

APRIL 2019

ST. INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH

APRIL 2019 NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR



Fall down & get up

By Fr. Theophan

To those outside the Christian faith, we Christians are often dismissed as hypocrites because we all fall short of our calling. Whether our falls are as simple as the occasional cuss word slipping out or whether they are much deeper the worldly person rejoices knowing that Christians aren't as good as they supposedly think they are. The outsider's view doesn't account for all the repentance that goes on secretly in the background.

We Christians inside the church have a different temptation. We sometimes romanticize that we should be able, in our own strength, to never sin, to be better, pray better, be more disciplined and have more "mountain top" experiences of God. What a disappointment it is for us when we find ourselves sinning, not wanting to pray, or not doing all the things we that "should" be doing.

As we journey through Great Lent it is assumed, if we are attempting to do the spiritual exercises of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, that will come in contact with our own sinfulness. How do we react when we see our own sins? Our reactions can sometimes compound the effects of sin. For example, when Adam and Eve did not react well to their fall when they disobeyed the one commandment from God in the garden. Seeing their own nakedness (physical and existential) for the first time they covered themselves, hid from God, and avoided responsibility by blaming. As fallen human beings we tend towards the same reactions to our own sins as Adam and Eve had and we have added a multitude more.

What are some of the reactions we may have when we perceive our own sinfulness? We often despair when we see our own sins. Some judge themselves and come to an unhealthy self-hatred. Most of us, when exposed to their own fallenness, avoid God. After all, why would God want anything to do with us in our brokenness? Some feel the need to ease their anxiety by self-medicating through the feeding of various passions. Yet others blame God, other people, or their circumstances for their sins and temptations. There are a host of negative ways our souls can react when we experience our own spiritual nakedness.

Within the Scriptures and tradition of the church, one of the basic and fundamental teachings is that we are fallen and that "all have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God." Why is it then that our souls react so strongly when we become conscious of sin? Well, as I mentioned above it is easy to romanticize the Christian faith.

What does the well-lived Christian life look like and what should our response to our own falls be? St. John of Karpathos, in his collection of letters to monks in India states,

My brethren, do all that is in your power not to fall, for the strong athlete should not fall, but, if you do fall, get up again at once, and continue the contest. Even if you fall a thousand times, because of the withdrawal of God's grace, rise up again at each time, and keep on doing so until the day of your death. For it is written: 'If a righteous man falls seven times,' that is, repeatedly throughout his life, 'seven times shall he rise again' [Proverbs 24:16].

In St. John's view the Christian life consists of struggling against sin and falling down and getting up. By applying this simple advice we can avoid despair, self-hatred, and the host of other unhealthy reactions our souls make and simply put our direction and trust in Christ. This means despite popular misconceptions; our faith does not encourage us to focus exclusively on our sins.

Repentance is a turning away from sin and turning toward God. The emphasis of the Christian life of repentance is in the "getting up" to turn our hearts to Christ.

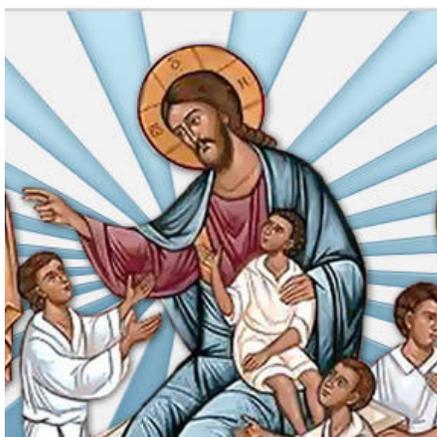
Have you fallen recently? Get up. Are you nursing a despairing heart? Get up, focus on Christ. Have you disappointed yourself? Get up, make it right if you can and move on. There is no need for despair or self-loathing. We only need to continuously turn our hearts to the One who saves us from our sins.

Here is a final thought from Elder Thaddeus of Vitovnica in his book *Our Thoughts Determine our Lives*,

All of us sin constantly. We slip and fall. In reality, we fall into a trap set by the demons. The Holy Fathers and the Saints always tell us, 'It is important to get up immediately after a fall and to keep on walking toward God'. Even if we fall a hundred times a day, it does not matter; we must get up and go on walking toward God without looking back. What has happened has happened – it is in the past. Just keep on going, all the while asking for help from God.

