

**ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST ANTIOCHIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH**

MARCH, 2017 NEWSLETTER

10383 ALBION ROAD

V. Rev. Father Andrew Harmon

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Website—www.stmattroyalton.org

SATURDAY VESPERS—5 p.m. (except 6 p.m., 3/18)

SUNDAY SCHOOL—September-May, 9 a.m.

CONFESSION—after Vespers and 9:45 a.m., Sunday

SUNDAY MATINS—9 a.m.

DIVINE LITURGY—10 a.m.

e-mail: fatherharmon@wowway.com

DEACONS---Rev. Deacon Macarius Tolbert; Rev. Deacon Basil Vazquez

EXTRA SERVICES IN MARCH

GREAT COMPLINE WITH CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE—The third part----

Thursday, March 2----6:30 p.m.

GREAT COMPLINE (without the canon)---Mondays, March 13, 20, 27, 6:30 p.m.

PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGIES---Wednesdays, March 1, 8, 15, 22 and Thursday, March 30-----
6:30 p.m. The “sermonettes”---“Glimpses Into Galatians”. “Black Fast” potluck meals afterwards.

AKATHIST TO THE THEOTOKOS----Fridays, March 3, 10, 17, 31----“Black Fast” potlucks, 6
p.m., *before* services. **Services** are at 7. **Saints Alive! classes** after service at 8 p.m.

ANNUNCIATION DAY IS MARCH 25—Our schedule for this great Feast:

Friday, March 24, ----“Black Fast” potluck, 6:00 p.m.

-----Vespers with 4th canon of Akathist & Artoklasia, 7 p.m.

-----*No Saints Alive! class this night*

Saturday, March 25---Festal Matins, 9 a.m.

---Liturgy, 10 a.m.

Potluck afterwards----the Lenten Fast is lessened for this joyous day---fish, wine, & oil are okay
*On this day, we celebrate the day when Archangel announced to St. Mary that she would be the Holy
Theotokos. One of our greatest holy days----please come!*

**LITTLE COMPLINE WITH CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE AND READING OF
LIFE OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT----Wednesday, March 29, 6:30 p.m. No Wednesday potluck this
week.**

***One change from usual Saturday Vespers at 5 p.m.---on Saturday, March 18, we will attend the 6
p.m. Vespers at Cleveland St. George in conjunction with diocese Spring Meeting.***

**CHANTING CLASS BEGINNING----It will meet on Saturdays at 4 p.m. (before 5 p.m. Vespers), beginning on
March 4. Speak with Anthony [Harmon---anthonysharmon@gmail.com](mailto:anthonysharmon@gmail.com) 440-228-8765 for more info.**

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS, STUDY GROUPS, & MINISTRY TEAMS

WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP---Friday, March 17, 1 p.m. at Jean Fadil's, 477 Cranston

Drive, Berea. All women are welcome! Call Joanne Vazquez, 440-239-9464, for more info.

WEST BIBLE STUDY—5:45 p.m., Saturday, March 11 (right after Vespers at 5)

We are studying the book of Daniel---all welcome!

SOUTH BIBLE STUDY—6:30 p.m., Tuesdays, March 7 & 14, at Dr. Craig & Cindy George’s,

9451 Sherwood Trail, Brecksville. We are studying the book of Romans—all are welcome!

NORTH BIBLE STUDY---Tuesday, March 28, 6:30 p.m., at Marianna Russyn’s, 27001 Knickerbocker Rd. Bay Village (in apartment building social room—1st floor). We are studying the book of Revelation---please come!

TEEN GROUP -----Teen/Parent Bible Study---after church, Sunday, March 26---*Location to be announced.*

ST. HERMAN’S MINISTRY TEAM---We will be cooking and serving meals for the homeless at St. Herman Shelter on **Sunday, March 19. Can you do the cooking? Contact Deacon Basil, 440-665-3591, for details.....thank you! And if you would like to help with the serving of the meal at 5:30, please let Deacon Basil know.** If you can bring desserts to St. Matthew’s that morning, we can bring them to serve. *Thank you to those who worked the February meal---Ron Hakaim (who cooked) and Jack Palivoda*

HOLY BREAD BAKING MINISTRY TEAM-- We have a rotation of bakers who prepare the bread for the Divine Liturgy. If you would like to be one of them and bake about once every 6 weeks or so, contact Joanne Vazquez, 440-239-9464 Training available!

