint (also known as the LXX) is the version of the Old Testament used in many quotations found in the New Testament, and the numbering of the psalms in the Septuagint differs from that found in Psalters and Bibles translated from the Hebrew. For example, one of the most prevalent psalms in Orthodox worship is Psalm 50 in the Septuagint numbering. In the Hebrew numbering, the numbering used in most translations of the Bible, it is Psalm 51. For purposes of this journal the Hebrew numbering is used for ease when looking in other bibles.

SEPTUAGINT PSALMS	HEBREW PSALMS
1-8	
9	9-10
10-112	11-113
113	114-115
114-115	116
116-145	117-146
146-147	147
148-150	

FASTING GUIDELINES

The word “passion” means something that is really attractive to us. We may have a “passion” for cooking or sports or lawn mowing. These are examples of good things that people do to fill their time and to find joy. In spiritual terms, “passions” are things we are attracted to that do not serve us well, in fact they take us farther from God. Examples include things like lust, power, greed, avarice, and anger. The most basic of all “passions” is hunger, because we can go several hours or even days without a greedy thought or an angry thought. However we can’t go more than a couple of hours without a hungry thought.

The purpose of fasting is to practice *askesis* or discipline over filling our bodies with food. If we can learn to abstain from certain kinds of food, if we can tame our passion for eating, then hopefully we can calm passions for the aforementioned things that take us away from God. When we fast, we fast from products that contain blood, recognizing the blood shed by Christ on the Cross. Fasting should be combined with receiving Holy Communion. We abstain from the blood of animals and are sustained by the Body and Blood of Christ.

The Orthodox Church year consists of periods of fasts and feasts. Preceding the Resurrection of Christ, there is a 48-day period of fasting - 40 days of Lent and 8 days of Holy Week. This is followed by a week of no fasting called Bright Week or Renewal Week. The strictest Lenten fast is a fast from meat and fish, dairy product and wine and oil.

The Lenten fast calls for the following guidelines:

1. Abstain from meat, fish, dairy products, every day from Clean Monday through Holy Saturday.
2. Oil and wine are allowed on Saturdays and Sundays, except for Holy Saturday.
3. Fish is allowed on March 25 (Annunciation), Saturday of Lazarus and Palm Sunday.

Here are a few suggestions for fasting. If you’ve never fasted before, don’t try level nine. Try a level that is challenging but not impossible. Once you’ve mastered that level, move up a level.

Level One-Fast from meat on Wednesdays and Fridays and Holy Week

Level Two-Fast from meat and fish on Wednesdays and Fridays and Holy Week

Level Three-Fast from meat the entirety of Lent and Holy Week

Level Four-Fast from meat and fish the entirety of Lent and Holy Week

Level Five-Level Four plus eliminate dairy products during Holy Week

Level Six-Level Four plus eliminate dairy products on Wednesdays and Fridays and during Holy Week

Level Seven-Level Four plus eliminate dairy products during all of Lent and Holy Week

Level Eight-Level Seven plus eliminate oil and wine during Holy Week

Level Nine-The Strict Fast-no meat, fish, dairy products, wine or oil during the entirety of Lent and Holy Week

*If a person is sick, pregnant or nursing, they should not fast. Fasting should be done in a way that does not conflict with medications one is taking.

***Note - alcohol should be consumed at a very minimum during Lent, and abstained from totally if possible. Also, activities should be curtailed, socializing a little more sedate, no dancing and loud music. During Holy Week, all unnecessary activities aside from work and school should be curtailed, so that we can focus on the Holy Days of the Passion of Christ.*

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Saturday, February 21	Second Saturday of the Souls	Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
Sunday, February 22	Forgiveness Sunday	Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
Sunday, February 22	Forgiveness Vespers	6:00 pm
Monday, February 23	Clean Monday - Canon of St. Andrew	10:00 am
Monday, February 23	Sacrament of Holy Unction	6:00 pm
Tuesday, February 24	Great Compline	5:30 pm
Wednesday, February 25	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	5:30 pm, 6:00 pm
Friday, February 27	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:30 am, 10:00 am
Friday, February 27	Salutations to the Virgin Mary	6:30 pm
Saturday, February 28	Third Saturday of the Souls	Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
Sunday, March 1	Sunday of Orthodoxy	Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
Tuesday, March 3	Great Compline	5:30 pm
Wednesday, March 4	Paraklesis	10:00 am
Wednesday, March 4	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	5:30 pm, 6:30 pm
Friday, March 6	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:30 am, 10:00 am
Friday, March 6	Salutations to the Virgin Mary	6:30 pm
Sunday, March 8	St. Gregory Palamas	Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
Monday, March 9	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:30 am, 10:00 am
Tuesday, March 10	Great Compline	5:30 pm
Wednesday, March 11	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	5:30 pm, 6:00 pm
Friday, March 13	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:30 am, 10:00 am
Friday, March 13	Salutations to the Virgin Mary	6:30 pm
Sunday, March 15	Veneration of the Holy Cross	Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
Tuesday, March 17	Great Compline	5:30 pm
Wednesday, March 18	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	5:30 pm, 6:00 pm
Friday, March 20	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:30 am, 10:00 am
Friday, March 20	Salutations to the Virgin Mary	6:30 pm
Sunday, March 22	St. John of the Ladder	Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
Monday, March 23	Great Compline	5:30 pm
Tuesday, March 24	Annunciation to the Virgin Mary	Great Vespers 5:30 pm
Wednesday, March 25	Annunciation to the Virgin Mary	Orthros 8:45 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
Friday, March 27	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:30 am, 10:00 am
Friday, March 27	Akathist Hymn	6:30 pm
Friday, March 27	Divine Liturgy	8:15 pm