News and Announcements

- Please let your children know that they are not allowed to hang on our newly planted trees. Community members, if you see children playing on our newly planted trees kindly stop them and let them know it is not allowed.
- The Parish Council is scheduled to meet on Thursday, April 11th at 7pm.
- Please see the calendars below for Lent, Holy Week and Pascha service schedules.



**Family Church School
will be held on
Saturday, April 20th at 4pm**

Many Years!

- Birthdays
- 1 Diana Gratigny
 - 3 Olga Collins
 - 4 Jessica Ennis
 - 6 Elijah Lee
 - 9 Dumitru Turner
 - 11 Brady Hough
 - 11 Stephen Marble
 - 12 A'anna Wilcox
 - 20 Steven Davis
 - 28 Daniela Galdau
 - 29 Gheorghe Codrean
- Anniversaries
- 23 Igor & Olha Osobov/Tsarkovsk

Pascha Evening Celebration in our Parish hall

Dear St. Innocent parishioners,

Following the Paschal Divine Liturgy on Saturday night/early Pascha morning, we will process over to the parish hall, where we will have a (very) short service of blessing over the Pascha baskets.

This year we are trying to simplify this gathering as much as possible, to facilitate a quicker and easier clean up afterwards. This is necessary because we will be using the same space again on Sunday afternoon for our "official" annual Pascha Party which will be held (for the first time!) in and on the grounds of our parish hall. So, in keeping with simplicity, the church WILL NOT BE PROVIDING PLATTERS OF MEAT, CHEESE AND FRUIT.

Again, the reason for this is to keep our mess to a minimum. Therefore, on Pascha night, if you and/or your family are planning to eat, drink and be merry in the fellowship hall, please be aware that there is no volunteer "clean up crew" for this gathering. This is why we are reminding everyone to be considerate of the volunteers who will be setting up for the next day's party. PLEASE, BE SURE TO CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELF (AND THOSE IN YOUR GROUP) BEFORE YOU LEAVE THE PARISH HALL.

There may be a guest or two present, so if you will be staying at the parish hall to break your fast after the Pascha baskets are blessed, please anticipate this possibility by bringing a little extra food in your basket to share with others. WE THANK YOU ALL IN ADVANCE for your understanding, consideration and cooperation!

Love In Christ,
Your SIOC Parish Council

Why Do Eastern and Western Christians Celebrate Easter on Different Dates?

<https://www.thoughtco.com/easter-related-to-passover-3970737>

If all Christians calculate Easter the same way, and no Christians calculate it with reference to the date of Passover, why do Western Christians and Eastern Christians usually (though not always) celebrate Easter on different dates?

While there are minor differences between East and West in how the date of the paschal full moon is calculated that do affect the calculation of the date of Easter, the primary reason why we celebrate Easter on different dates is because the Orthodox continue to calculate the date of Easter according to the older, astronomically inaccurate Julian calendar, while Western Christians calculate it according to the much more astronomically accurate Gregorian calendar. (The Gregorian calendar is the calendar we all -- East and West -- use in daily life.)

Here's how the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America explains it in "The Date of Easter":

Unfortunately, we have been using the 19-year cycle in calculating the date of the Resurrection ever since the fourth century without actually checking to see what the sun and moon are doing. In fact, besides the imprecision of the 19-year cycle, the Julian calendar itself is off by one day in every 133 years. In 1582, therefore, under Pope Gregory of Rome, the Julian Calendar was revised to minimize this error. His "Gregorian" calendar is now the standard civil calendar throughout the world, and this is the reason why those who follow the Julian Calendar are thirteen days behind. Thus the first day of spring, a key element in calculating the date of Pascha, falls on April 3 instead of March 21.

We can see this same effect of the use of the Julian calendar in the celebration of Christmas. All Christians, East, and West agree that the Feast of the Nativity is December 25. Yet some Orthodox (though not all) celebrate the Feast of the Nativity on January 7. That doesn't mean that there is a dispute between Christians (or even just among Orthodox) about the date of Christmas: Rather, December 25 on the Julian calendar currently corresponds to January 7 on the Gregorian one, and some Orthodox continue to use the Julian calendar to mark the date of Christmas.

