

**ST. MATTHEW THE EVANGELIST  
ANTIOCHIAN  
ORTHODOX CHURCH  
MARCH 2024, NEWSLETTER:  
10383 ALBION ROAD, N. ROYALTON, OH 44133  
P.O. Box 33183, N. Royalton, OH 44133**

**Father Andrew's Contact Info: [fatherharmon@outlook.com](mailto:fatherharmon@outlook.com)  
cell: 440-539-1116 home: 440-826-0662 church: 440-582-5673  
Website: [www.stmattroyalton.org](http://www.stmattroyalton.org)**

**SATURDAY VESPERS—5 p.m.  
SUNDAY MATINS—8:50 a.m. SUNDAY LITURGY—10 a.m.  
CONFESSION—after Vespers and during Sunday Matins & by  
appointment.**

**MANY EXTRA SERVICES IN MARCH LEADING UP TO LENT AND FOR  
THE FIRST PART OF LENT-----**

**SOUL SATURDAY LITURGY & MEMORIAL SERVICE---Saturday, March  
9, 10 a.m. (Matins at 9). You may turn in (either ahead of time or on that  
day) of names of departed loved ones to be prayed for in the liturgy and  
memorial service.**

**FORGIVENESS VESPERS FOR EVE OF LENT—Sunday, March 17, 6 pm  
Preceded by meatless potluck meal at 5. At this service we ask God's  
forgiveness and also forgiveness from each other as the Great Fast begins.**

**MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 19, 21—6:30 pm. Great  
Compline with the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete.**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20—6:30 pm. Pre-Sanctified Liturgy. Followed by  
potluck Lenten meal.**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 22—7 pm. Akathist for the Theotokos. Preceded by  
potluck Lenten meal at 6. Followed by Saints Alive! Class at 8 pm (taught  
by a layperson).**

**SATURDAY, MARCH 23—Vespers, 5 pm, as usual.**

**SUNDAY, MARCH 24—SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY PAN-ORTHODOX  
EVENING VESPERS—4 pm, at St. Theodosius Cathedral, 733  
Starkweather, Cleveland.**

## **EXTRA SERVICES AFTER THE FIRST WEEK OF LENT---**

**ANNUNCIATION DAY EVENING LITURGY**----Monday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 6:30

p.m. Followed by potluck supper----fish, wine, & oil are fine as the Lenten Fast is relaxed in celebration of this great Feast Day---when the Archangel Gabriel announced to the Holy Theotokos that she would give birth Christ 9 months later.

**GREAT COMPLINE**---Tuesday, March 26, 6:30 p.m.

**PRE-SANCTIFIED LITURGY**---Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. Followed by potluck meal---strict fasting food, please.

**AKATHIST FOR THE THEOTOKOS**---Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. Preceded by potluck meal, 6 p.m. Strict fasting food, please. Followed by SAINTS ALIVE! class (taught by a layperson) at 8 p.m.

## **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, Confession, more Bible reading, almsgiving, and fasting.

Fasting is a discipline meant to help us in many ways: learning self-denial, gaining self-control, helping us to focus more on God and less on food, allowing us to spend less on food and, thus, give more to the poor.

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

Lent this year is from March 18<sup>th</sup> through April 26<sup>th</sup>. During Lent, Orthodox give up meat and animal foods (such as eggs, dairy, & fish) plus wine and olive oil. Shellfish are eaten. On Annunciation Day, March 25, wine, oil, and fish are consumed. And wine and oil are used on Saturdays and Sundays in Lent. During Holy Week, April 27<sup>th</sup> through May 4<sup>th</sup>, the fast is the same as in Lent itself, except that wine, olive oil, and fish are used on Palm Sunday. Also, Holy & Great Friday and Holy & Great Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 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 fasting allows for 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 "tighten up" year by year---on the other hand, some new folks do fine with just diving right in. We should always remember that unless we fast strictly enough to make it hard, it will be of little value to us. One should always feel free to speak to 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 is 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 distinguish it from less strict fasting. How strictly each person follows the recommended fast is not anyone else's business. We should only be concerned with our own fasting and not

judge what others eat. ***A good rule of thumb: fast yourself as strictly as you can-- and pay no attention to what anyone else eats.***

