



Saints Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church

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April 7, 2024. Third Sunday of the Great Fast. Tone 3. **Sunday of the Veneration of the Precious Cross.** Repose of the holy confessor Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and Enlightener of North America.

“What does it mean to take up one’s cross? Not to flee the visitation of sorrow, not to stand stubbornly against it, but to be ready to accept when it has not yet befallen on; to obediently and without complain accept it when it actually comes upon one; to all oneself to be meekly led like a lamb to the slaughter, after the example of the Lamb and Shepherd Christ; if necessary, to suffer for righteousness; to carry, without objection, the firewood for one’s own immolation, like Isaac, if such is the will of the Heavenly Father, for our purification and in order to lead us to the promised regeneration.”

St Philaret of Moscow, homily of the Veneration of the Cross

FOURTH WEEK OF THE HOLY FAST

WELCOME! If this is the first time visiting us, we welcome you! To begin, we want you to know this much about us: You are always welcome here. It is our joy and honor to have visitors join us for prayer and worship. You won’t be asked to do anything which would make you uncomfortable. Our children worship with us. If you have young children, they are welcome here, too. If you need to move to the back of the church for any reason, you are not disturbing us. We expect our children to be raised in the church, and to do that, they have to be in church. If you are an Orthodox Christian, and you have prepared yourself to receive Holy Communion according to your spiritual father’s directions, please be sure to introduce yourself to Father Michael before the service. We hope you enjoy your visit. Our prayer is that you might return to pray here, serve here, and help lead others to the Orthodox Faith. If you have any questions, don’t be afraid to ask!

Divine Services

Wed	10	Great Lenten Hours & Typika	9:00 am
Fri	12	9 th Hour & Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts	
		Litya for the Departed	10:00 am
Sat	13	Great Vespers & Confessions	6:00 pm

Parish Community Lenten Alms: REVISED We will continue to collect for the families affected by the tragic Guy Street fire throughout the Lenten season. All funds are sent directly to a special account in the charge of the Elliot Credit Union (make checks payable to Elliott Community FCU). May the Lord have mercy and repay!

Adult Class: “Preparing for Holy Week” Father Michael will offer the first of two classes this Thursday, April 10, and again on April 17 at 6:00 pm, to explain the Holy Week. We will follow Father Alexander Schmemmann’s “A Liturgical Explanation of Holy Week,” which can be found on stnicholasmarin.org. All are welcome.

Lenten Mission Vespers Service: Ss. Cyril & Methodius Church, NEXT Sunday, April 14, 5:00 pm: We will be hosting the Mission Vespers on **SUNDAY, APRIL 14**, beginning at 5:00 pm and are followed by a light meal. **PLEASE** mark your calendars and schedules and be present.

Pre-Pascha Church Cleaning Day; Saturday, April 20, 9:00 AM: Remember our Cleaning Day! We will start at 9 am and wipe down the iconostasis, clean the pews and kneelers, dust and polish the nooks and crannies. Two non-Orthodox friends of the parish have volunteered to come and help clean and beautify the Church! Have you signed up on the bulletin board downstairs?

2024 Trapeza (Lunch) Schedule: 2024 monthly Trapeza schedules are posted on the bulletin board in the Hall. Volunteers are needed for the April. Lenten cookbooks are available and can be purchased from our bookstore in the vestibule to help to prepare a delicious Lenten meal.

Kiosk New Items: The Kiosk has been stocked with many new books to help you through Lent and during the Paschal season. There are gift items also available, along with Pascha cards to send to your fellow Orthodox. Of special note: we have received four 50-knot and four 100-knot prayer ropes, handmade by Fr. Joel Brady's father. These are exceptional quality and can be a prayer aid during this Lenten season and after.

Did you know that...today is special because we remember and venerate the Holy Cross. Today is called: The Sunday of the Cross; Cross Sunday; Adoration of the Holy Cross; and many other variations. But why is the cross honored in such a way during the Great Lent? Before Christ, the cross was an instrument of the cruelest punishment and a symbol of horror. After Christ's sufferings, the cross became **the sign of victory** of good over evil and of life after death. The cross became the reminder of the limitless love of God and a source of happiness. The cross was sanctified by Christ's blood and became the carrier of His blessings and holiness. It became, and IS, an essential part of Christian life, used in all Church services and prayers. All Sacraments receive their spiritual power through the sign of the cross: water is blessed and becomes holy with the sign of the cross; bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ with the sign of the cross. The sign of the cross protects us from accidents and misfortunes and attracts God's help to us. Hence, Orthodox Christians revere the cross, bless themselves with the sign of the cross, wear a cross on their chest and decorate their homes and Churches with crosses. The cross is our weapon of salvation; it saves us.

During the Lent, we are preparing for the Great and Holy Pascha with more and better prayer, fasting from food and other habits/items that control us, and giving alms to those in need and to the Church. This can be a difficult time for those who are putting forth great effort. The cross is brought to the center of the Church, beautifully decorated, to encourage and remind us that there is a better way to live. We sing: "Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy Holy Resurrection, we glorify." The cross reminds us that those things that may be hard to do or accept can become easy and acceptable, even joyous. "Take up thy cross and follow me," said Christ. For He died on the cross but was resurrected (rose on the third day) and revealed to us the best way to live in full communion with God.

The cross is venerated in the center of the Church for the entire week. The priest does not hold the cross during this week. Instead, we approach the cross, we bow down to the floor two times, touching our foreheads to the floor, rising between the two bows and make the sign of the cross. After the second bow and cross, we kiss the cross. We then make a third and final bow and sign of the cross and continue our veneration of the icons and our lighting of candles.