But wait — if there's currently a 13-day difference between the Julian calendar and the Gregorian calendar, shouldn't that mean that the Eastern and Western celebrations of Easter should always be 13 days apart? No. Remember the formula for calculating Easter:

Easter is the first Sunday that follows the paschal full moon, which is the full moon that falls on or after the spring equinox.

We've got several variables in there, including the most important one: Easter must always be on a Sunday. Combine all of those variables, and the Orthodox calculation of Easter can vary by as much as a month from the Western calculation.

If you interested in the full article please go to the source. <https://www.thoughtco.com/easter-related-to-passover-3970737>

The Sacrament of Confession

The sacrament of penance is our formal act of reconciliation with God in the Church when sin has severed us from the Church's life. Because penance is the way to communion with God when that communion has been broken by sin, it is often referred to in Church Tradition as the renewal of baptism, or as the reestablishment of that condition of life with God which was given to men in the basic sacraments of inauguration into the Christian life.

Not every sin requires the necessity of formal penance through sacramental ritual. This is obvious because Christians are never completely without sin. Certain grave sins or the prolonged separation from Holy Communion, however, do call for the act of sacramental penance. Also, Christians living in communion with Christ are expected to make use of this sacrament periodically in order to humble themselves consciously before God and to receive guidance in the Christian life from their pastor in the Church. It is the teaching of the Orthodox Church that sacramental penance is necessary for those receiving Holy Communion when they have committed grave sins or when they have been separated from the Eucharistic meal for a long time...

<https://oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/worship/the-sacraments/penance>

There are three main elements to the act of formal penance:

1. sincere sorrow for sin for the breaking of communion with God and neighbor.
2. an open and heartfelt confession in the presence of the priest who stands on behalf of the whole community.
3. the prayer of absolution by the priest through which the forgiveness of God is sacramentally bestowed upon the repentant sinner



Regular partaking of the Sacrament of Confession is a normative practice of the Christian faith especially during Great Lent which is a season of repentance. Every Orthodox Christian should prepare to make a good confession during these days.

Fr. Theophan hears confessions before or after the weekday Lenten services or at any other time by appointment. On Sunday mornings between 9:20am -9:40am. If Fr. Theophan is behind the icon screen come and get him.

NOTE: Please make every effort to come to confession before Lazarus Saturday.

In general practice, the anointing on Holy Wednesday presupposes that one has recently confessed their sins.

HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA 2019



Monday, April 22. 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins

Tuesday, April 23. 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins

Wednesday, April 24. 6:30 pm The Mystery of Holy
Unction

Thursday, April 25. 10am Vespereal Liturgy of St.
Basil - The Last Supper

6:30pm Matins with the 12 Passion Gospels

Friday, April 26. 10am Royal Hours

3pm Vespers with the placing of the shroud

6:30pm Matins with the Lamentations

Saturday, April 27. 10am Vespereal Liturgy of St.
Basil - the harrowing of hell

11:30 pm Paschal Nocturns

12am Great and Holy Pascha!

Sunday, April 28. 1pm Agape Vespers
Followed by Pasha Party in Parish Hall

How to Prepare a Traditional Pascha Basket



In many Orthodox countries, it is the custom to bring foods in a basket to be blessed at Pascha. The foods traditionally brought in the basket have special significance, but many people will add the foods they've missed the most during the Fast. The basket is usually covered with a white cloth embroidered with the words, "Christ is Risen." It is also customary to have a blessed candle in it to light at the Blessing, which takes place at church following the Resurrection services.

At St Philip's, it is our custom for parishioners to prepare a table in the Great Room on Holy Saturday where we place our baskets in preparation for the Blessing and our Paschal Meal together following the services. If there are visitors, please invite them to join you.

What goes into the Pascha basket?



