

PARISH OF THE HOLY TRINITY



COMMUNITY BULLETIN

16 MARCH 2024

No. 82

Monthly News & Announcements

Prayers & Services

- ❖ Please pray for the newly departed *Archpriest George, Vladimir and Korina (Kyriaki)*, and the sick *Valentina*.
- ❖ Saints' days in [Greek](#) and [English](#)
- ❖ Bilingual texts and music for [all services by date](#)
- ❖ Archdiocesan Sunday [Bulletins](#) and [Services](#) (Holy Wisdom Cathedral, London)

Events & Announcements

Please see our parish [website](#) for a full community calendar

Sunday 17 March, Forgiveness Vespers at 6pm. *There will be services held every evening of the upcoming week to help the faithful begin Lent with grace, please see Fr Ian's message below.*

A new *kouvouklion* (bier used during Holy Week) has been ordered from an atelier in Greece. ***Please watch for a fundraising email if you would like to contribute.***

Saturday 20 April is the date of the church cleaning in preparation for Pascha (10am to 2pm) — everyone is welcome to help with this happy task of preparation!

Our community enjoyed an inspiring pastoral visit from Archbishop Nikitas on Sunday 18 February. (See the Archdiocesan report [here](#).) Thank you to the many volunteers who helped in the altar, sang, readied the festive meal, and otherwise celebrated!



From Fr Ian ON LENT

As we are about to set out on the Great Fast let us pause for a moment to consider what we are undertaking. In its hymns for the season the Church frequently compares the journey through the season to a sea voyage. We steer the small boat of our soul across the turbulent ocean of life looking to reach the safe harbour of the Resurrection of Christ. In order to make landfall safely and avoid being swamped on the journey we are reminded of the need to lighten our ship by getting rid of everything that weighs us down and holds us back — our sins, certainly, but more than that, our self satisfaction, our ‘meddling curiosity and empty talk,’ and our tendency to see ourselves at the centre of all things.

A profitable voyage towards the light of Easter starts with our recognition that we have been heading in the wrong direction and our determination that with God’s help we will turn around and travel in the opposite direction. To this we add an awareness of the difficulties faced by other people, and a determination to do what is right by them, to enable them, as far as we can, to become the true Persons that God created them to be, and to accept their enabling of us to be the same. We know that it is only by God’s grace and help that we can achieve any progress in this way of life, and so we try more and more to open ourselves to his life and light.

To help us realise these ends the Church gives us special Lenten services – the **Great Canon of Repentance** in the first and fifth weeks of the fast, and the **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**, which we will serve on Wednesday evenings throughout the fast. We are also given the opportunity to contemplate the life and faith of the most perfect Christian of all, the Mother of God, as we chant the **Salutations of the Akathist Hymn** on the first five Fridays of Lent. Let us make use of these opportunities to deepen our spiritual life and faith, and may we all arrive with renewed joy at the harbour of Easter.

With my love to you all,

Fr Ian



Registered Charity no. 1011772

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Please remember Holy Trinity Parish in your prayers

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UPCOMING! ANNUAL BENEFIT CONCERT

Musical Journeys

A Fundraising Concert



Saturday June 1st, 2024, 7:30pm

St Nicolas Church, Abingdon
Market Place, OX14 3 D

Sergei Rachmaninov: Piano Sonata No 2, in Bb minor, Op. 36

Verdan Janjanin (Piano)

Manos Hadjidakis: A selection of Greek Songs

Celeste Lingas (Soprano)

Despina Nikolakis (Piano)

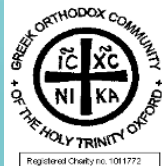


Followed by a Reception

All proceeds from this Fundraiser will be matched for the benefit of The Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Oxford.

Sponsored by the Nikolakis family, Piano Key Studio and the Atzemoglou family.

Tickets on sale at the door in church or on Eventbrite
£15 / £12 (concessions) / £5 (children under 12)



Forgiveness Sunday and the Fast

Today, on Cheese-fare Sunday, our Church commemorates the exile of Adam from Paradise.

The evangelist Matthew bears witness to our Lord's words, citing extracts from His Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes. It is through those words that Christ shows us the pathway to our salvation. The Lord lays out three signposts, three directional lines: first, willingness to forgive, as precondition of the pardon offered by God to mankind; second, authentic fasting; and third, the quest for true treasure, i.e. the Kingdom of Heaven. He asks us to forgive beyond what is reasonable, leaving behind us any kind of hurt or upset, abjuring any kind of animosity, injustice and malice. We are called to war down spiteful thoughts, to surmount the obstacles set up by the Devil, and to advance towards our salvation reconciled together in the spirit of Christ. The Dominical Prayer, handed down to us by the Lord Himself, incorporates the necessity of forgiving in the phrase 'and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us'. The Lord asks us to keep the Fast with dignity, without the grimacing gloom of hypocritical fasters. According to Christ's teaching, fasting is not merely a matter of nutrition; it is equally relevant to our minds and hearts. It has material boons as its starting point, but substantially encompasses all the spiritual virtues. The Fast is a training in self-control, obedience, humility and prayer. It curbs the body and disciplines the soul.

According to St John Chrysostom, 'the value of fasting does not reside in the avoidance of food, but in distancing ourselves from sin. Are you fasting? Then show it through your actions. It is not only our mouths that should fast, but also the eyes, ears, feet, hands, and all our bodily parts. If you see a poor man, give him alms.' With these words, the great Father of the Church teaches us that the Fast is laudable for its contribution to community solidarity. To the modern city-dweller, this concept is outdated. And yet the Lord's remarks in the last part of the Gospel extract reveal its magnificently essential Truth, as related to the perfecting of virtue. Our Lord Himself, in today's reading, warns us not to seek worldly enrichment, but to be concerned only with gaining heavenly treasure. Let us also bear in mind two more of the Lord's parables, that of the rich man and the pauper Lazarus [Luke 16: 19-31], and that of the foolish wealthy man [Luke 12: 16-21]. Nor should we forget the Lord's words, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.'

In tonight's evening service, by custom entitled the Vespers of Forgiveness, we shall have the opportunity, all together in mutual reconciliation and love, to observe and follow the Lord's words, and to embark on our spiritual exercise empowered by the prayer of the venerable Ephraim the Syrian: 'Lord and Master of my life, a spirit of idleness, despondency, ambition, and idle talking give me not. But rather a spirit of chastity, humblemindedness, patience, and love bestow on me, Thy servant. Yea, O Lord King, grant me to see my failings and not condemn my brother; for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen.'

By Presbyter Constantine Mamouris

[Translation from the Archdiocesan bulletin, offered by Rosemary B-M, [Source](#).]
