

The Weekly Messenger – February 18, 2018
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Epistle: Romans 13:11-14; 14:1-4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21

Sunday of Cheesefare: Expulsion of Adam from Paradise As we begin the Great Fast, the Church reminds us of Adam's expulsion from Paradise. God commanded Adam to fast (Gen. 2:16), but he did not obey. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and lost the life of blessedness, knowledge of God, and communion with Him, for which they were created. Both they and their descendents became heirs of death and corruption.

Let us consider the benefits of fasting, the consequences of disobedience, and recall our fallen state. Today we are invited to cleanse ourselves of evil through fasting and obedience to God. Our fasting should not be a negative thing, a mere abstention from certain foods. It is an opportunity to free ourselves from the sinful desires and urges of our fallen nature, and to nourish our souls with prayer, repentance, to participate in church services, and partake of the life-giving Mysteries of Christ.

At Forgiveness Vespers we sing: "Let us begin the time of fasting in light, preparing ourselves for spiritual efforts. Let us purify our soul, let us purify our body. As we abstain from food, let us abstain from all passion and enjoy the virtues of the spirit...."

Great Lent begins Monday, Feb 19th. We will have Presanctified Liturgy on Wednesday nights beginning Feb 21st @ 7:00pm (next Wednesday). Lenten (Pot Luck) dinner and discussion will be held in the church hall following the Presanctified Liturgy.

Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts As we already have seen, the eucharistic Divine Liturgy is not celebrated in the Orthodox Church on Lenten weekdays. In order for the faithful to sustain their Lenten effort by participation in Holy Communion, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is served. The service is an ancient one in the Orthodox Church. We officially hear about it in the canons of the seventh century, which obviously indicates its development at a much earlier date.

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is an evening service. It is the solemn Lenten Vespers with the administration of Holy Communion added to it. There is no consecration of the eucharistic gifts at the presanctified liturgy. Holy Communion is given from the eucharistic gifts sanctified on the previous Sunday at the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, unless, of course, the feast of the Annunciation should intervene; hence its name of "presanctified." Read more:

<https://oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/worship/the-church-year/liturgy-of-the-presanctified-gifts>



International Women's Day Celebration and Dance:

Is only TWO WEEKS AWAY!! Saturday, March 3, 2018, 5:00 – 10:00 pm in the Church Hall. Tickets are \$50.00, \$20.00 for children under 12. Buffet dinner and continuous dancing are included! Soda & coffee will be provided BY.O.B. Please visit our website to register or contact Nilda Salavachi trustee.nilda@stjohnsphila.org for more info

Commemorations for the Deceased: The victims of the mass shooting in Florida, Zaharulla Milo, Katherine Halkedis, Pandora Bendo, Susan Thomas, Steven DiStefano, Larry Jance, James Pandeli, Charlie Daka, Nico Mallozzi, Jorgia Kashari, Father Deacon Stephen Stefani and those servicemen and women who have fallen asleep in the Lord in the service of their Country.

Commemorations for the Living: The survivors of the mass shooting in Florida, Father Dimitrie Vincent, Joseph Urquhart, Sara, Craig Risley, Wayne Merkle, Elizabeth Jones, Ann Gjoka, Virginia Daka, Haretina (Papa) Milo, Margarita, Peter Melnik, Dhimiter Ndrecka, Pandeli, Jorgaq, Lefteri, and all of the men and women serving in the Armed Forces.

John Melnik – Annual Buddy Walk: John is now a 3rd grader! He is taking swim lessons at the Mary Campbell Center and karate at Gentle Palm Studio. He still loves the Mexican rock band Maná, traveling to Cabo, drumming, painting, drawing, singing and playing with his friends at school. And most of all having a blast with all of you at the Buddy walk. If you cannot join us this year at the walk, please consider a donation to team **Brother John**. Thank so much. The Melnik Family
<https://www.ds-stride.org/delawarebuddywalk/profiles/team/18>

Coffee Hour Sponsors: Please check the sign-up sheet in the vestibule and pick a date!
February 18th Vito Bigo & Elviro Gusho and the Family of Zaharulla Milo
February 25th No Sponsor **March 4th** Bendo/Fiss Families in memory of Pandora
March 11th OPEN DATE No sponsor

Upcoming Events:

Feb 18th Cheesefare/Forgiveness Sunday and 1 Yr. Memorial for Zaharulla Milo
Feb 19th Lent begins,

Wednesday, Feb 21st PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY 7:00 pm

Feb 25th Sunday of Orthodoxy **March 1st** Charity & Benevolence Mtg 7:00 pm

Saturday, March 3rd Baptism Olivia Gore daughter of Nick & Athina

5:00 pm – 10:00pm– Annual Women's Day Dance

March 4th 40 day Memorial Pandora Bendo

March 8th Outreach Mtg 7:00 pm

March 11th Veneration of the Holy Cross **March 18th** 3 Year Memorial Flossie Vissar