

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

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A parish of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of North America · Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

April 2024 Monthly Newsletter

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever!

Holy Trinity Orthodox Church is the little church with a big heart and room for all, where Jesus nourishes modern lives through ancient roots! Join our priest, Father Alexis Woytek, and our church family for worship, fellowship, and spiritual growth. Read on to find out what's happening this month at HTOC!

Time Is Ticking

There are **10,800 minutes** in one week. We're awake for around **6,720** of them. Out of those **6,720**, church gets about **75** for Divine Liturgy. And over the other **6,645**, media and marketing bombard us with messages and mindsets often at odds with Christ Jesus' gospel.

That puts the church at quite a disadvantage: **1.1%** of our week versus **98.9%**!

And how much of that **98.9%** between Sundays do we spend working on our relationship with God through prayer, Bible reading, charity, and other spiritual exercises? If we're not showing up for church, we're likely not doing much of those things either.

Christian writer Richard Rohr noted: **"If we're honest, culture forms us much more than the gospel. It seems we have kept the basic storyline of human history in place rather than allow the gospel to reframe and redirect the story."**

How can we reverse that misdirection? What healthy, holy habits can we cultivate during Great Lent and beyond, so that our lives are shaped by Jesus, rather than by the greed, violence, and lust that saturate contemporary culture?

Mark Your Calendar!

Friday, April 5 • 6 p.m.

Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Saturday, April 6 • 9:30 a.m.

All Souls Saturday Divine Liturgy and Memorial

Sunday, April 7 • 9:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy

Third Sunday of Great Lent · The Holy Cross

Wednesday, April 10 • 12 noon

Moleben to the Holy Cross

Friday, April 12 • 12 noon

Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Saturday, April 13 • 9:30 a.m.

All Souls Saturday Divine Liturgy and Memorial

Sunday, April 14 • 9:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy

Fourth Sunday of Great Lent · Saint John Climacus

Guest priest: Father Demetrious Glimidakis

Thursday, April 18 • 6 p.m.

Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete

Friday, April 19 • 6 p.m.

Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Saturday, April 20 • 12 noon

Akathist to Mary the Virgin Birthgiver of God

Sunday, April 21 • 9:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy

Fifth Sunday of Great Lent · Saint Mary of Egypt

Friday, April 26 • 12 noon

Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Sunday, April 28 • 9:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Palms and Willows

Palm Sunday: Entry of Christ Jesus into Jerusalem

MORE! ➡

Special Services: Great Lent

On **All Souls Saturdays** during Great Lent we hold the Divine Liturgy and Memorial Service in prayerful memory of **“those whom we love but see no longer,”** as one Christian prayer touchingly puts it, because **“alive or dead, we still belong to the Lord”** (Romans 14:8). Come, pray for your loved ones.

The **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts** gives us opportunity to be nourished with Holy Communion on weekdays of Great Lent, when the Divine Liturgy is not held. Come, receive Jesus as your food and drink.

The **Moleben to the Holy Cross** is a prayer service in honor of the role that Jesus' cross played in his death, and thus his resurrection, which broke death's grip on humankind. The word **moleben** comes from the Church Slavonic verb **moliti**, which means “to pray.” Come, honor Christ crucified for your sake before his holy cross.

The **Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete** is also known as the **Canon of Repentance**. In poetic hymns, it covers a sweeping spectrum of Biblical cases of sin and repentance to inspire our own change of heart and mind in a more Godward direction. Come, learn through song and prayer the meaning of repentance – the very goal of Great Lent.

The **Akathist to Mary the Virgin Birthgiver of God** is a poetic hymn in 13 stanzas that honors her role in the **incarnation** – God's embodiment as a human being in the person of Christ Jesus. The word **akathist** comes from a Greek word that means “without sitting,” as originally the congregation – aside from the elderly and the ailing – stood through it out of respect for Jesus' virgin mother. Come, honor Mary as a model of faith at this special service.

Lenten Mission: April 14

During Great Lent, our diocese has a tradition of **Lenten Mission** – seasonal gatherings where neighboring parishes meet together for worship and fellowship. Since that is not feasible in Florida – where our diocese's parishes are few and far apart – we will honor that intention with a “priest exchange” on April 14. On that Sunday, Father Alexis Woytek will lead the Divine Liturgy at Saint Nectarios Church in Lakeland, while its priest Father Demetrious Glimidakis will lead the Divine Liturgy in our parish. **Let's all be on hand to give Father Demetrious a warm welcome!**

Milestones

“Rejoice with those who rejoice” (Romans 12:15). Best wishes to our kinfolk in Christ celebrating special milestones this month! **Birthdays:** Alex Onishenko (April 16) and Debbie Romanyak (April 24). **God grant you many years!**

Pitch In!

Church doesn't happen on its own. It happens when all of us pool our time, talent, and treasure together and put them at God's disposal to do his will as followers of Jesus. In a word, that's **stewardship**. Want to lend a helping hand? See our parish priest, Father Alexis Woytek to find out what needs doing. Want to become a supporting member? See our parish treasurer, Mrs. Lydia Pinkowski to find out how. Thanks for pitching in to make **your** church happen!

Reach Out!

The Church doesn't exist for itself. God calls it to reach out and share his love with the world that it lives in. Our parish charity bin is one way that we do such **outreach**, by collecting nonperishable food that our friends at **People Helping People in Hernando County** (phphernando.org) share with locals in need. Download a **grocery list** from our website (tinyurl.com/htoc-list). Thanks for reaching out and helping others through **your** church's charity!