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday, March 29	St. Mary of Egypt	Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
Tuesday, March 31	Great Compline	5:30 pm
Wednesday, April 1	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	5:30 pm, 6:00 pm
Friday, April 3	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:30 am, 10:00 am

SERVICES OF HOLY WEEK

Saturday, April 4	Saturday of Lazarus	Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am
Palm Sunday	Palm Sunday	Orthros 8:30 am Divine Liturgy 9:45 am
Sunday, April 5	Vespers	5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
	Service of the Bridegroom	6:30 pm - 8:00 pm
Holy Monday	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:00 am, 9:30 am - 11:00 am
Monday April 6	Service of the Bridegroom	6:30 pm - 8:00 pm
Holy Tuesday	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:00 am, 9:30 am - 11:00 am
Tuesday, April 7	Service of the Bridegroom	6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
Holy Wednesday	9th Hour, Pre-Sanctified Liturgy	9:00 am, 9:30 am - 11:00 am
Wednesday, April 8	Holy Unction	3:00 pm - 4:00 pm
	Service of the Bridegroom	5:15 pm - 7:00 pm
	Holy Unction	7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
Holy Thursday	Vesperal Divine Liturgy	9:15 am - 11:00 am
Thursday, April 9	Service of the Passion of Christ	6:30 pm - 10:00 pm
Holy Friday	Royal Hours	9:00 am - 11:00 am
Friday, April 10	Vespers of Descent from the Cross	3:00 pm - 4:30 pm
	Lamentations	7:00 pm - 10:30 pm
Holy Saturday	Vesperal Liturgy	8:30 am - 11:00 am
Saturday, April 11	Great Canon	11:00 pm
	Resurrection Service	11:45 pm
Pascha	Paschal Divine Liturgy	12:30 am - 2:00 am
Sunday, April 12	Agape Vespers	11:00 am - 12:15 pm
Wednesday, April 15	Paraklesis	10:00 am
Friday, April 17	Life Giving Fountain of the Virgin Mary	Orthros 9:00 am Divine Liturgy 10:00 am



PRAYERS

TRISAGION PRAYERS

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Glory to You, our God, glory to you!

Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, present in all places and filling all things, the treasury of blessings and Giver of life: come and abide in us. Cleanse us from all impurity and save our souls, gracious Lord.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All Holy Trinity have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for the glory of Your name.

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

I praise, bless and thank You, Almighty God, the Father of Light, that You have again shown to me the light of this day. I entreat You: forgive my sins and accept my prayer in Your great mercy, for I seek refuge in You, the merciful and Almighty God. Shine in my heart the Light of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. Enlighten my mind and my whole being that I may live according to Your commandments and serve You in all that I do and say. For You are the source of life and light, and to You I give praise and thanksgiving, to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.



PRAYERS

MORNING PRAYERS

Having risen from sleep, I worship You, blessed God, and sing to You mighty Lord, the angelic hymn: Holy, Holy, Holy are You, O God; through the intercessions of the Theotokos have mercy on me.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Having awakened me from sleep, Lord, enlighten my mind and heart. Open my lips to praise You, Holy Trinity: Holy, Holy, Holy, are You, O God; through the intercessions of the Theotokos have mercy on me.

Now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Suddenly the Judge will come and the deeds of all will be revealed. Therefore, early in the morning let us cry out in awe: Holy, Holy, Holy are You, O God; through the intercessions of the Theotokos have mercy on us.

EVENING PRAYERS

Now that the day has come to a close I thank You, Lord, and entreat that the evening with the night may be sinless; grant this to me, Savior, and save me.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Now that the day has passed I glorify You, Master, and entreat that the evening with the night may be free of stumbling; grant this to me, Savior, and save me.

Now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Now that the day has run its course I praise You, Holy One, and entreat that the evening with the night may be undisturbed by evil; grant this to me, Savior, and save me.



PRAYERS

PRAYER TO CHRIST

Christ our God, Who at all times and in every hour are worshipped and glorified in heaven and on earth; long-suffering, generous in mercy, and rich in compassion; loving to the righteous and merciful to the sinner; You call all to salvation through the promise of blessings to come: Lord, in this hour accept our prayers and direct our lives in the way of Your commandments. Sanctify our souls, purify our bodies, correct our thoughts, cleanse our minds and deliver us from all affliction, evil and distress. Encompass us with Your holy angels, so that guided and guarded by their company we may reach the unity of the faith and the knowledge of Your unapproachable glory, for You are blessed unto the ages of ages. Amen.

PRAYER OF METROPOLITAN PHILARET OF MOSCOW

Lord, I know not what to ask of You. You alone know what my true needs are. You love me more than I myself know how to love. Help me to see my real needs which may be hidden from me. I dare not ask for either a cross or a consolation. I only wait upon You; my heart is open to You. Visit and help me in Your steadfast love. Strike me and heal me; cast me down and raise me up. I worship in silence Your holy will. I offer myself to You as a living sacrifice. I put all my trust in You. I have no other desire than to fulfill Your will. Teach me to pray. Pray Yourself in me. Amen.

