

## Sunday Vesper Services

Each Great Fast, the Greater Akron Orthodox Clergy Association sponsors a series of Sunday evening Vespers Services, to provide a means of gathering Orthodox Faithful from the various Orthodox communities, to allow them to speak with and support one another through the Fasting season, and to offer a series of spiritual talks to help us on our own personal journeys through the Fast.

The schedule for these services, the speakers scheduled, and the parishes in which the services are being held, will be announced from the pulpit on a weekly basis.

Date	Location
09Mar	Sunday of Orthodoxy Presentation/Fairlawn—5PM
16Mar	St. Gregory Palamas St. Thomas/Fairlawn—5PM
23Mar	Sunday of the Cross St. Elia/Akron—5PM
30Mar	St. John Climacus St. George/Fairlawn—5PM
06Apr	St. Mary of Egypt St. Nicholas/Mogadore—5PM

## THE TRUE NATURE OF FASTING

By Mother Mary and Archbishop Kallistos

We waited, and at last our expectations were fulfilled', writes the Serbian Bishop Nikolai of Ochrid, describing the Easter service at Jerusalem. 'When the Patriarch sang "Christ is risen", a heavy burden fell from our souls. We felt as if we also had been raised from the dead. All at once, from all around, the same cry resounded like the noise of many waters. "Christ is risen" sang the Greeks, the Russians, the Arabs, the Serbs, the Copts, the Armenians, the Ethiopians one after another, each in his own tongue, in his own melody. . . . Coming out from the service at dawn, we began to regard everything in the light of the glory of Christ's Resurrection, and all appeared different from what it had yesterday; everything seemed better, more expressive, more glorious. Only in the light of the Resurrection does life receive meaning.'

This sense of resurrection joy, so vividly described by Bishop Nikolai, forms the foundation of all the worship of the Orthodox Church; it is the one and only basis for our Christian life and hope. Yet, in order for us to experience the full power of this Paschal rejoicing, each of us needs to pass through a time of preparation. 'We waited,' says Bishop Nikolai, 'and at last our expectations were fulfilled.' Without this waiting, without this expectant preparation, the deeper meaning of the Easter celebration will be lost.

**Do not neglect the Forty Days;** it constitutes an imitation of Christ's way of life.

*Saint Ignatius the Godbearer*

The primary aim of fasting is to make us *conscious of our dependence upon God*. If practiced seriously, the Lenten abstinence from food - particularly in the opening days - involves a considerable measure of real hunger, and also a feeling of tiredness and physical exhaustion. The purpose of this is to lead us in turn to a sense of inward brokenness and contrition; to bring us, that is, to the point where we appreciate the full force of Christ's statement, 'Without Me you can do nothing' (John 15: 5). If we always take our fill of food and drink, we easily grow over-confident in our own abilities, acquiring a false sense of autonomy and self-sufficiency. The observance of a physical fast undermines this sinful complacency.



