

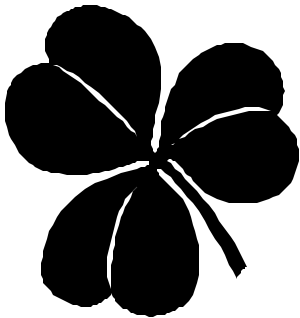
The Heavenly Host

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Volume 11, Issue 2

March 2002

**Happy
St. Patrick's
Day!**



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Letter from the Pastor by Father Timothy Baclig

Even before Great Lent begins we are provided with pre-Lenten Gospel lessons which introduce us to the themes of the Lenten season: 1) **call** upon the mercy of God, *Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee*, 2) **return** home to God's loving forgiveness, *Sunday of the Prodigal Son*, 3) **see** Christ in every man *Sunday of Meat Fare*, and 4) **practicing** forgiveness, *Sunday of Cheese Fare* or "*Forgiveness Sunday*." The lessons call us to act. We practice what we believe by doing. It is the Church's prescription for the 40-day rehabilitation of the mind, body and soul. It is something that we must commit ourselves to doing even before Great Lent begins.

This year, we begin the Fast on Monday, March 18, a week before Western Palm Sunday! Yes, our church will be celebrating Easter five weeks after Western Easter! It doesn't seem fair, but the fact is we have maintained the practice of calculating Easter based on the early decision of the Church (325 AD) when the Roman Church was in agreement with us. To simply state what was once followed by both East and West: 1) Easter cannot fall earlier than April 4th or later than May 8th. 2) the day of Easter is the Sunday after the full moon which falls on or immediately after April 3rd. If the full moon occurs on a Sunday, Easter is the following Sunday. 3) Easter must always follow the Jewish Passover and may not be celebrated before or at the same time with it.

Beginning on Monday, March 18th, our parish will be providing three additional services each week during the Fast. 1) Great Compline *a prayer service of repentance, truly Lenten in character*, 2) The Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts *a Eucharistic Lenten service beginning with the evening Vespers prayers*, and 3) The "Aktathist" or "Madeyeh" Service *a prayer service of intercessory prayer linked to the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25*. Note: since the Wednesday evening communion service requires abstinence for those receiving the Sacrament, a light brunch is permitted and an evening meal is planned in the Community Center following the service. All of the evening Lenten Services will begin at 6:30 pm in the Church, with the exception that the Compline service will take place in the Chapel on the second floor of the Community Center.

Contrary to what may be a false impression created by the solemn tone heard and dark colors seen in the Church during the season, Great Lent is not intended to be a period of morbidity and gloominess. Instead, it is a time of joyfulness and purification. Heard in one of the hymns at the beginning of Great Lent is:

"Let us begin the fast with joy...let us prepare ourselves for spiritual efforts. Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh. Let us abstain from passion as we abstain from food, taking pleasure in the good words of the Spirit, that we may be granted to see the Holy Passion of Christ our God and rejoice in spirit at His holy Resurrection!"

Come To The Feast An excerpt from “Does It Matter If I Miss Church?” by Fr. John Weldon Hardenbrook

I have focused here on the most important reason for coming to church—to partake of Christ in the Eucharist. But that is not the only reason. If you stay away from church, you are depriving yourself of the fellowship of other believers — a very powerful encouragement in living the Christian life. Have you ever noticed how quickly a single coal dies out when it is removed from a bed of coals in the fireplace? So it is spiritually with the member who removes himself from the assembly of the Church. The fact is, Christians can only keep a saving faith alive through having consistent fellowship with other believers.

If you miss church you also miss out on hearing the Scriptures read and interpreted in the hymnography of the Church and in the homilies. The entire doctrine of the Orthodox Faith is contained within her services, in one form or another; if you do not attend, how will you know what the Church believes? Reading on your own, of either Scriptures or theological works, is good, but it is no substitute for hearing the Truth proclaimed in the assembly.

