

## **SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE GREAT LENT:**

It is possible for one who fasts not to be rewarded for his fasting. How? When, we abstain from foods, but do not abstain from iniquities: When we do not eat meat, but gnaw to pieces the homes of the poor, when we do not become drunkards with wine, but become drunkards with evil pleasures: when we abstain all the day, but all the night we spend in profane entertainment. Then what is the benefit of abstention from foods, when on the one hand you deprive your body of a selected food, but on the other, offer yourself unlawful pleasure? **St. John Chrysostom**

**THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION:** This is one of the seven holy “Mysteries” of the church, e.g. Baptism, Eucharist, etc. It is also called the sacrament of Repentance, from the Greek word *metanoia*, a change, a turning around of our heart, mind and will. The Lord instituted this mystery when He conveyed His own Priesthood upon the bishops and priests of the Church, through His Holy Apostles. He breathed on them and said, “*Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.*” (John 20:22-23) While confessing frequently throughout the year, the faithful are to do so, especially, during Great Lent!

## **PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS LITURGY**

During Great Lent we do not celebrate the Divine Liturgy on weekdays, except for the Holy Feast Day of the *Annunciation of the Theotokos on March 25<sup>th</sup>*. This is because the Divine Liturgy is a joyous celebration and great Lent is a time for repentance of our sins. So that the faithful are not left without Holy Communion, the Presanctified Liturgy is usually celebrated on Wednesday and/or Friday. “Presanctified” means “already consecrated” because the bread and wine (Body and Blood of Jesus Christ) of Holy Communion were consecrated on the preceding Sunday. The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts will be served on Wednesday of each week during Great Lent at 6:00 PM (except the Wednesday of Holy Week). Fasting before the Liturgy should start at 12:00 Noon (6 hours before receiving the Holy Sacrament). Confessions will be heard before Liturgy, or after, or by appointment.

**FASTING AND RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION AT PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY:** If you would like to take communion at the Presanctified Liturgy during Great Lent, you must fast by taking no food from 12:00 noon until you receive Holy Communion. Confession must be taken before Liturgy. If you have taken private confession or General Confession during a given month, or 4 weeks, then you may receive Absolution at the Presanctified Liturgy and Sunday Liturgies in that four (4) week period. We pray that many of our members will partake of Holy Communion more than once during Great Lent!

**‘AGAPE MEAL’** - Each Wednesday, after Presanctified Liturgy, there will be a gathering of our members in St. Michael’s Cultural Center to partake of an evening meal. All who are at the Presanctified Liturgy, are invited to join in this fellowship meal. We only ask that each family bring a Lenten Dish (casserole, dessert, salad, bread). There is no fee. Our Agape meals have always been enjoyed by all.

**ORTHODOXY SUNDAY – PROCESSION WITH ICONS – Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023.** Following Divine Liturgy, we will again have a short service with the Procession of Icons with everyone in church. All will carry an Icon in the procession symbolizing the returning of the Icons into the church in the year 843 AD.

**MEMBERS:** Just a reminder: To be a member of St. Michael’s it is your obligation to pay your annual membership dues and also to partake of holy communion, at least on a yearly basis. If you have not paid your dues for 2022 – we ask you to please do so now. Dues are \$75.00 for a family and \$50.00 for a single person. It is important that you be sure to meet both of these obligations of St. Michael’s so we may consider you a member. You may also pay your dues for 2023 now. Thank You!

**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME:** A reminder that daylight savings time begins on *Sunday, March 12, 2023*. Remember to “spring forward” and set your clocks an hour ahead before you go to bed.