PRAYER BEFORE READING SCRIPTURE

Shine in my heart, loving Master, the pure light of Your divine knowledge and open the eyes of my mind to comprehend the message of Your Gospel. Instill in me also reverence for Your holy commandments, so that having conquered sinful desires I may pursue a more spiritual life, thinking and doing only those things that are pleasing to You. For You, Christ our God, are the Light of our souls and bodies, and to You I send up glory, with Your Father who is from everlasting, and Your all-Holy, Good, and Life-giving Spirit, now and forever, and to the ages of ages. Amen.

**Adapted from "My Orthodox Prayer Book"*



PRAYERS

PRAYER OF MANASSEH (FROM THE GREAT COMPLINE)

O Lord, Almighty, the God of our Fathers, of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and of their righteous seed; who created the heaven and the earth with all their adornment; who bound the sea by the word of Your command; who shut up the abyss and sealed it with your awesome and glorious Name; Whom all things dread and before Whose power they tremble, because the majesty of Your glory is unbearable and the threat of Your anger against the sinners unendurable; yet the mercy of Your promise is both, immeasurable and unfathomable, for You are the Lord most high, compassionate, long-suffering and all merciful, and relent on the wickedness of man. You, Lord, in the multitude of Your goodness promised repentance and forgiveness to those who have sinned against You, and in Your infinite compassion appointed repentance for sinners that they may be saved. Therefore, Lord, the God of the powers, You have not appointed repentance for the righteous, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who have not sinned against You, but You appointed repentance for me the sinner, for I have committed more sins than the grains of the sand of the sea. My transgressions have multiplied, Lord; my transgressions have multiplied, and I am not worthy to look up and see the height of the sky from the multitude of my iniquities, being weighted down by many iron chains, so that I cannot raise my head; there is no respite left for me because I provoked Your anger and committed evil before You not having done Your will and not having kept Your commandments. And now I bend the knee of my heart, beseeching Your goodness. I have sinned, Lord, I have sinned and I acknowledge my transgressions; but I beg and ask of You: Forgive me, Lord, forgive me and do not destroy me with my transgressions; do not be angry with me forever and keep my evils in me, and do not condemn me to the depths of the earth; for You are God, the God of those who repent, and in me You shall show all Your goodness; for even though I am unworthy, You shall save me according to the multitude of Your mercy, and I shall praise You without ceasing all the days of my life. For every heavenly power sings Your praises, and Yours is the glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Translated by +Fr. Evagoras Constantinides+



LENTEN PRAYER OF ST. EPHRAIM

O Lord and Master of my life,
do not permit the spirit of laziness and meddling,
the lust for power and idle talk to come into me.

Instead, grant me, Your servant, the spirit of prudence,
humility, patience and love.

Yes, Lord and King, give me the power to see my own
faults and not to judge my brother.

For You are blessed unto the ages of ages. Amen.

THE JESUS PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.



PSALM 50 (51)

A PSALM OF REPENTANCE

HAVE MERCY ON ME, O GOD, ACCORDING TO YOUR GREAT MERCY, AND ACCORDING TO THE MULTITUDE OF YOUR COMPASSIONS, BLOT OUT MY TRANSGRESSIONS. WASH ME THOROUGHLY FROM MY INIQUITY AND CLEANSE ME FROM MY SIN. FOR I KNOW MY TRANSGRESSIONS AND MY SIN IS BEFORE ME ALWAYS. AGAINST YOU ONLY HAVE I SINNED AND DONE EVIL BEFORE YOU, THAT YOU MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND EMERGE VICTORIOUS WHEN YOU ARE JUDGED. FOR BEHOLD, I WAS CONCEIVED IN INIQUITIES, AND IN SINS DID MY MOTHER CARRY AND BEAR ME. FOR BEHOLD, YOU HAVE LOVED THE TRUTH; YOU REVEALED TO ME THE HIDDEN AND SECRET PARTS OF YOUR WISDOM. YOU SHALL SPRINKLE ME WITH HYSSOP AND I SHALL BE CLEANSED; YOU SHALL WASH ME AND I WILL BE WHITER THAN SNOW. YOU SHALL MAKE ME HEAR JOY AND GLADNESS; THE AFFLICTED BONES SHALL REJOICE. TURN AWAY YOUR FACE FROM MY SINS, AND BLOT OUT ALL MY INIQUITIES. CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART, O GOD, AND RENEW A RIGHT SPIRIT, IN THE DEPTHS OF ME. DO NOT CAST ME AWAY FROM YOUR PRESENCE, AND DO NOT TAKE AWAY YOUR HOLY SPIRIT FROM ME. RESTORE TO ME THE JOY OF YOUR SALVATION, AND STRENGTHEN ME WITH A GUIDING SPIRIT. I WILL TEACH TRANSGRESSORS YOUR WAYS, AND THE UNGODLY SHALL RETURN TO YOU. DELIVER ME FROM BLOOD-GUILTINESS, O GOD, THE GOD OF MY SALVATION; AND MY TONGUE WILL JOYFULLY SING YOUR JUSTICE. O LORD, YOU SHALL OPEN MY LIPS, AND MY MOUTH SHALL DECLARE YOUR PRAISE. FOR IF YOU DESIRED SACRIFICE, I WOULD HAVE OFFERED IT; YOU WILL NOT BE PLEASED WITH WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS. SACRIFICE TO GOD IS A CONTRITE SPIRIT; A CONTRITE AND HUMBLED HEART GOD WILL NOT DESPISE. DO GOOD, LORD, TO ZION IN YOUR GOOD PLEASURE, THAT THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM MAY BE BUILT. THEN YOU WILL BE PLEASED WITH A SACRIFICE OF JUSTICE, OFFERING AND WHOLE-BURNT SACRIFICES. THEN SHALL THEY OFFER CALVES UPON YOUR ALTAR.



