



Knowing the commandments of the Lord, let this be our way of life: let us feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome strangers, visit those in prison and the sick. Then the Judge of the earth will say even to us: "Come, you whom My Father has blessed, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you!"

Mesonyktikon

## St. Ignatios of Antioch Melkite Church

1003 Merry St., Augusta, GA 30904  
 Parish Administrator: Fr. Miguel Grave de Peralta  
 Parish: 706-738-9388      www.melkite.net      Priest: 706-993-6279

**Meat-Fare Sunday**

**Feb. 27, 2011**

Tone: 7

Eothinon: 7

**Today:** Sunday of the Last Judgement



**This Week:** This week is known as the Week of Abstinence, or Cheese Fare Week. The tradition is to consume meat today for the last time until Pascha. Dairy products are still allowed until next Sunday evening.

**Next Sunday, March 6:** Sunday of Forgiveness, or Cheese-Fare  
**6:30 PM Forgiveness Vespers, St. Augustine Coptic Church**

### Coming events:

March 7, Mon. Clean Monday, Great Lent begins

March 8, Tues. Parish Advisory Council meeting, 6:30 PM

*Publicans' Prayers on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays at 11:00 AM  
 And on 1<sup>st</sup> Saturdays at 5:00 PM*

**Sunday**  
 Orthros 9:15 AM  
 Divine Liturgy 10:00 AM

**Daily**  
 Vespers 5:30 PM

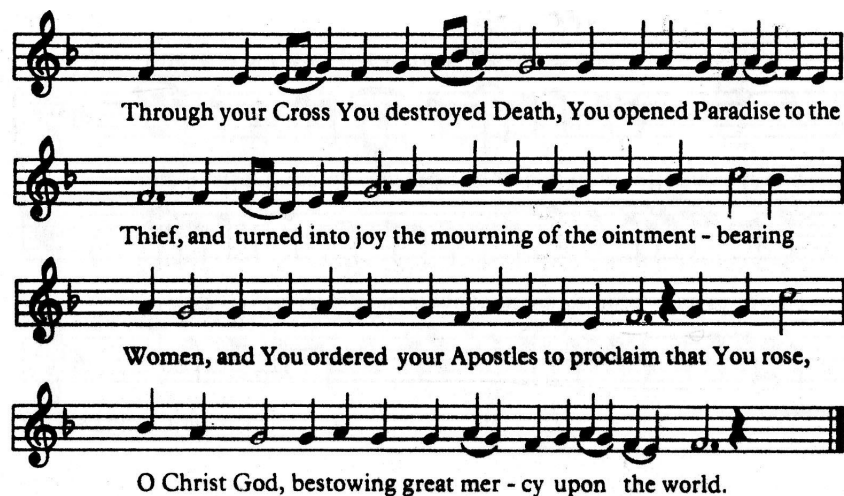
## This Sunday's Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

### Antiphon Prayer (Said at the end of the *Great Synapte*)

O Christ, Our God, You were sent by the Father, not to judge the world, but to save it. We ask You in your boundless Compassion: Assist our weakness. Overcome our selfishness. Teach us to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to serve all people faithfully for your sake. Then we shall deserve to hear your Divine Voice saying: "*Come you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" For You are our Life and our Hope, O Christ God, and to You we render glory, and to your Eternal Father, and your All-holy, Good and Life-giving Spirit, now and always and forever and ever.

### Hymns:

Troparion of the Resurrection, Tone 7



Through your Cross You destroyed Death, You opened Paradise to the  
Thief, and turned into joy the mourning of the ointment - bearing  
Women, and You ordered your Apostles to proclaim that You rose,  
O Christ God, bestowing great mer - cy upon the world.

Troparion of our patron, St. Ignatios of Antioch

Kondakion of Meat-fare, BDW p. 783

O God, when You shall come down upon earth in Your glory, every creature shall tremble before You. A river of fire shall flow before Your judgment-seat, the books shall be opened and all se-

fasting that can perform that transformation, giving us the existential proof that our dependence on food and matter is not total, not absolute, that united to prayer, grace, and adoration, it can itself be spiritual.

All this means that deeply understood, fasting is the only means by which man recovers his true spiritual nature...Fasting is the real fight against the Devil because it is the challenge to that one all-embracing law which makes him the "Prince of this world." Yet if one is hungry and then discovers that he can truly be independent of that hunger, not be destroyed by it but just on the contrary, can transform it into a source of spiritual power and victory, then nothing remains of that great lie in which we have been living since Adam...

Ultimately, to fast means only one thing: *to be hungry* – to go to the limit of that human condition which depends entirely on food, and... to discover that this dependency is not the whole truth about man..It is here, however, that we discover also that fasting as a physical effort is totally meaningless without its spiritual counterpart: "...by fasting and *prayer*." This means that without the corresponding spiritual effort, without feeding ourselves with Divine Reality, without discovering our total dependence on God and God alone, physical fasting would indeed be suicide. If Christ Himself was tempted while fasting, we have not a single chance of avoiding that temptation. Physical fasting, essential as it is, is not only meaningless, it is truly dangerous if it is disconnected from the spiritual effort – from prayer and concentration on God....

It is for this reason that we need first of all a spiritual preparation for the effort of fasting. It consists in asking God for help and also in making our fast God-centered. We should fast for God's sake. We must rediscover our body as the Temple of His Presence. We must recover a religious *respect* for the body, for good, for the very rhythm of life. All this must be done before the actual fast begins so that when we begin to fast, we would be supplied with spiritual weapons, with a vision, with a spirit of fight and victory.

had life in itself and that he, by partaking of that food, could be like God, i.e., have life in himself. To put it very simply: he *believed in food* ...World, food, became his gods, the sources and principles of his life. He became their slave...Man is still Adam, still the slave of “food.” He may claim that he believes in God but God is not his life, his food, the all-embracing content of his existence...His science, his experience, his self-consciousness are all built on that same principle: “by bread alone.” We eat in order to be alive but we are not alive in God. This is the sin of all sins. This is the verdict of death pronounced on our life...