***However, when we gather together at church during Lent at coffeetime and meals, we should all abide by the full Lenten fast.***

### **THE GREAT CANON OF ST. ANDREW OF CRETE**

The Great Compline 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 prayed in the first week of Lent to assist us in our repentance as we begin this season of spiritual struggle and growth. The service is broken down in various ways in various parishes. We will do it in 3 sections (1 per night) in conjunction with the service of Great Compline at 6:30 on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, March 18, 20, & 21, in the first week of Lent. Then the service is done with all 3 sections in it later in Lent in April. In March, Great Compline without the Great Canon will be done at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup>.

**LENTEN PSALTER GROUP**—Begins March 18. If you wish to participate, it involves reading one Kathisma from the book of Psalms every day from March 18 through April 26. You read in your own home and whatever time of the day works for you. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Kh. Bonnie at [bonniewharmon@gmail.com](mailto:bonniewharmon@gmail.com) or text (216)258-4837.

*No other book so glorifies God as does the Psalter. It profits the soul; it glorifies God together with the angels, and exalts and extols with a powerful voice, and imitates the angels. At times, it flogs the demons and drives them out, and causes them much weeping and injury. It prays to God for kings and princes, and for the whole world. With the Psalter you can pray to God even for yourself, for it is the greatest and most exalted of books.*

*--Basil the Great*

### **PARISH ORGANIZATIONS, STUDY GROUPS, MINISTRY TEAMS**

**WEST BIBLE STUDY**—Saturday, March 16, 6 pm at the church.  
Studying Revelation.

**WOMEN'S PRAYER GROUP**—Tuesday, March 19, 10:30 a.m. All women welcome! The location is at Tara Reidy's, 274 Elmwood, Berea. For more info, call Sandy Tolbert, 440-773-9162. We're reading and discussing the book, "The Ascetic of Love."

**SOUTH BIBLE STUDY**—Tuesday, March 5, at Craig & Cindy George's, 9451 Sherwood Trail, Brecksville. All are welcome. The study will be on the first part of Genesis. Just one meeting in March.  
**YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY**—Saturday, March 9, 6 p.m., at the church. Bible, food, fellowship—Beginning Gospel of St. Mark.  
**TEEN CLUB**—Monthly meeting after liturgy, Sunday, March 31.  
**ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP MEETING**—After liturgy, Sunday, March 10.

**MARTHA MINISTRIES IS NOW UNDERWAY**—This is a ministry to provide meals for families in need of some help—new babies, illness, grieving, etc. If you can help, see/email/call Erin Musarra at 440-799-0838.

**ST. HERMAN'S MINISTRY TEAM**—Contact Deacon Basil, 440-665-3591 to help with our monthly meal serving at the shelter on Sunday, March 17.

**MONTHLY DELIVERY OF FOOD, CLOTHING, ETC. TO HOMELESS ON STREETS OF DOWNTOWN CLEVELAND**---Sunday, March 24. Alms box to help this outreach is near hall entrance.

**HOMESCHOOL ENRICHMENT GROUP**---It meets every Friday from 9:30-1:30 at St. Matthew's. For more info, contact Olivia at [oharmon15@gmail.com](mailto:oharmon15@gmail.com) or call (440)220-2624,

**MOM AND TOTS GROUP**—A new group for moms with babies and toddlers has begun. Will meet every Friday around 10:45 a.m. during Homeschool Enrichment Group. Contact Oliva at [oharmon15@gmail.com](mailto:oharmon15@gmail.com) or call (440)220-2624.

**CHESS CLUB**—Meets after church on March 10.

**KNIT/CROCHET GROUP**—Do you knit or crochet? Would you like to learn? Call Lisa Bowden, 440-667-2767, if you have any questions. Not meeting in March.

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL IS GOING STRONG!**

The number of children has gone up this year and it is an exciting time for our education program.