SWEET BREAD—Called Kulich or Paska by some, many "old country" traditions and recipes exist. This is a sweet yeast bread, rich in eggs, butter, milk, etc., sometimes with raisins, and perhaps baked with a red egg or decorated with Christian symbols. The Pascha bread is symbolic of Christ Himself, who is our Living Bread, and who has come down from heaven to give eternal life in the Eucharist. Just as bread is the "staff of life," Christ is our spiritual nourishment for eternal life.



EGGS—Hardboiled & decorated, eggs are always considered a symbol of the resurrection, the emergence of new life. At Pascha, our Savior came forth from the tomb as a chick breaks forth from its shell.



BUTTER—Traditionally shaped in the form of a lamb (can be just a stick), butter represents the Lamb of God who was offered on the altar of the cross for the life of the world.



MEATS—Lamb, Ham, Sausage, Veal, etc. A portion of any or all of these meats are put in the basket. The meat products symbolize the sacrificial animals of the Old Testament, foreshadowing the true sacrifice of our Savior, who became for us "the Lamb of God, taking away the sins of the world." As we learn from the prayer of blessing, the meat products also symbolize the fattened calf prepared for the Prodigal Son on his return to his Heavenly Father. Thus at Pascha we celebrate our return to God and our joyous participation in the blessings of our Savior, who promised to be our "true food."

SALT—Salt is necessary for flavor, and reminds the Christian of his duty to others. As salt preserves food, we are to be as salt in the world.



HORSERADISH—In some traditions mixed with grated red beets, this is symbolic of the Passion of Christ still in our minds, but sweetened with sugar because of the Resurrection. A bitter-sweet red mixture reminds us of the sufferings of Christ.



CHEESE—A custard-type cheese shaped into a ball having a rather bland but sweet taste indicative of the moderation that Christians should have in all things. Also, creamed cheese is placed in a small dish and decorated with Christian symbols.

SPECIAL ITEMS—Chocolate, candy, wine, and other food items extend the joy of the Resurrection. The Church takes ordinary food and blesses it as an aid in making us holy. God's blessing changes us from children of natural descent into sons and daughters of the Kingdom of God.



April 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 St. John Climacus 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape Lenten Class	8	9 9am Morning Prayers	10 6:30pm Great Canon of St. Andrew	11 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry 7pm Parish Council	12	13 5pm Confession 6pm Great Vespers
14 St. Mary of Egypt 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape Lenten Class	15	16 9am Morning Prayers	17 6:30pm Presanctified Liturgy	18 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	19 6:30pm Lazarus Saturday	20 9am Lazarus Saturday Liturgy 4pm Family Church School 6pm Great Vespers
21 Palm Sunday 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy With Palm Procession 11:45am Agape	22 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins	23 6:30pm Bridegroom Matins	24 6:30pm The Mystery of Holy Unction	25 10am Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil 6:30pm Matins with 12 Passion Gospel Readings	26 10am Royal Hours 12pm Decorate the tomb 3pm Vespers with the placing of the shroud 6:30pm Matins with the Lamentations	27 10am Vesperal Liturgy of St. Basil 10:30pm Reading of Acts 11:30 pm Paschal Nocturns 12am Great and Holy Paschal
28 Great and Holy Paschal 1pm Agape Vespers followed by Pascha Party	29	30 9am Morning Prayers				

Tentative May 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 No Fast 6pm Paschal Vespers	2 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	3 No Fast	4 5pm Confessions 6pm Great Vespers
5 St. Thomas Sunday 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Cemetery Blessing & Panikhida 12:30pm Agape		7 9am Morning Prayers	8 6pm Daily Vespers	9 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	10	11 5pm Confessions 6pm Great Vespers
12 Holy Myrrhbearers 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape		14 9am Morning Prayers	15 6pm Daily Vespers	16 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	17	18 5pm Confessions 6pm Great Vespers
19 The Paralytic 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape		21 9am Morning Prayers	22 6pm Daily Vespers	23 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	24	25 5pm Confessions 6pm Great Vespers
26 The Samaritan Woman 8:45am Matins 10am Divine Liturgy 11:45am Agape	27	28 9am Morning Prayers	29 6pm Daily Vespers	30 9am Morning Prayers 1-4pm Central State Prison Ministry	31	