THE SUNDAYS OF THE LENTEN SEASON

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY

Great Lent begins with the setting of the sun on the evening of Forgiveness Sunday. This Sunday commemorates the Fall of Adam and Eve and their banishment from Paradise. The theme of this Sunday is forgiveness. As part of the forgiveness vespers, the faithful ask one another for forgiveness, so that we can enter the period of Great Lent unencumbered by anger towards one another. Christ teaches us that before we can be reconciled to God, we must be reconciled to one another and this happens with forgiveness. If we expect God to forgive us, then we must forgive one another.

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY

The first Sunday of Lent is known affectionately as the “Sunday of Orthodoxy.” It is a day we remember the historical event of the returning of the icons to the churches in 843 AD. The Church spent nearly 150 years arguing about whether icons constituted a violation of the second commandment that we are not to worship graven images. The Seventh Ecumenical Council decreed in 787 AD that icons were in fact not a heresy but a help. And then it took nearly sixty more years until the matter was finally laid to rest. In most Orthodox Churches, there is a beautiful procession of icons on this Sunday. Following the procession, there is a reading of a Synodic Statement, read every year on the Sunday of Orthodoxy since the year 843 AD. The statement boldly proclaims Orthodoxy as the true expression of the faith:

As the prophets beheld, as the apostles have taught, as the Church has received, as the teachers have declared, as the world has agreed, as grace has shown forth, as truth has been revealed, as falsehood has been dispelled, as wisdom has become manifest, as Christ awarded, Thus we declare; thus we affirm; thus we proclaim Christ our true God, and honor His saints in words, writings, thoughts, sacrifices, churches and holy icons; on the one hand worshipping and reverencing Christ as God and Lord, and on the other, honoring the saints as true servants of the same Lord of all, and offering them proper veneration.

This is the faith of the apostles. This is the faith of the fathers. This is the faith of the Orthodox. This is the faith on which the world is established.

Therefore with fraternal and filial love we praise the heralds of the faith, those who with glory and honor have struggled for the faith, and we say: to the champions of Orthodoxy, faithful emperors, most-holy patriarchs, hierarchs, teachers, martyrs and confessors: May your memory be eternal!

Let us beseech God that we may be instructed and strengthened by the trials and struggles of these saints, which they endured for the faith even unto death, and by their teachings, entreating that we may to the end imitate their Godly life. May we be deemed worthy of obtaining our requests through the mercy and grace of the Great and First Hierarch, Christ our God, through the intercession of our glorious Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, the divine angels and all the Saints. Amen.



THE SUNDAYS OF THE LENTEN SEASON

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

St. Gregory Palamas was born in 1296 AD. He was a monk, then became a priest, and eventually became the Archbishop of Thessaloniki. He was a renowned writer who wrote about the essence and energies of God, writing that we could experience the energies of God but not the essence of God. He died peacefully in 1359 AD and when he died, his countenance was radiant with a light similar to the light that had shined on St. Stephen at his martyrdom (Acts 6:15). He was made a saint in 1368 AD. He is commemorated on the second Sunday of Great Lent.

VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

The third Sunday of Lent marks the mid-point of the Lenten journey. This Sunday is dedicated to the Veneration of the Holy Cross, and is a reminder to the faithful where the Lenten journey will end - at the Cross and Resurrection of Christ. The Gospel lesson from Mark 8:34-9:1 reminds us that we are to take up our cross and follow after Christ. At the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy, a procession is made with the cross on a tray traditionally covered in daffodils, the sign that spring has arrived, and with it new life.

ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER (CLIMACUS)

On the fourth Sunday of Lent, we celebrate the Feast of St. John Climacus. St. John authored a book in the 7th century called The Ladder of Divine Ascent, a series of thirty virtues used to attain salvation and entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. A popular icon of the ladder shows clergy ascending the ladder from earth to Christ. Along the rungs of the ladder, we see the devil and his angels trying to snatch people through temptation. Many are falling, even some who are high up on the ladder, those who are spiritually accomplished. We must work to ascend towards Christ by becoming more committed to the Christian life. We must know that the closer we get to Christ, the harder the devil tries to discourage us.

ST. MARY OF EGYPT

On the fifth Sunday of Lent, we commemorate Saint Mary of Egypt. Saint Mary lived in the late fifth and early sixth centuries, reposing in the year 522 AD. She lived as a harlot for seventeen years. One day in Jerusalem, she wanted to go into the church to venerate the Holy Cross but was prevented from entering by an unseen force. She promised the Panagia that if she could be allowed to venerate the Cross, she would go wherever the Panagia directed her to go. After this, she fled into the desert for forty-seven years, where she lived as an ascetic. At the end of her life, a priest named Zosimos was called by God to find her and offer her Holy Communion. The lesson of St. Mary of Egypt is that anyone can become a saint through repentance. As we make the final turn towards Holy Week this week, it is not too late to repent.