Thanks to all who are teaching and helping!

There are classes for from age 3 through 19---parents, please have your child attend this Sunday!

For more info, contact our co-superintendants----

Gail Malaniak 440-552-4586 [gailmeen@gmail.com](mailto:gailmeen@gmail.com)  
Dawn Heatwole 304-995-7882 [dkheatwole@yahoo.com](mailto:dkheatwole@yahoo.com)

**NEW PARISH MEMBERS IN JANUARY & FEBRUARY**

**Ryan Cobb** (by Holy Chrismation)

19221 Royalton Road

Strongsville 44149

330-635-0121

[Rdcobb10@zoominternet.net](mailto:Rdcobb10@zoominternet.net)

**Sami Conway**

Alexander, Klementine

temporary address---

Motel 6 7219 Engle Rd.

Middleburg Hts 44130

216-858-0681

[ms.s.popeko@gmail.com](mailto:ms.s.popeko@gmail.com)

**Bud Linder**

Pleasant Valley Care Center

Parma

(Sadly, Bud fell asleep in Christ a short time after joining our parish.. Memory Eternal!)

**OUR CURRENT CATECHUMENS ARE:** Michael Asta; Adam, Stevi, & Liv James; Jamie & Lucas Domonkos, Tiara Robinson, D’Lorenzo Thomas, Zachary Beltz We pray for them at each liturgy---please pray for them also during the week as they prepare to enter the Orthodox Faith by either Holy Baptism or Holy Chrismation.

**CONGRATULATIONS!---**

Ryan Cobb & Samantha were wed on January 13<sup>th</sup>.

Sophie Michelle, granddaughter of George & Florentina Popa, was baptized on February 24<sup>th</sup>.

Eleni Elizabeth, daughter of Michael & Erin Musarra, was baptized on February 25<sup>th</sup>.

Ryan Cobb entered the Orthodox Faith by Holy Chrismation on January 4<sup>th</sup>.

Zoe Elizabeth, daughter of Patrick & Laura Allen, was born on February 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **OUR CONDOLENCES TO----**

---The family of Bud Linder on his falling asleep in Christ on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

---The family of Faye Farris on her falling asleep in Christ on February 19<sup>th</sup>

May their memories be eternal!

### **PRISON MINISTRY**

This new ministry will be in conjunction with the national Orthodox Christian Prison Ministry. We will have a ZOOM meeting with their director, Mark Santana, after liturgy (12:30 pm) on Sunday, March 31. If you wish to get involved or just want more info for now, please attend! It is possible to help with prison ministry even without ever going inside a prison. For more info, contact our local prison ministry leader, Vincent Defilippo at 330-352-6678, vdefilippo@neo.rr.com.

**OCLife ST. MATTHEW CHURCH**--- will once again be hosting a Booth at the "Bringing America Back to Life" conference at Embassy Suites in Independence. The dates are March 8 & 9 from 8:00-6:30 each day. If you are interested in helping with this, please use the sign-up sheet in the Hall or see Lisa Palivoda or Cindy George. This is always a fun event with a great opportunity to talk to others about the Orthodox faith.

### **ANNUAL PARISH RETREAT**

**Led by Fr. Josiah Trenham of St.  
Andrew Parish in Riverside,  
California**

**Weekend of September 22**

**Please mark your calendars!  
More details later**



# SAVE THE DATE

## 2024 DIOCESE OF TOLEDO PARISH LIFE CONFERENCE

All Saints and Holy Transfiguration invite you to join us for a few days of Christian fellowship, prayer, and fun for all ages. Whether you are new to the Diocese or have been attending PLCs for many years, we welcome each of you and your families. We look forward to seeing you and getting to know you at the Toledo Diocese Parish Life Conference in Chicago-Land in June 2024!

### DATE

June 26-29

Wednesday - Saturday

### LOCATION

Chicago Marriott Oak Brook

1401 W 22nd St, Oak Brook, IL 60523



St. Matthew Orthodox Church

10383 Albion Road

North Royalton, OH 44133