MINISTRY TO THE HOMELESS----Some of our parishioners will be delivering personal necessity bags, sandwiches, clothes, water, socks, etc. to the homeless on the streets of Cleveland after church on **Sunday, March 19.** If you can help by donating items, let Josie Katzbach 440-668-9831. **ESPECIALLY NEEDED NOW**---- **SOCKS** (see big box on table in hall) **AND WATER.** *And please remember the need for cash funding---please put your donations in the alms box in church narthex. And a new need---we are “adopting” some folks in need of tents. Can you donate a tent?---any size is fine. Either new or used but in good shape and ready to use...Just let Josie know.*
PARISH FOOD PANTRY----**Thank you to all who helped with** our Christmas food deliveries and toys for needy children ministry---to those who donated, those who “packed up”, & those who delivered! 17 homes received help and 27 children received gifts. The food pantry was totally literally cleaned out---so now we need to build it back up for Holy Week deliveries. If you can help, please bring in non-perishable food---you can put it on table in hall by door to room next to kitchen.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP IS BEGINNING---Interested? Need info? Contact the leaders: Wesam Alsaifi, 440-502-7780 & Samuel Harmon, 216-598-9230

COLLEGE STUDENT CARE PACKAGES-----Our annual outreach mailing program for our parish’s college students is now underway. Please bring in week by week items that will be packaged and mailed to them in care packages later in the school year. There is a marked box on the table in the hall. Watch Sunday bulletins for what the featured item to bring in is each week...but if you don’t see that, you can, of course, bring in anything any time: snacks, gum, candy, small cereal boxes, hot cocoa, popcorn, small icons, etc., etc.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES NEEDED We are now e-mailing most of our parish newsletters to save on paper, copying, and mailing. If you received this copy by regular mail, but do have e-mail, please get your address to us. Just send a quick e-mail to fatherharmon@wowway.com or call 440-582-5673 **THANK YOU!**

PITA BREAD FOR SALE

Our Sisterhood will be selling pita bread after liturgy in the hall during coffeetime on Sunday, March 26

DONATIONS NEEDED----

---copy paper, either 8 x11 or 8 x 14

---stamps for church mailings

-flowers for Veneration of Cross ceremony, March 19 Contact Beth Farage Snyder, 216-970-7160, bdfarage@gmail.com

MORE MEMORIAL WHEAT PREPARERS NEEDED—We have several preparers who make the wheat for memorial services, but we need some more... If you would like to be a wheat preparer, contact Joanne Vazquez, 440-239-9464 Training available!

MARCH ALTAR BOY SCHEDULE

TEAM A, 3/19

Gregory Tolbert, captain
Jacob Kash
Joseph Mozden
Edward Sevastos

TEAM B, 3/26

Fuad Zogheib, captain
Samir Amer
Ricky Farris
Evan Sevastos

TEAM C, 3/5

Justin Nassif, captain
Joseph Ibrahim
Grant Johnson
Jed Zogheib

TEAM D, 3/12

Shadi Zogheib, captain
Eli Haddad
Nicholas Katsaros
Emad Zogheib

MARCH GREETERS SCHEDULE—

3/19—Georgette Dye, Judy Yanik

3/26---Fred Bourjaily, Penny Sent

3/5---Scott & Simona Palmer

3/12---Ralph & Elle Parker

MARCH WOMEN'S MONTH USHERS SCHEDULE

March 5

Judy Yanik
Georgette Dye

March 12

Georgette Dye
Nouhad Zoghaib

March 19

Simona Palmer
Susan Joseph

March 26

Jean Fadil
Cindy George

MARCH WOMEN'S MONTH EPISTLE READERS SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS---

March 5—Camille Patrick

March 19--- Susan Joseph

March 12---Lisa Palivoda

March 26--- Judy Yanik

Annunciation Day Liturgy, Saturday, March 25-----Michael Lieberman

Soul Saturday Liturgy----**Saturday, February 18**----Judy Yanik

Lenten Pre-Sanctified Evening Liturgies—Wed., March 1—Mark Katzbach; Wed. March 8—Cindy George
Wed., March 15—Rose Sahley; Wed. March 22—Lisa Palivoda; Thursday, March 30---Michael Lieberman

CAN YOU SPONSOR A MEAL FOR THE POOR?

It costs about \$100 for us to serve our monthly meal to the poor at St. Herman's. Would you like to help in a very special way by sponsoring one meal by donating \$100? You can do this either by yourself or together with another family or families. Please mark your donation clearly!

THANK YOU -----

--to Dolores Kaleal and Anthony & Judy Yanik for hosting our February 5 Monthly Community Lunch!

--Kosta & Dijana Bokjanc for copy paper for the church

SAINTS DAY PRAYERS---Children whose Saints Days fall in February will be honored and prayed for after the liturgy on Sunday, March 26.