HOLY WEEK

SATURDAY OF LAZARUS

Saturday of Lazarus commemorates the raising of Lazarus from the dead by Jesus in Bethany. The Gospel shows the two natures of Christ. He was human, in that He wept for His friend Lazarus. He is God, as He raised Lazarus from the dead.

PALM SUNDAY

Palm Sunday commemorates the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem, seated on a donkey. Palm Sunday night begins the descent into the dark sadness of Holy Week, and the themes include the cursed fig tree and the noble Joseph, who prefigured Christ by being unjustly punished, and while doing so, saved the world from famine. The Bridegroom Service includes the procession of the icon of Christ the Bridegroom.

HOLY MONDAY

Holy Monday commemorates the signs of the end times, the hypocrisy of the temple leadership, and in the evening's Bridegroom Service, we commemorate the parable of the Talents.

HOLY TUESDAY

Holy Tuesday commemorates the repentance of a sinful woman, contrasted to the treachery and betrayal of Judas. The Bridegroom Service includes the Hymn of Kassiane.

HOLY WEDNESDAY

Holy Wednesday brings the theme of healing, as the faithful participate in the sacrament of Holy Unction. The Bridegroom Service also includes an account of the Last Supper and the washing of the feet of the Disciples.



HOLY THURSDAY

Holy Thursday morning commemorates the Last Supper and the Institution of the Eucharist. Holy Thursday evening commemorates the Passion of Christ, with twelve Gospel readings. The First Gospel is the farewell discourse of Christ told in John 13-17. The remaining eleven readings tell the story of the Passion of Christ, from His betrayal, to trial, to Crucifixion and burial.

HOLY FRIDAY

Holy Friday commemorates the death and burial of Christ. The Royal Hours include the account of the Crucifixion from each of the four Gospels. The Apokathelosis, or Descent from the Cross, commemorates the death and burial of Christ. The Lamentations Service is the funeral of Christ, and also a service that begins the transition out of the solemnity of Great Lent into the joy of the Resurrection.

HOLY SATURDAY

Holy Saturday commemorates the first announcement of the Resurrection to those in Hades. Leaves are spread around the church as a sign of Christ's victory over death.

PASCHA

Pascha commemorates the Resurrection of Christ. The Fast ends and the Feast begins. At midnight, the Light of Christ is distributed to the faithful, who sing the Paschal Hymn "Christ is Risen" or "Christos Anesti." The Paschal Divine Liturgy is then celebrated with great joy. In the afternoon, the Agape Vespers service proclaims the Gospel in many languages, reminding us to take the news of the Resurrection and spread it to all.

BRIGHT WEEK

Bright Week, also called Renewal Week, is a time of feasting and rejoicing. The Lenten journey has been successfully completed and we bask in the bright glow of the Resurrection of Christ.

WEEK ONE - FORGIVENESS

FORGIVENESS SUNDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 51:10

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”

REFLECTION:

What part of my heart feels most in need of cleansing or renewal today?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 51

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent,
today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 57



WEEK ONE - FORGIVENESS

CLEAN MONDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night.

REFLECTION:

Where do I sense God inviting me to slow down and listen more deeply?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 1

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 38, Psalm 79



WEEK ONE - FORGIVENESS

TUESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK

DAILY VERSE



Psalm 31:1-2

In you, O Lord, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame; in Your righteousness deliver me! Incline Your ear to me; rescue me speedily! Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me!

REFLECTION:

What would it look like to rest in God rather than in my own strength?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 31

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 41, Psalm 90



WEEK ONE - FORGIVENESS

WEDNESDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 141:3

Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!

REFLECTION:

Which words do I want to speak—or refrain from speaking—to bring peace today?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 141

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 32, Psalm 106



WEEK ONE - FORGIVENESS

THURSDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 6:9

The Lord has heard my plea; the Lord accepts my prayer.

REFLECTION:

What prayer have I been carrying that I need to trust God has already heard?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 6

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 69, Psalm 123



WEEK ONE - FORGIVENESS

FRIDAY OF THE FIRST WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 23:1

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

REFLECTION:

Where do I feel most in need of guidance or reassurance right now?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 23

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 80, Psalm 102



WEEK ONE - FORGIVENESS

THIRD SATURDAY OF THE SOULS



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 130:3-4

*If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord,
who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness,
that You may be feared.*

REFLECTION:

How can I offer forgiveness where it is most difficult for me?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 130

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 39, Psalm 74



WEEK TWO - TRIUMPH

SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 20:7

Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

REFLECTION:

Where am I tempted to trust in my own strength instead of God's presence?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 20

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 7, Psalm 126, Psalm 139



WEEK TWO - TRIUMPH

MONDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 19:1

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork.

REFLECTION:

What part of creation helps me remember God's greatness today?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 19

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 92, Psalm 117, Psalm 124



WEEK TWO - TRIUMPH

TUESDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 24:1

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.

REFLECTION:

How might my day change if I remembered that everything belongs to God?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 24

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 59, Psalm 68, Psalm 70



WEEK TWO - TRIUMPH

WEDNESDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 121:1-2

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.

REFLECTION:

Where do I most need God's help right now?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 121

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 30, Psalm 35, Psalm 86



WEEK TWO - TRIUMPH

THURSDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 104:21

O Lord, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom have You made them all; the earth is full of Your creatures.