Hunger is that state in which we realize our dependence on something else – when we urgently and essentially need food – showing thus that we have no life in ourselves...It is, in other words, the time when we face the ultimate question: on what does my life depend? And, since the question is not an academic one but is felt with my entire body, it is also the time of temptation. Satan came to Adam in Paradise; he came to Christ in the desert. He came to two hungry men and said: eat, for your hunger is the proof that you depend entirely on food, that your life is in food. And Adam believed and ate; but Christ rejected that temptation and said: man shall not live by bread alone but by God. He refused to accept that cosmic lie which Satan imposed on the world, making that lie a self-evident truth not even debated any more, the foundation of our entire world view, of science, medicine, and perhaps even of religion. By doing this, Christ restored that relationship between food, life, and God which Adam broke, and which we still break every day.

What then is fasting for us Christians? It is our entrance and participation in that experience of Christ Himself by which He liberates us from the total dependence on food, matter, and the world. By no means is our liberation a full one. Living still in the fallen world, in the world of the Old Adam, being part of it, we still depend on food. But just as our death – through which we still must pass – has become by virtue of Christ’s Death a passage into life, the food we eat and the life it sustains can be life in God and for God...the daily bread we receive from God can be in this life and in this world that which strengthens us, our communion with God, rather than that which separates us from God. Yet it is only

crets revealed. On that day, O Just Judge, deliver me from eternal fire and make me worthy to stand at Your right!

**Epistle of Meat-Fare, 1 Corinthians 8: 8-16** (p. 337)

**Prokimenon (Tone 2)**

My strength and my courage is the Lord,  
and he has been my Savior.

**Stichon:** The Lord has chastised me through his teaching,  
yet he has not delivered me to death.

**Reading** from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians  
Brethren, food does not commend us to God. For neither shall we gain any advantage if we eat, nor suffer any loss if we do not. And yet, beware lest perhaps this right of yours become a stumbling-block to the weak. For if a man sees you who “have knowledge” sitting at table in a place dedicated to idols, will not his conscience, weak as it is, be emboldened to eat idol offerings? And through your “knowledge” the weak one will perish, the brother for whom Christ died. Now, when you sin in this way against the brethren and wound their weak conscience, you are sinning against Christ. Therefore if food scandalizes my brother, I will never again eat any more meat so as not to scandalize my brother.

Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? And if to others I am not an apostle, yet to you I am. For you are the seal set upon my apostleship in the Lord.

**Alleluia (Tone 2)**

The lord shall hear you on the day of distress;  
the name of the God of Jacob shall defend you.

**Stichon:** O Lord, save your people and bless your inheritance.

**Gospel of Meat-Fare Matthew 25: 31-46** (*Last Judgment*)

The Lord said, “At that time when the Son of Man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory; and before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another, as the shepherd

separates the sheep from the goats; and he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the king will say to those on his right hand, Come, blessed of my Father, take possession of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you covered me; sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the just will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you; or thirsty, and give you to drink? And when did we see you a stranger, and take you in; or naked, and clothe you? Or when did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?' And answering, the King will say to them, 'Amen I say to you, every time you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me.' Then he will say to those on his left hand, 'Go away from me, accursed ones, into the everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his ministers. For I was hungry, and you did not give me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take me in; naked and you did not clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Amen I say to you as long as you did not do it for one of these least ones, you did not do it for me.' And these will go into everlasting punishment, but the just into everlasting life."

**Hymn to the Theotokos:** *It is truly meet...*

**Kinonikon:** *Praise the Lord...*

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February 27: Our Holy Father Procopius of Decapolis (9th c.)

He was from Decapolis near the Sea of Galilee, and entered monastic life as a youth. When the Emperor Leo the Isaurian began his persecution of the holy icons, Procopius, who had previously spent his life in hiddenness and silence, boldly stood forth to defend the true Orthodox veneration of the icons. For this he was

cruelly tortured and imprisoned. When the cruel Leo died and the icons were restored to the churches, Procopius returned to his monastery, where he lived in peace to a great old age. The Prologue concludes, 'In old age, he entered into God's Kingdom, where he beheld with joy the living angels and saints whose images were on the honoured icons on earth.'

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On Fasting— from *Great Lent*, by Alexander Schmemmann

There is no Lent without fasting. It seems, however, that many people today either do not take fasting seriously, or, if they do, misunderstand its real spiritual goals. For some people, fasting consists in a symbolic "giving up" of something; for some others, it is a scrupulous observance of dietary regulations. But in both cases, seldom is fasting referred to the total lenten effort...

In the Orthodox teaching, sin is not only the transgression of a rule leading to punishment; it is always a mutilation of life given to us by God. It is for this reason that the story of the original sin is presented to us as an act of eating. For food is means of life; it is that which keeps us alive. But here lies the whole question: what does it mean to be alive and what does "life" mean? For us today this term has a primarily biological meaning: life is precisely that which entirely depends on food, and more generally, on the physical world. But for the Holy Scripture and for Christian Tradition, this life "by bread alone" is identified with death because it is mortal life, because death is a principle always at work in it...

The world and food were...created as means of communion with God, and only if accepted for God's sake were to give life. In itself food has no life and cannot give life. Only God has Life and is Life. In food itself God – and not calories – was the principle of life. ..

The unfathomable tragedy of Adam is that he ate for its own sake. More than that, he ate "apart" from God in order to be independent of Him. And if he did it, it is because he believed that food