## The GREAT FAST—2025

### *Doors of Repentance*

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.*

*Open to me the doors of repentance, O Life-giver,*

*For my spirit rises early to pray t'wards Your Holy Temple*

*Bearing the temple of my body, all defiled;*

*But in Your compassion,*

*Purify me by the loving-kindness of Your mercy.*

*Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

*Lead me on the paths of salvation, O Mother of God,*

*For I have profaned my soul with shameful sins*

*And have wasted my life in laziness;*

*But by your intercessions, deliver me from all impurity.*

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your great mercy*

*And according to the multitude of Your compassions,*

*Blot out my transgressions.*

*When I think of the many evil things I have done,*

*Wretch that I am,*


*I tremble at the fearful day of Judgment.*

*But trusting in Your loving kindness,*

*Like David I cry to You:*

*Have mercy on me, O God (3X)*


*According to Your great mercy!*



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# HOLY WEEK

**PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 13**

Divine Liturgy 1000AM  
Bridegroom Matins 600PM

**GREAT & HOLY MONDAY, APRIL 14**

Presanctified Liturgy 430PM  
Bridegroom Matins 600PM

**GREAT & HOLY TUESDAY, APRIL 15**

Presanctified Liturgy 430PM  
Bridegroom Matins 600PM

**GREAT & HOLY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16**

Presanctified Liturgy 430PM  
Holy Unction 600PM

**GREAT & HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 17**

St. Basil's Liturgy 1000AM  
Matins/12 Passion Gospels 600PM

**GREAT & HOLY FRIDAY, APRIL 18**

Royal Hours 1000AM  
Vespers of Entombment 300PM  
Matins/Lamentations 600PM

**GREAT & HOLY SATURDAY, APRIL 19**

St. Basil's Liturgy 1000AM  
Nocturnes 1130PM

**PASCHA!!!, APRIL 20**

Matins, Divine Liturgy Midnight  
Agape Vespers 1130AM



# The GREAT FAST 2025

<b>Cheesefare Sunday</b> 2 Divine Liturgy 10AM Rom 13:11-14:4 Mat 6:14-21	<b>Great Fast Begins</b> 3 Canon St Andrew 6PM Isa 1:1-20; Gen 1:1-13; Prov 1:1-20							
<b>Orthodoxy Sunday</b> 9 Presentation 5P T4 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 11:24-26, 32-12:2 John 1:43-51								
<b>St Gregory</b> 16 St Thomas 5P T5 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 1:10-2:3 Mark 2:1-12								
<b>Cross Veneration</b> 23 St. Elia 5P T6 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 4:14-5:6 Mark 8:34-9:1	<b>Forefeast</b> 24 Annunciation Vesperal Liturgy 6PM Isa 14:24-32; Gn 8:21-9:7; Prov 11:19-12:6	<b>Feast of</b> 25 Annunciation Heb 2:11-18 Luke 1:24-38						
<b>St. John Climacus</b> 30 St. George 5P T7 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 6:13-20 Mark 9:17-31								
<b>St Mary of Egypt</b> 6 St. Nicholas 5P T8 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 9:11-14 Mark 10:32-45								
<b>Entry of Lord</b> 13 Divine Liturgy 10AM Bridegroom Matins 6PM Phil 4:4-9 John 12:1-18	<b>Grt&amp;HolyMon</b> 14 Presanctified Lit 430P Bridegroom Mat 6PM Ex 1:1-20, Job 1:1-12 Matt 24:3-35	<b>Grt&amp;HolyTue</b> 15 Presanctified Lit 430P Bridegroom Mat 6PM Ex 2:5-10, Job 1:13-22 Matt 24:36-26:2	<b>Grt&amp;HolyWed</b> 16 Presanctified Lit 430P Holy Unction 6PM Ex 2:11-22; Job 2:1-10 Mat 26:6-16	<b>Grt&amp;HolyThur</b> 17 St Basil's Liturgy 10AM 12 Passion Gsppls 6PM 1 Cor 11:23-32 Mat 26:2-27:2	<b>Grt&amp;HolyFriday</b> 18 Royal Hours 10AM Vespers Entomb 3PM Lamentations 6PM Phil 2:5-11; Lk 10:38-42, 11:27-28	<b>Grt&amp;HolySatrdy</b> 19 St Basil's Liturgy 10AM Midnight Office 1130 Rom 6:3-11 Mat 29:1-20		
<b>PASCHA!</b> 20 Agape Vespers 1130A Acts 1:18 John 1:1-17	<b>Bright Monday</b> 21 Acts 1:12-17, 21-26 John 1:18-28	<b>Bright Tuesday</b> 22 Acts 2:14-21 Luke 24:12-35	<b>Bright Wednesday</b> 23 Acts 12:1-11 John 15:17-18:2	<b>Bright Thursday</b> 24 Acts 2:38-43 John 3:1-15	<b>Bright Friday</b> 25 Phil 2:5-11; Lk 10:38-42, 11:27-28	<b>Bright Saturday</b> 26 Vespers 6PM Acts 3:11-16 John 3:22-33		