REFLECTION:

What small detail of life can I pause to appreciate as God's handiwork?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 104

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 91, Psalm 98, Psalm 118



WEEK TWO - TRIUMPH

FRIDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK

DAILY VERSE



Psalm 93:1-2

The Lord reigns; He is robed in majesty; the Lord is robed; He has put on strength as His belt. Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved. Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.

REFLECTION:

What situation in my life do I need to surrender to God's steady rule?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 93

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 87, Psalm 108



WEEK TWO - TRIUMPH

SATURDAY OF THE SECOND WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 136:1

*Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His
steadfast love endures forever.*

REFLECTION:

Where have I experienced God's enduring love recently, even in subtle ways?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 136

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 44, Psalm 60



WEEK THREE - COMFORT

ST. GREGORY PALAMAS



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 133:1

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!

REFLECTION:

Where do I long for deeper unity—with God, with others, or within myself?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 133

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 5, Psalm 120



WEEK THREE - COMFORT

MONDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 25:4-5

Make me to know Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach Me, for You are the God of my salvation; for You I wait all the day long.

REFLECTION:

What guidance am I quietly seeking beneath the surface of my day?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 25

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 10, Psalm 42, Psalm 43



WEEK THREE - COMFORT

TUESDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 18:1-2

I love you, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in Whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

REFLECTION:

What part of my life feels unsteady, and how might God be offering stability?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 18

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 12, Psalm 88, Psalm 116



WEEK THREE - COMFORT

WEDNESDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 130:5

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I hope.

REFLECTION:

What am I waiting for, and how can I wait with hope instead of anxiety?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 130 *repeat

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 110, Psalm 142



WEEK THREE - COMFORT

THURSDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 27:1

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

REFLECTION:

Where do I feel fear, and how might God be shining light into that place?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 27

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 40, Psalm 71



WEEK THREE - COMFORT

FRIDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 77:13-14

Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God? You are the God who works wonders; You have made known Your might among the peoples.

REFLECTION:

What past moment of God's faithfulness can I remember to strengthen me today?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 77

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 22, Psalm 37



WEEK THREE - COMFORT

SATURDAY OF THE THIRD WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 4:8

In peace I will both lie down and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

REFLECTION:
What would help me rest more fully in God?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:
Psalm 4

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:
Psalm 56, Psalm 73



WEEK FOUR - COURAGE

VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 127:1

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

REFLECTION:

Where am I trying to build or control something that I could entrust more fully to God?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 127

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 3, Psalm 11



WEEK FOUR - COURAGE

MONDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 16:1

Preserve me, O God, for in You I take refuge.

REFLECTION:

What part of my life feels fragile, and how might I rest in God's protection?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 16

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 54, Psalm 55, Psalm 101



WEEK FOUR - COURAGE

TUESDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 13:5

But I have trusted in Your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation.

REFLECTION:

What would it look like to trust God's love in the place where I feel most uncertain?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 13

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 61, Psalm 64, Psalm 144



WEEK FOUR - COURAGE

WEDNESDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 143:8

Let me hear in the morning of Your steadfast love, for in You I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to You I lift up my soul.

REFLECTION:

What do I need to hear from God today to move forward with courage?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 143

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 85, Psalm 109



WEEK FOUR - COURAGE

THURSDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 67:1

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face to shine upon us.

REFLECTION:

Where do I sense God's grace quietly at work in my life right now?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 67

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 125, Psalm 129, Psalm 137



WEEK FOUR - COURAGE

FRIDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 46:1

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

REFLECTION:

What fear or pressure do I need to bring into God's refuge instead of carrying alone?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 46

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 17, Psalm 26, Psalm 131



WEEK FOUR - COURAGE

SATURDAY OF THE FOURTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 31:24

Be strong, and let your heart take courage, all you who wait for the Lord!

REFLECTION:

What small step of courage is God inviting me to take today?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 31 *repeat

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 83, Psalm 94, Psalm 122



WEEK FIVE - SOVEREIGNTY

ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 46:10

“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”

REFLECTION:

Where do I need to stop striving and simply rest in God’s presence?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 46 *repeat

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 8, Psalm 58, Psalm 76, Psalm 78



WEEK FIVE - SOVEREIGNTY

MONDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 84:1-2

How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God.

REFLECTION:

What is my soul longing for beneath the surface of my daily routines?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 84

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 21, Psalm 29, Psalm 62, Psalm 82



WEEK FIVE - SOVEREIGNTY

TUESDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 28:7

The Lord is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to Him.

REFLECTION:

What would it look like to let God protect my heart instead of guarding it myself?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 28

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 14, Psalm 95, Psalm 99



WEEK FIVE - SOVEREIGNTY

WEDNESDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 34:18

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

REFLECTION:

Where do I feel heartbroken, and how might I let God draw near to that place?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 34

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 2, Psalm 36, Psalm 140



WEEK FIVE - SOVEREIGNTY

THURSDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 134:2

Lift up your hands to the holy place and bless the Lord!

REFLECTION:

What simple gesture of openness or surrender can I offer to God today?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 134

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 9, Psalm 33, Psalm 115



WEEK FIVE - SOVEREIGNTY

FRIDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 145:18

The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth.