In addition, if you have children, you are sinfully neglecting a vitally important opportunity to set them an example of a truly pious life. Statistics have proven that children raised in homes where one or both parents attend church only sporadically are far more likely to be sporadic in church attendance when they become adults — if they go to church at all. Even if you send your children to church without you, they will learn that church is not really important. If it were important, their parents would be there!

Another point needs to be made here. If you are convinced that you need to come to church and partake of the Eucharist, do not give in to the temptation to come in late, take Communion, and leave immediately afterwards. This shows just as much disrespect for Christ and His Holy Mysteries as does not coming at all. Imagine you are invited to a dinner party at a friend’s home. Do you come in an hour late, just as everyone is sitting down, bolt down your meal, and rush off as soon as you are finished? Of course not! That would be unbelievably rude. To treat the Body and Blood of Christ this way is worse than rude—it is failing to discern the Lord’s Body. And according to Saint Paul, he who does this “eats and drinks judgment to himself” (1 Corinthians 12:29).

The only way the life of the Church can truly become the path of salvation is for each of us to truly commit ourselves to get involved with our whole heart, mind and soul. First, go to confession with an Orthodox priest and repent. To repent means simply to turn around and go in a different direction. It may be turning from the love of the world to the love of God; from putting temporal things first to putting eternal things first. Whatever it may be that is taking you away from Christ and His Church—you must turn from that to God.

You must dedicate yourself to the reality of your baptism, to the death, burial and Resurrection of the Lord, and to walk in His life and commandments—to be loyal to Christ with your entire life! That is the kind of dedication He seeks from His servants—and the kind that will draw others to Christ and His Holy Church.

St. Michael Church
www.stmichaelvannuys.com
MARCH

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<i>Regular Services</i>						
<i>Saturdays: Great Vespers at 5 pm in the Church.</i>						
<i>Sundays: Orthos at 8:45 am & Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am in the Church.</i>						
<i>Confessions are arranged by appointment or prior to services.</i>						
SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON 3	4	7:30 pm-Ladies Guild Meeting at Sondra Love's home 5	6	7	9:00 am- Ladies Prep for Baking (Kitchen) 8	7:00 am-Ladies Bake Day (Kitchen & Banquet Room) 9
MEAT FARE SUNDAY St. Patrick cele- brates Meat Fare Sunday luncheon SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGEMENT 10	7:30 pm-Parish Council Meeting Upstairs in Conference Room 11	12	13	14	15	16
CHEESE FARE SUNDAY FORGIVENESS SUNDAY 17	GREAT LENT BEGINS 6:30 pm-Great Compline service in Chapel PURE MONDAY 18	19	6:30 pm-Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts Followed by Lenten Dinner 20	21	6:30 pm-The Akathist/Madeyeh Prayer Service 22	23
24 1st Sunday of Lent SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY 2nd Sunday of Lent 31	THE ANNUNCIATION 6:30 pm-Great Compline service in Chapel 25	26	6:30 pm-Liturgy of Pre-Sanctified Gifts Followed by Lenten Dinner 27	28	29	30

No man ever sank under the burden of the day. It is when tomorrow's burden is added to the burden that the weight is more that one can bear. — George MacDonald

In order to see the rainbow, you must first experience the rain. — Dolly Parton

Portfolio of the Typical UCLA Graduate

from data polled by over 250,000 alumni

\$ 75,000	Average yearly personal income
\$510,220	Average investment portfolio value
\$285,888	Average value of home ownership
93%	Own their own homes or condominiums
50%	Own other real estate properties
62%	Hold management/professional positions
65%	Have done postgraduate studies after UCLA
67%	<u>Donate up to 10% of income to charity</u>
67%	Traveled outside U.S. in the last 2 years



Announcements

Descanso Gardens has thousands of tulips. The bulbs are planted at different times so that they bloom continuously for several weeks.

Congratulations to Don Meena on his retirement from Lockheed-Martin.

Did you know that as a pledge member of the church, you are entitled to receive a *free* copy of The Word Magazine from the archdiocese? Contact the church office if you're not receiving your monthly edition.

