



The Lenten Season

Fr. Joseph Longofono, Lent, 2013, Ss. Peter and Paul, Topeka, KS.

Once again, we continue our journey through Great Lent, on the Road to the heavenly gates of the Kingdom, in the Feast of Feasts: PASCHA! It is a journey that only you can take for yourself, for the reward you receive is based solely on the effort you put into it. Therefore, we encourage you to make the following a part of your daily and weekly experience as we continue through this Lenten season:

1. **DAILY PRAYER:** Please remember your morning and evening prayers, including prayers for our bishops, our clergy and their families, your Parish Council and all parishioners, the sick and suffering, those who hate us and those who love us, those who are kind to us and minister to us, and all those in need of God's mercy, and especially St. Ephraim's Prayer.

2. **THE WORD OF GOD:** When you come to pray, take 10 minutes and read the Word of the Lord. You can start with a few chapters each day from the Psalms, the Proverbs, the Book of Job, or the Gospel according to St. Luke. But whatever it is, READ IT, and ask questions on those areas you find difficult.

3. **THE WEEKDAY SERVICES:** GOD'S GIFT OF LIFE TO YOU!

- **Presanctified Liturgy**, Wednesday evening at 5:30 pm, a uniquely peaceful time of prayers, followed by a potluck Lenten meal in the church basement.

- **Akathist (Madayeh) Service**, Friday evening at 6:00pm, a prayer service of supplication to the Virgin Mary.

- **Ninth Hour and Great Vespers**, Saturday evening, 5:45 pm, in preparation for:

- **Orthros and Divine Liturgy**, Sunday morning 9:00 am

- **Holy Week Services** (Please see [Weekly Bulletins](#) and Web Site [Calendar Page](#) for the latest information)

4. **THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION:** Repentance is the door to salvation. Without it, we remain a lost sheep, and lose all hope of tasting the Fountain of Life; but with it we find the Door of Paradise, and the angels and the saints at the eternal Banquet Feast of the Lord. During Holy Week, confessions will be heard **before and after** all services through Holy Wednesday evening, and during the week by appointment. Only emergency Confessions will be heard after 6:00 pm on Holy Wednesday evening.

5. **CHARITY AND GOOD WORKS:** Basically, this is LOVING one another, with the same kind of



Love Jesus showed us (Read 1 Corinthians 13, James and 1 John).

6.

FASTING: A necessary ingredient to this season. Please try to abstain this season from any meat and dairy products, and gain control over your earthly passions. Then, share what you didn't eat with those who have nothing. Remember to "feed" your Food for Hungry People Box each day with your children, and teach them how to care for the poor.

7. **PALM SUNDAY SERVICE and HOLY WEEK:** Beginning on Palm Sunday, there will be services all week long, sometimes several times a day. These include the Bridegroom Orthros services, Presanctified Liturgy, the Service of Holy Unction, Vespers Divine Liturgies and Royal Hours just to name a few.

8.

KEEPING VIGIL AT THE TOMB OF CHRIST: Following the Service of the Lamentation at 6pm on Holy & Great Friday evening, the church will begin to keep watch (an all night vigil) over the tomb of Christ. We will be reading from the Psalms and Gospels through the night, and encourage you to sign up for an hour to come and keep watch together. Please sign-up on the sheet posted on our bulletin board. The teens will be at the church all night, joining other teens across the Archdiocese who keep watch in their respective parishes. The vigil will end on Holy Saturday morning, when we will all gather together for the Vespers Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great at 9am and partake of the Eucharist (Communion).

9.

THE AGAPE MEAL & THE PASCHA BASKET!: It is custom in many Orthodox churches to share a common meal following the Paschal Liturgy. Some people even prepare a basket filled with all of the food they have been fasting from during Lent. We encourage you to prepare your own basket filled with your own special foods, such as: eggs, meats, sausages, cheeses, sweets, fried chicken or even a cheese burger, if you so desire. These baskets can be placed on the Altar, to be blessed at the Liturgy. Please join us for a potluck Paschal Feast, following the Paschal Liturgy! At 3pm on Sunday, here at Sts. Peter and Paul Church, there will be an Agape Service followed by a reception and egg hunt.

10.

FOOD FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE PROGRAM: "O God, to those who have hunger, give bread and to those who have bread, give the hunger for justice." Hunger is one of the world's most pressing problems - affecting over one billion people. But it is an intensely personal problem as well. Behind the grim statistics are children and families loved by God, who are deprived of their right to a full life because they don't have enough to eat. As part of our Lenten offerings, let us please be generous to the Food for Hungry People Program. Boxes should be returned to the church during Holy Week.

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