NORTH ROYALTON MINISTERS' ASSOCIATION---COMMUNITY MONTHLY MEAL

This ministry has been organized with Orthodox (2 parishes), Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Nazarene, & Methodist participation. The basic plan is for the parishes to go together to serve a hot meal to all who can come---the target group originally was the needy, but all are welcome! The next meal will be Sunday, March 26, 3-5 p.m., at St. Albert Catholic Church on Wallings Road. If you can help in any way, contact Father Andrew.

THE PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY

Canon law does not permit celebration of the Liturgy on weekdays in Lent due to the solemnity of those days and the joyous nature of the Liturgy. However, due to increased spiritual struggle during Lent, the Eucharist is needed more than ever. Therefore, our Orthodox Tradition allows receiving Communion from the reserved Host (from Sunday) on Wednesday & Fridays in Lent. The most common Antiochian practice is to have it on Wednesdays only due to having the Akathist service on Fridays. This service, called the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, is very ornate and solemn and one of the most beautiful of all. We will have it here each Wednesday in Lent at 6:30 p.m., beginning March 1, followed by a potluck meal ("black fast", please).----*except for Wednesday, March 29 when a different service is held. So that week, the Pre-Sanctified Liturgy and potluck will be on Thursday, March 30.* In order to prepare to receive Holy Communion in the evening, the minimal preparation is to fast after a light strict fast food lunch if one is not able to fast from after breakfast or fast all day.

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

Applications are on table in hall for the Elinor Bourjaily Scholarships for college and Antiochian Village Camp. For more info, contact Gail Malaniak, 440-552-4586, gailmeen@gmail.com

HOUSEBLESSINGS HAVE NOW ENDED DUE TO THE START OF LENT----120 have been done. There are still a few left which can be done after Pascha..... If yours hasn't yet been done, see Father Andrew to schedule it for after Pascha.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS & WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Birthday & Many Years to-----

1---Kaylyn Johnson, Rachel Lane
2---Brandon Campenza, Adam Daher, Michael Rotundo,
Anthony Yanik
3---Maya Johnson
5---Judy Yanik
7---Xenia Amer, Charles Burhen, Jennifer Moujaes
8---Kristen Johnson
10---Christopher Harmon, Tony Latina
11---Marybeth Sevastos
13---Francine Comstock
21---Estefan Saada
22---Maya Childress
23---Natalie Roma
24---John Roma
25---Judy Burhen
27---Scott Palmer
29---Michael Farris, Michael Katsaros, Khouriyeh Ruth Meena
30---Nawal Yared
31---Jeffrey Joseph

Wedding Anniversaries

29-- Deacon Basil & Joanne Vazquez

Send a card or make a call and make someone's special day a little more special!

IF YOU ARE NOT ON THE PARISHIONER BIRTHDAY/ANNIVERSARY LIST, CALL FR. ANDREW!

THE GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE

The Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete is a penitential canon of hymns written in the 600's A.D. by St. Andrew, bishop of the island of Crete. It is commonly served during the 1st week of Lent to assist us in our repentance as we begin this season of spiritual struggle and growth. Because it is quite long to do in one service, it is usually broken into sections on different nights. We will do it in 3 sections in conjunction with the service of Great Compline on 3 evenings in the 1st week of Lent---Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday, February 27 & 28 and March 2. **IT WILL BE AT 6 P.M. ON MONDAY AND AT 6:30 ON TUESDAY & THURSDAY.**

SAINTS ALIVE!

Once again, we will have presenters teach and lead discussion about various Saints on Lenten Friday evenings---March 10 is still open. Let Fr. Andrew know if you can lead it.

MINISTRY TEAMS

St. Matthew Church has been busy establishing Ministry Teams. These teams are essential in making our church run more smoothly. If everyone can be a part of a team as a leader or as a helper, you and all of us in the church will greatly benefit. Please look on the wall in the hall near the water fountain to find a list of teams and of the people who have already signed up. Consider adding your name to the list as God leads you to do so.

Some of the ministry teams that still need leaders are: 1. Altar Guild (taking care of altar cloths, altar boy robes, etc.) 2. Worship matters oversight (for readers, altar boys, Handmaidens) ; 3. Potluck coordinator---(not to coordinate the meals, but to find individuals to be in charge of individual potlucks.)

“Let all things be done decently and in good order”---I Corinthians 14:40

EASTERN ORTHODOX WOMEN'S GUILD MEETING---Saturday, March 11, 9 a.m., at St. Mary Romanian Cathedral, 3256 Warren Road, Cleveland. Divine Liturgy & Memorial Service. Program: "What Every Orthodox Christian Should Know", led by Subdeacon Leon Felon.

REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS TO COOK AND SERVE AT ST. HERMAN SHELTER

We would like to ask for 12 volunteers to cook meals in a year to help the poor. The goal is to have enough cooks so each only cooks once a year. This entails preparing our monthly meal at St. Herman Orthodox Homeless Shelter for about 125 people. *Please do not let this number intimidate you, because we will have simple recipes for you to use that work well for such a number.* You can also come up with your own recipe or buy prepared meals from GFS. It is a simple thing to do but goes a long way in ministering to those in need. It costs about \$100-\$125---you can be reimbursed by the parish or, if you wish, you can donate the meal. You can prepare it at home, or in our church kitchen, or at St. Herman's. Serving begins at 5:30 and you can stay to serve if you like.

We are also looking for volunteers to be servers of the meals. It is a wonderful way to express your care for others---you will be at St. Herman's about one hour to actually serve the meal to the poor.

The scriptures encourage caring for others as if we are caring for Christ Himself---Matthew 25:31-46. May God grant you guidance as you pray about and ponder this request. To get more information or to volunteer, please see me at church or call me at 440-665-3591-----*Deacon Basil*

THE LENTEN FAST

Great Lent is a time to especially work on spiritual disciplines to help us grow in Christ. These disciplines include such things as extra worship services, beginning or strengthening the habit of daily prayer, going to Confession, more Bible reading, almsgiving-----and fasting. Fasting is a discipline meant to help us in several ways---learning self-denial, gaining in self-control, helping us to focus more on God, allowing us to spend less on food in order to give more alms, etc.

The Lenten fast involves both eating less and giving up certain foods. Throughout Lent, we should eat less and avoid snacks, in addition to abstaining from certain foods.

Lent this year is from February 27 to April 7. During Lent, we give up meat and animal foods (such as eggs, dairy products, & fish), wine, and olive oil. Shellfish are permitted. On Annunciation Day, March 25, wine, oil, and fish are consumed. And wine and olive oil are allowed on all Saturdays and Sundays. During Holy Week, April 8-15, the fast is the same as in Lent itself, except that wine, olive oil, and fish are allowed on Palm Sunday, April 9. Also, Holy & Great Friday and Holy & Great Saturday, April 14 & 15, are to be observed as especially strict fast days, with as little eating and drinking as possible.

As with all fasting, the Church's Lenten fast allows adjustments for children, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and those with health problems that require certain foods. Also, those who are new to fasting may need to begin with a less strict fast and then gradually get stricter year by year. However, we should remember that unless we strict fastly enough to make it hard, it will be of little use to us. One should always feel free to speak with one's spiritual father about how to personally observe, and make the best spiritual use of, the Lenten Fast.

The Bible and the Saints are clear that fasting is not a way to earn salvation, but a tool to help us grow. We must guard against pride when we fast and concentrate most on fasting from sin---gossip, pride, lust, etc.

The prescribed Lenten Fast is sometimes called "black fast" to differentiate it from less strict fasting, such as just giving up meat. How strictly each person follows the recommended fast is not other people's business. We should only be concerned with our own fasting, not judging others for what they eat. However, when we gather together during Lent as a church family, we should abide by the Church's Lenten fast---therefore, we should keep all of our parish meals and coffeetimes during Lent "black fast."

CONGRATULATIONS—

--to Doug Snyder & Beth Farage who were married on February 11!

--John Nersesian & Jean Rafeedie who were married in Detroit on February 19!

May God grant both couples many years!

LENTEN CONFESSIONS

All Orthodox Christians should go to the sacrament of Confession during Lent or Holy Week. At St. Matthew's, confessions are heard after Saturday Vespers and at 9:45 a.m. Sunday; or before or after other services---or by appointment at other times. If you have questions about the details, just call or e-mail Father Andrew.

NEXT PARISH NEWSLETTER will be printed the week of March 26. Please give any info for it to Father Andrew by then.

**ST. MATTHEW ORTHODOX CHURCH
10383 ALBION ROAD
NORTH ROYALTON, OH 44133**

THE AKATHIST SERVICE FOR THE HOLY THEOTOKOS

The Little Compline with the Akathist Hymn, common called simply the Akathist, was written in Constantinople in the 600's A.D. At that time, the city was besieged by the non-Christian Avar barbarians. The people put their hope in the Protectoress of the city, the Holy Theotokos, St. Mary.

Through her prayers to God, the city was saved. This hymn of thanks to God and the Virgin was written and the people gathered to sing it in the Cathedral of Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia). To show honor to the Theotokos, all stood for the whole service. Thence, the name "akathist" which means "not sitting" in Greek. Antiochian practice is to have the service on the first five Fridays of Lent. However, this year it will not be held in its fullness on Friday, March 24, being it will be pre-empted by Vespers for the great holy day of the Annunciation. At St. Matthew's, we have the Akathist service at 7 p.m., preceded by a Black Fast potluck at 6 p.m. and followed by the Saints Alive! lay-led class on various Saints in the hall afterwards at 8.