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# BULLETIN



## THIS ISSUE

THE WEEKS OF HOLY AND  
GREAT LENT

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## SAINTS CONSTANTINE & HELEN PARISH HERALD

### THE WEEKS OF HOLY AND GREAT LENT

The first week of Great Lent is especially strict and the church services are very long. During Great Compline on the first four days (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete is read. After each verse we chant the refrain: "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me"

On Friday of the first week of Great Lent, after Liturgy and the prayer which the priest recites before the ambo, there is the blessing of the wheat. This is done in memory of the Holy Great Martyr Theodore the Tyro, who helped Christians to keep the fast when, in the year 362, the Byzantine Emperor Julian the Apostate ordered all the food in the marketplaces of Antioch to be secretly sprinkled with the blood of animals which had been sacrificed to idols. St. Theodore the Tyro, who had been burned to death in 306 for his confession of the Christian Faith, appeared in a dream to the Bishop of Antioch Eudocius and revealed to

him Julian's secret plan. St. Theodore ordered that during the entire week Christians were not to buy any food in the market places; instead, they were to eat wheat.

On the first Sunday of Great Lent we celebrate the "Triumph of Orthodoxy" instituted in 842 during the reign of Theodore in memory of the restoration of the veneration of holy icons. At the end of Liturgy, the clergy serve a (prayer of thanksgiving) in the middle of the church before icons of the Saviour and the Mother of God. They beseech the Lord to strengthen Orthodox Christians in their faith and to turn to the path of truth all those who have fallen away from the Church. Then the deacon loudly proclaims the Creed and pronounces anathema (announces the separation from the Church) upon all those who have dared to distort the truth of the Orthodox faith. He then intones "Memory Eternal" for all those who ended their lives defending Orthodoxy, and "Many Years" to the living.

On the Second Sunday of Great Lent

Saints Constantine & Helen Serbian Orthodox Church  
4109 Avenue L, Galveston, Tx 77550



## SAINTS CONSTANTINE & HELEN PARISH HERALD

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we commemorate St. Gregory Palamas who lived in the 14th century. In keeping with the Orthodox faith, he taught that the Lord vouchsafes those who undertake ascetic struggles of fasting and prayer to shine with uncreated light, just as Christ shone on Mount Tabor. Because St Gregory revealed this teaching concerning the power of prayer and fasting, it was established that his memory be celebrated on the second week of Great Lent.

On the third Sunday of Great Lent, after the Great Doxology during Vigil, the Holy Cross is solemnly carried into the middle of the church for all the faithful to venerate. We make prostrations before the Cross as the church sings: "Before Thy Cross, we bow down, O Master, and Thy Holy Resurrection, we glorify."

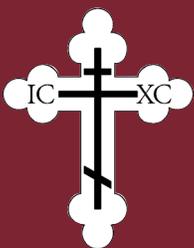
This hymn is also sung during Liturgy in place of the Trisagion. The Cross is brought out to the faithful now, in the middle of Lent, in order that the remembrance of Our Lord's suffering and death on the Cross might inspire and strengthen us to continue the course of the fast. The holy Cross remains in the center of the church for veneration during the entire week until after the Hours on Friday when, before Liturgy, it is carried back into the altar.

On the fourth Sunday we commemorate St. John of the Ladder who describes in his writings a ladder of virtues which lead us to the Throne of

God. On Thursday of the fifth week we take part in a special service during which the life of St. Mary of Egypt is read together with the entire Canon of St. Andrew of Crete, the same that was read on the first four days of Lent. The life of St Mary who had formerly been a great sinner, should serve as an example to all of genuine repentance and should convince everyone of God's unspeakable mercy. On Saturday of the fifth week takes place the "Laudation of the Most Holy Theotokos." An akathist is read to the Mother of God. This service originated in Greece in thanksgiving to the Mother of God for having repeatedly saved Constantinople from its enemies. Today we have the "Laudations" akathist for the strengthening in the faithful of hope in the Heavenly Intercessor Who, in helping to protect from visible enemies, is all the more ready to help us in our battle against the unseen enemies.

On the fifth Sunday of Great Lent we commemorate St. Mary of Egypt whom the Church honors as an image of true repentance. To encourage those who are laboring spiritually, the Church points to her life as an example of God's unspeakable mercy towards repentant sinners.

The sixth week is dedicated to preparing the faithful worthily to meet the Lord with branches of good deeds and to follow Him to His Passion. On Saturday of the sixth week, during Matins and Liturgy, we commemorate the





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raising of Lazarus by Jesus Christ, for which reason this day is called "Lazarus Saturday." During the Liturgy, in place of "Holy God..." we sing "As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. Alleluia."

The sixth Sunday of Great Lent is one of the 12 great Feasts on which is celebrated the triumphal entry of our Lord into Jerusalem on His way to His voluntary Passion. This Feast is also called Palm Sunday.

### CALENDAR OF CHURCH SERVICES AND EVENTS AT SAINTS CONSTANTINE & HELEN

**MARCH 5th**  
Presanctified Liturgy  
Wednesday at 6:00 pm

**MARCH 7th**  
Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos  
Friday at 6:00 pm

**MARCH 8th**  
Theodore's Saturday.  
Memorial Service for our dearly  
departed & blessing of wheat.  
Saturday 10:00 am  
followed by blessing of graves  
at the cemetery.

**MARCH 9th**  
First Sunday of Great & Holy Lent  
(Sunday of Orthodoxy)

**MARCH 12th**  
Presanctified Liturgy  
Wednesday at 6:00 pm

**MARCH 14th**  
Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos  
Friday at 6:00 pm

**MARCH 16th**  
Second Sunday of Great & Holy Lent  
(St Gregory of Palamas)

**MARCH 19th**  
Presanctified Liturgy  
Wednesday at 6:00 pm

**MARCH 21st**  
Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos  
Friday at 6:00 pm

**MARCH 23rd**  
Third Sunday of Great & Holy Lent  
(Adoration of the Cross)

**MARCH 25th**  
Presanctified Liturgy  
Wednesday at 6:00 pm

**MARCH 28th**  
Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos  
Friday at 6:00 pm

**MARCH 30th**  
Fourth Sunday of Great & Holy Lent  
(St John of the Ladder)