REFLECTION:

What prayer rises naturally in me when I remember that God is already close?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 145

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 49, Psalm 50, Psalm 63, Psalm 72



WEEK FIVE - SOVEREIGNTY

SATURDAY OF THE FIFTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 100:4

Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise! Give thanks to Him; bless His name!

REFLECTION:

What gratitude can I bring before God right now, even if it feels small?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 100

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 52, Psalm 97, Psalm 132



WEEK SIX - PRAISE

ST. MARY OF EGYPT



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 119:73

Your hands have made and fashioned me; give me understanding that I may learn Your commandments.

REFLECTION:

What part of my life do I need to remember was lovingly shaped by God?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:
Psalm 19

**Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the book of Psalms, and stands alone as the additional reading of the day.*



WEEK SIX - PRAISE

MONDAY OF THE SIXTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 66:1

Shout for joy to God, all the earth;

REFLECTION:

What joy, however small, can I acknowledge and offer back to God today?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 66



To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 107, Psalm 111, Psalm 112, Psalm 113, Psalm 114

WEEK SIX - PRAISE

TUESDAY OF THE SIXTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 103:1

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me,
bless His holy name!*

REFLECTION:

What gratitude rises in me when I pause and listen to my own soul?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 103

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:
Psalm 45, Psalm 47, Psalm 48, Psalm 53



WEEK SIX - PRAISE

WEDNESDAY OF THE SIXTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 128:1

Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways!

REFLECTION:

Where do I sense God inviting me into a deeper reverence or attentiveness?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 128

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 15, Psalm 65, Psalm 105, Psalm 138



WEEK SIX - PRAISE

THURSDAY OF THE SIXTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 96:1

Oh sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth! Sing to the Lord, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day.

REFLECTION:

What “new song” — a fresh hope, a renewed desire, a quiet joy — is emerging in me?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 96

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 75, Psalm 81, Psalm 89, Psalm 135



WEEK SIX - PRAISE

FRIDAY OF THE SIXTH WEEK



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 150:6

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!

REFLECTION:

How can I let my breath become a form of praise today?

Today's full Psalm Chapter:

Psalm 150

To complete the entire book of Psalms during Lent, today's reading includes these additional psalms:

Psalm 146, Psalm 147, Psalm 148, Psalm 149



HOLY WEEK

SATURDAY OF LAZARUS



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 113:2

*Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth
and forevermore!*

REFLECTION:

How can I honor God's name today?



HOLY WEEK

PALM SUNDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 118:26

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord.

REFLECTION:
What does blessing others look like for me?



HOLY WEEK

HOLY MONDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 51:6

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I hope;

REFLECTION:
How can I deepen my hope in God?



HOLY WEEK

HOLY TUESDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 92:1-2

Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

REFLECTION:
Where is God growing wisdom within me?



HOLY WEEK

HOLY WEDNESDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 23:5

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

REFLECTION:

What does abundance look like in my spiritual life?



HOLY WEEK

HOLY THURSDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 34:8

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!

REFLECTION:

How have I experienced God's goodness this week?



HOLY WEEK

HOLY FRIDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 22:1

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?

REFLECTION:

How can I hold onto faith even in emotional darkness?



HOLY WEEK

HOLY SATURDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 22:68

*God shall arise, his enemies shall be scattered;
and those who hate him shall flee before him!*

REFLECTION:

How does God's power give me confidence today?



BRIGHT WEEK

PASCHA



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 118:24

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

REFLECTION:

How can I welcome today with gratitude and joy?



BRIGHT WEEK

BRIGHT MONDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 32:11

Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

REFLECTION:

What reasons do I have to rejoice in the Lord today?



BRIGHT WEEK

BRIGHT TUESDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 95:1

Oh come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

REFLECTION:

How can I make space for joyful worship in my routine?



BRIGHT WEEK

BRIGHT WEDNESDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 18:46

The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock, and exalted be the God of my salvation!

REFLECTION:

How can I exalt God through my words and actions today?



BRIGHT WEEK

BRIGHT THURSDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 21:13

Be exalted, O Lord, in your strength! We will sing and praise your power.

REFLECTION:

What situations remind me that God is strong on my behalf?



BRIGHT WEEK

LIFE-GIVING FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN MARY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 57:5

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!

REFLECTION:
Where do I see God's glory shining around me?



BRIGHT WEEK

BRIGHT SATURDAY



DAILY VERSE



Psalm 20:5

May we shout for joy over your salvation, and in the name of our God set up our banners! May the Lord fulfill all your petitions!

REFLECTION:

What blessings can I celebrate with joy today?







PASCHAL HOMILY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM (TRANSLATION BY FR. GEORGE PAPADEAS)

