

# St. Nicholas Orthodox Christian Church

28 Cross Street - Auburn, New York 13021 ([www.stnicholasauburn.com](http://www.stnicholasauburn.com))

**Very Reverend Michael Speck – Pastor**

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**Fr. Michael's Office Hours Monday and Thursday 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM in the Church Hall Office or by Appointment**

**Reverend Deacon David Donch Sr. Warden Greg Michaels Jr. Warden Rocco Lupo**

**Subdeacon Michael W. Speck Reader Nathaniel Donch Reader Peter A. Speck**

## **Sunday, March 10, 2019 – Cheesefare Sunday**

- Sunday, March 10** -10:00 AM – Divine Liturgy followed by Forgiveness Vespers  
-1:00 PM - 5:00 PM – Cancer Benefit for David Lupo @ Falcons
- Monday, March 11** -6:00 PM – Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
- Tuesday, March 12** -6:00 PM – Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
- Wednesday, March 13** -6:00 PM – Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
- Thursday, March 14** -6:00 PM – Canon of St. Andrew of Crete
- Friday, March 15** -5:00 PM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
- Saturday, March 16** -9:00 AM – Divine Liturgy – St. Theodore Saturday  
-4:30 PM – Confessions  
-4:45 PM – Ninth Hour  
-5:00 PM – Vespers
- Sunday, March 17** -9:00 AM – Adult Education  
-9:40 AM - 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Hours  
-10:00 AM – Divine Liturgy – Sunday of Orthodoxy  
-6:00 PM – Lenten Mission Service, St. Sophia's, Syracuse

### **Donations for the General Fund in memory of John Baumes**

**\$100 by Subdeacon Michael Speck - \$100 by Mildred Bondy, Lynda, Mary & Marty Baumes - \$100 by Dan & Ted Speck - \$100 by Bill & Karen Speck - \$50 by Miranda Askew-Brown - \$50 by Mark & Bonnie Lawn - \$50 by Greg & Karen Schoonover - \$20 by Lorraine Wasilenko - \$20 by Paul Smith Junior – \$10 by Sandy DiMarco**

### **Donations for the Renovation Fund in memory of John Baumes**

**\$200 by Stephen Baumes - \$200 by Katie Baumes - \$100 by Kathy & Betty Hryvko - \$100 by Lori & Steve Miller - \$50 by Paula Smith - \$50 by Vince & Jackie Bisignano - \$50 by Nino & Denise Pellegrino - \$50 by Robert, Mary, & William Enge - \$50 by Howard & Evelyn Haines - \$25 by Richard & Judy Boedicker - \$25 by Phyllis & Tom Lisano - \$25 by Mike & Joan Panek - \$25 by Coylynn & Charles Cator**

### **Donations for the Benevolence Fund in memory of John Baumes**

**\$25 by Beverly & Jacqueline Aversa**

## Beginning of Great Lent

**In the Orthodox Church, the last Sunday before Great Lent—the day on which, at Vespers, Lent is liturgically announced and inaugurated—is called Forgiveness Sunday. On the morning of that Sunday, at the Divine Liturgy, we hear the words of Christ: “If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses...” (Mark 6:14-15).**

**Then after Vespers—after hearing the announcement of Lent in the Great Prokeimenon: “Turn not away Thy face from Thy child, for I am afflicted! Hear me speedily! Draw near unto my soul and deliver it!”, after making our entrance into Lenten worship, with its special melodies, with the prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian, with its prostrations—we ask forgiveness from each other, we perform the rite of forgiveness and reconciliation. And as we approach each other with words of reconciliation, the choir intones the Paschal hymns, filling the church with the anticipation of Paschal joy. What is the meaning of this rite? Why is it that the Church wants us to begin the Lenten season with forgiveness and reconciliation? These questions are in order because for too many people Lent means primarily, and almost exclusively, a change of diet, the compliance with ecclesiastical regulations concerning fasting. They understand fasting as an end in itself, as a “good deed” required by God and carrying in itself its merit and its reward. But the Church spares no effort in revealing to us that fasting is but a means, one among many, towards a higher goal: the spiritual renewal of man, his return to God, true repentance and, therefore, true reconciliation. The Church spares no effort in warning us against a hypocritical and pharisaic fasting, against the reduction of religion to mere external obligations. As a Lenten hymn says:**

**“In vain do you rejoice in not eating, O soul! For you abstain from food, but from passions you are not purified. If you persevere in sin, you will perform a useless fast!”**

**Now, forgiveness stands at the very center of Christian faith and of Christian life because Christianity itself is, above all, the religion of forgiveness. God forgives us, and His forgiveness is in Christ, His Son, whom He sends to us so that by sharing in His humanity we may share in His love and be truly reconciled with God. Indeed, Christianity has no other content but love. And it is primarily the renewal of that love, a growth in it, that we seek in Great Lent, in fasting and prayer, in the entire spirit and the entire effort of that season. Thus, truly forgiveness is both the beginning of, and the proper condition for, the Lenten season. One may ask, however: Why should I perform this rite when I have no “enemies?” Why should I ask forgiveness from people who have done nothing to me, and whom I hardly know? To ask these questions is to misunderstand the Orthodox teaching concerning forgiveness. It is true that open enmity, personal hatred, real animosity may be absent from our life, though if we experience them, it may be easier for us to repent, for these feelings openly contradict Divine commandments. But the Church reveals to us that there are much subtler ways of offending Divine Love. These are indifference, selfishness, lack of interest in other people, of any real concern for them—in short, that wall which we usually erect around ourselves, thinking that by being “polite” and “friendly” we fulfill God’s commandments. The rite of forgiveness is so important precisely because it makes us realize—be it only for one minute—that our entire relationship to other men is wrong, makes us experience that encounter of one child of God with another, of one person created by God with another, makes us feel that mutual “recognition” which is so terribly lacking in our cold and dehumanized world.**

**Forgiveness Sunday: the day on which we acquire the power to make our fasting—true fasting; our effort—true effort; our reconciliation with God—true reconciliation. (Father Alexander Schmemmann – OCA Lives of the Saints)**