

Great Lent is finally here!

And not a moment too soon...

Why look forward to Great Lent? The fact of the matter is we need it. We stumble through life not focused on where we are supposed to be going. We think we are invincible and not die.

Well, we couldn't be more wrong. Judgment lies ahead. We are going to have to explain ourselves to God.

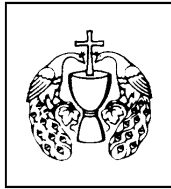
Great Lent is the perfect opportunity to get back in touch with reality. The various week-day services remind us of our mortality. They draw us ever closer to God and His love for us. We have an opportunity to straighten ourselves out. And don't think for a moment that we don't need to do it. A careful examination of our lives will show the truth. In fact, we are probably very far away.

How can that be? I go to church every Sunday. We may go through a routine but seldom focus on what we are doing and more importantly what we are not doing.

So, let's go! Let's get back on track and journey toward the One who truly loves and forgives.

Take advantage of the various Lenten services. Follow the Great Fast to the best of your ability. Exercise charity. Be generous to those in need.

Start with Forgiveness Vespers, Monday, February 20 at 7:30 p.m. Go to confession this lent and start over!



The Tree of Life

Newsletter of Holy Cross Parish
Christ is in our midst! He is and always will be!

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Lenten services

- **Forgiveness Vespers**,
Monday, Feb. 20, 7:30
p.m.

Great Compline
Every Monday
throughout the
remainder of Lent,
7:30 p.m.

**Liturgy of the Pre-
sanctified gifts**,
Every Wednesday at
7:30 p.m.

**Acathist Hymn
(Madayeh)**, every Fri-
day, 7:30 p.m.

**The Penitential Canon
of St. Andrew of Crete**
Wednesday, Mar. 21,
7:30 p.m. - All Night
Vigil

Orthros, Daily, Monday
thru Friday, 9 a.m.

Vespers - every Satur-
day at 6 p.m.

The Sundays of Great Lent

1. Sunday of Orthodoxy, Procession with icons.
2. Sunday of the Holy Relics & St. Gregory Palamas, Procession with relics
3. Sunday of the Veneration of the Cross - Procession with the Holy Cross
4. Sunday of St. John of the Ladder
5. Sunday of St Mary of Egypt

Don't forget to pledge your support!

Many thanks to all who returned their 2012 Pledge Card. Pledging helps our Finance Council to set a budget for the year. It helps to keep the parish on an even quell. More importantly it helps each of us to focus on our responsibility to support our church.

Our parish church is much like the fire or police department. It must be there when we need it! When someone is in a life threatening state we need our priest to come and minister. If someone dies we need the priest to pray and bury them. When a baby is born we want to bring the child for Mysteries of Christian Initiation. We may want to speak with the priest for counseling or maybe we need a letter of recommendation. Support of our parish church makes all this possible.

Most importantly we need our church as a connection with God. It here we receive the Holy Eucharist, confess our sins or be united in marriage. Without our parish church this all becomes difficult

Finally, we want to preserve our unique Melkite tradition, our Middle Eastern heritage. It's our family!

So, please take time to pledge your support for 2012. You may want to give electronically or by automatic deposit. Many prefer to use the weekly offering envelopes. Just check the appropriate box on the Pledge Card.

But what if something happens and I can't pay my pledge? Not to worry. Nothing will happen. Our support of our church is between us and God. If we trust God, He will find a way to help us in all our difficulties. So don't be afraid. Send in your pledge today!



My 2012 Holy Cross Church Pledge:

Name _____
Phone _____
I pledge: \$ _____ Weekly _____ Monthly _____ Annually
I want to contribute electronically: Credit Card
#: _____ Exp. _____
I will contribute by automatic deposit: _____
I will use the offering envelopes _____