WHOSOEVER IS A DEVOUT LOVER OF GOD, LET HIM ENJOY THIS BEAUTIFUL BRIGHT FESTIVAL. AND WHOSOEVER IS A GRATEFUL SERVANT, LET HIM JOYOUSLY ENTER INTO THE JOY OF HIS LORD. AND IF ANY BE WEARY WITH FASTING, LET HIM NOW RECEIVE HIS REWARD. IF ANY HAS TOILED FROM THE FIRST HOUR LET HIM RECEIVE HIS JUST DEBT. IF ANY CAME AFTER THE THIRD LET HIM GRATEFULLY CELEBRATE. IF ANY ARRIVED AFTER THE SIXTH, LET HIM NOT DOUBT; FOR HE TOO SHALL SUSTAIN NO LOSS. IF ANY HAVE DELAYED TO THE NINTH, LET HIM COME WITHOUT HESITATION. IF ANY ARRIVED ONLY AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR, LET HIM NOT BE AFRAID BY REASON OF HIS DELAY; FOR THE MASTER IS GRACIOUS AND RECEIVES THE LAST, EVEN AS THE FIRST. HE GIVES REST TO HIM WHO ARRIVES AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR, AS WELL AS HIM, WHO HAS LABORED FROM THE FIRST. HE IS MERCIFUL TO THE ONE WHO DELAYS AND NOURISHES THE FIRST. HE GIVES ALSO TO THE ONE, AND TO THE OTHER HE IS GRACIOUS. HE ACCEPTS THE WORKS, AS HE GREETS THE ENDEAVOR, HE HONORS THE DEED, AND THE INTENT HE COMMENDS.

LET ALL OF YOU THEN ENTER INTO THE JOY OF YOUR LORD. THE FIRST AND SECOND ENJOY YOUR REWARD. YOU RICH AND POOR, REJOICE TOGETHER. YOU TEMPERATE AND YOU HEEDLESS, HONOR THE DAY. YOU WHO FASTED, AND YOU WHO DID NOT, REJOICE TODAY. THE TABLE IS RICHLY LADEN. ALL OF YOU, FARE SUMPTUOUSLY ON IT. THE CALF IS A FATTED ONE; LET NO ONE GO AWAY HUNGRY. ALL OF YOU ENJOY THE BANQUET OF FAITH. ALL OF YOU ENJOY THE RICHES OF HIS GOODNESS. LET NO ONE Grieve POVERTY; FOR THE UNIVERSAL KINGDOM HAS BEEN REVEALED.

LET NO ONE Grieve OVER SINS; FOR FORGIVENESS HAS DAWNED FROM THE TOMB. LET NO ONE FEAR DEATH; FOR THE DEATH OF OUR SAVIOR HAS SET US FREE. HE HAS DESTROYED IT BY ENDURING IT. HE DESPOILED HADES, WHEN HE DESCENDED THERETO. HE EMBITTERED IT, HAVING TASTED OF HIS FLESH. ISAIAH FORETOLD THIS WHEN HE CRIED OUT: "YOU, O HADES, HAVE BEEN EMBITTERED BY ENCOUNTERING HIM BELOW." IT WAS EMBITTERED, FOR IT WAS ABOLISHED. IT WAS EMBITTERED, FOR IT WAS MOCKED. IT WAS EMBITTERED, FOR IT WAS SLAIN. IT WAS EMBITTERED, FOR IT WAS ANNIHILATED. IT WAS EMBITTERED, FOR IT IS NOW MADE CAPTIVE. IT TOOK A BODY, AND, LO, IT DISCOVERED GOD. IT TOOK EARTH AND, BEHOLD! IT ENCOUNTERED HEAVEN. IT TOOK WHAT IT SAW, AND WAS OVERCOME BY WHAT IT COULD NOT SEE. O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING? O HADES, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? CHRIST IS RISEN, AND YOU ARE ANNIHILATED. CHRIST IS RISEN, AND THE DEMONS HAVE FALLEN. CHRIST IS RISEN, AND THE ANGELS REJOICE. CHRIST IS RISEN, AND LIFE IS LIBERATED. CHRIST IS RISEN, AND THE TOMB IS EMPTIED OF THE DEAD; FOR CHRIST, HAVING RISEN FROM THE DEAD, HAS BECOME THE FIRST FRUITS OF THOSE WHO FALL ASLEEP.

TO HIM BE THE GLORY AND THE DOMINION TO THE AGES OF AGES.
AMEN.



CHRISTOS ANESTI
ALITHOS ANESTI (GREEK)

CHRISTOS VOSKRESE
VOITSINOU VOSKRESE (SLAVONIC)

AL MASSIEH KAM
HAKAN KAM (ARABIC)

CHRISTI U NGAL
VERTET U UNGAL (ALBANIAN)

CHRISTOS A INVIAȚ
ADEVARAT INVIAȚ (ROMANIAN)

CHRISTOS HARIAVE I MERELOTZE
ORTNIALE E HAROUTOUN CHRISTOSI (ARMENIAN)

CHRISTO AMEFUFUKA
AMEFUFUKA KWELI (SWAHILI)

CHRISTO HA RESUCITADO
EN VERDAD HA RESUCITADO (SPANISH)

CHRISTOS VOSKRES
VOYEASTINO VOSKRES (UKRANIAN)

LE CHRIST EST RESUCITEE
VRAIMENT EST RESUCITEE (FRENCH)



Christ

is
Risen!

Truly He

is
Risen!

Without a vision, the people perish. Proverbs 29:18

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
TAMPA, FL

MISSION:
LOVE GOD.
SERVE OTHERS.
SHARE THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

VISION:
WE ENCOURAGE ALL TO SEEK SALVATION
THROUGH PRAYERFUL WORSHIP, ACTIVE
ENGAGEMENT, AND CHRIST-CENTERED
MINISTRY, CULTIVATING A WELCOMING,
GENEROUS, AND GROWING CHURCH
COMMUNITY ROOTED IN AUTHENTIC
ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY.

CORE VALUES:
LOVE • WORSHIP • COMMUNITY • LEARNING • SERVICE