If you currently have keys to the church grounds (gate, community center, classrooms or church), please contact John Andrews via email at FRMRJHN@aol.com or by phone at 661-303-7027. Thank you.



Catechism Bowl

Plans are being made for the Catechism Bowl to be held at the Western Region Parish Life Conference in San Diego during the July 4th, 2002 weekend.

We have three teams; Junior, Senior and Adult.

We will be studying the Book of Matthew.

Study times will be held every two weeks immediately after church. The Orthodox Study Bible will be used.

Get involved. This is an enriching experience. Call Carrie Skaff to register at (818) 501-3477.

Western Region Conference 2002 Theme:

"Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me."
(Matthew 25:40)

Deadlines for eligibility for:

Festivals - May 1st,
Oratorical - June 1st and
Bible Bowl - June 1st.



**St. Patrick Celebrates
Meatfare Sunday
at
St. Michael Orthodox Church
Family Lunch
Sunday, March 10, 2002**



**Won't you come and join us
for the traditional Irish meal of
Corned Beef and Cabbage and Potatoes?**

Adults: \$5; children 12 and under free.

Please let us know if you're coming by mailing your reservation and a check payable to St. Michael Orthodox Church or you may give them to Mary Ann Coury.

Deadline March 6, 2002

Name _____

Adults _____ **#Children (ages)** _____

Total enclosed \$ _____

Mail to: **St. Michael Orthodox Church**
16643 Vanowen Street
Van Nuys, CA 91406-2314

From the Ladies Guild

Gift certificates are available each Sunday in the Community Center. A portion of each dollar is donated to our Church and is applied to our mortgage. Buy your scrip today!

You're all invited to sign up for Holy Bread & to host a coffee hour. Please call Leila Abu-Ghazaleh for more information on open dates at (805) 522-4797.

Spiritual Bouquets: Donations are offered in memory of the deceased in lieu of flowers. If you wish to participate, please see Jeannette Aboud.

Pageant of the Masters: 45 people attended this year's event in Laguna. Make your reservations now for next year's event. Please contact Carrie Skaff at (818) 501-3477.

ST. MICHAEL ANTIOCHIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH
OF THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

V. Rev. Fr. Timothy Baclig, Pastor

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PRINTING ERROR:

Dates for Golf Classic and Laguna
Arts Festival were incorrect in the
last newsletter.

Golf Classic will be on
Monday, June 10, 2002

Laguna Arts Festival will be on
Saturday, August 10, 2002

Recipe of the Month

Red Snapper with Mango Shrimp Salsa

2 Tbsp. olive oil
3 shallots, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
1 cup diced raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
Juice from ½ lemon
Juice from ½ lime
Juice from ½ orange
3 Serrano chilies, seeded and diced
3 Roma tomatoes, seeded and diced
3 tomatillos, husks removed, seeded and diced
1 small mango, peeled and diced
½ bunch cilantro leaves, chopped
Sea Salt to taste
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
4 red snapper filets
3 Tbsp. olive oil

Prepare the grill to make a hot fire. To prepare the

Mango Shrimp Salsa, heat the 2 tablespoons of oil in a medium skillet, over medium heat. Add the shallots and garlic. Sauté 2 to 3 minutes and then add the shrimp. Sauté 2 to 3 minutes more, or until the shrimp turns pink. Add the fruit juices, chilies, tomatoes, and tomatillos. Cook just enough to warm the tomatoes and combine the ingredients. Remove from heat and gently stir in the mango and cilantro. Season with the salt and pepper. Set aside.

Coat the fish with the 2 teaspoons of oil on both sides. Season with salt and pepper. Rub the grill with additional oil to prevent the fish from sticking. Grill the fish on one side about 5 minutes. Using a metal spatula, carefully turn the fish and grill about 3 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fish. Spoon the warm salsa over the grilled fish and garnish with sprigs of cilantro.

Serves 4.