The Benefits of Fasting: “Patience, Gentleness, and Self-Control”
By: Fr. Timothy Cook

With Lent on the horizon, this is the time of year when I start to get a lot of questions about fasting. Fasting is a major part of being an Orthodox Christian, since, in a given year, we end up fasting a little less than half of that time. Lent accounts for the biggest chunk of those fast days, so it makes sense that we’d think about it more right now about now.

The questions I hear about fasting, however, are usually focused on the “how,” and the “when.” What exactly is it ok to eat? Do we really not eat any meat for the whole fast? Do eggs count as meat? Do I have to fast on my birthday? The question we don’t really ask is, “why,” or perhaps, “what are the benefits of the fast?”

So, what are the benefits of the Orthodox food fast?

It helps us to pray. The foods we fast from are all “heavy foods,” meaning that they are more of an aid to sleep rather than to prayer. Think of Thanksgiving dinner: after all that turkey and pie, all we want to do is take a nap! By eating less of these heavy foods, and less in general, we are able to be more alert and attentive in general, and in our prayers.

It helps us to give. The second major thing our “fast from” foods have in common is that they tend to be more expensive, especially the meat. Fasting is intended to help us save money on groceries so we have more to share with our neighbor.

It teaches us self-control. Obviously, there are lots of ways for us to learn (and practice) self-control. Because food is (a) necessary and (b) something we often use to excess without realizing, food is an easy place to begin learning and practicing self-control.

It teaches us the difference between that which is necessary and that which is excess. Part of the Orthodox fast is simply eating less. Rather than taking two or three servings until we are full or over-full, the Church calls us to leave the table while still a little hungry. The point isn’t to starve us, only to teach us that we actually need less than our appetites might suggest and helps us to rule the appetite rather than allowing the appetite to rule us.

It teaches us to relate to God through our food, because our fast is not just an exercise in self-control, but an offering to God. If we practice being thankful to God even when we are eating less, we learn to give thanks to God for all meals.

These are all benefits of the food fast, and I daresay that there are many others. But these virtues that are nurtured by the fast shouldn’t be limited just to our relationship with food. We struggle with self-control in many other areas of our lives. We struggle with many other appetites and passions, most of which are far more dangerous than our passion for food.

Father’s message continued on page 2...
Father’s Message…
Learning to regulate ourselves in something small like our food makes it that much easier to regulate ourselves in other things, like our prayer routines. A “good Lent” only begins with the food fast.

One of the pitfalls of Lent and fasting in general is that we become so focused on what we’re eating (or not eating) that we forget to pray, become short-tempered, and lose self-control rather than gaining it. The food fast is intended to help us also begin to fast from anger, selfishness, impatience, laziness, thoughtlessness, and all of our passions – leading us instead into the fruits of the Spirit: “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” (Galatians 5:22-23) Fasting from food forces us to live our lives with intention and, done properly, that intention should spread to every aspect of our lives, so that in every way and every moment we enter more deeply into the Kingdom.

-Fr. Timothy

ALTAR VIGIL CANDLES
12/22 - Successful Operation & Better Health for Paula Dawson by Debra Ahejew
12/22 - Better Health for Jeff Daguse by David Nichols
12/22 - In Memory of beloved sister, Constance Callinicos, by Gust Triantafillou
12/22 - In Memory of my father John Armeros by Rula Koutras
12/29 - In Memory of beloved husband, Dick Gustafson, by Betty Lou Gustafson
12/29 - Better Health & Healthy Recovery for Paula Dawson by Petro & Sandra Ahejew
12/29 - In Memory of brother, uncle, & godfather George Kouvelas by Elaine Kimmerly & Family
1/5 - For Celia Meyers by Art Tselepis
1/12 - For Families & Relatives, Better Health, Happy Marriage, Peace & Happiness in Our Country, the Departed, Peace in Mind and Thanksgiving by G.R. Zhubulake
1/19 - Better Health for Nick Makrianis by Tom & Peggy Nemode

PHILOPTOCHOS CORNER
Greetings to all Philoptochos Sisters,
On Sunday, February the 16th, Philoptochos will be part of the nationwide "Go Red Campaign" which promotes women's heart health. Please wear Red to church and be part of the "Go Red Campaign". Our upcoming events include:
Sun., February 9th - monthly meeting.
Sat., February 15th - church cleaning.
Sun., February 23rd, Philoptochos will host the Meatfare lunch after church. Bring a side or dessert to pass.
Sun., March 8th - monthly meeting
Wed., March 11th - Pre-Sanctified Potluck
Thanks to all that make this organization an important part of Saint Demetrios and our community!

Joni Porchia
President
CONFESSION WORKSHOP
WITH PRESVYTERA CATHERINE
FEBRUARY 22\textsuperscript{nd}
12:00 - 3:00 PM

This workshop is designed specifically to help us begin to learn how to receive this vital sacrament of the Church, and is open to everyone ages 7 and up. If you do not receive Confession regularly, or have never received this sacrament, this is an excellent introduction. All children \textbf{MUST} be accompanied by at least one parent, and we strongly encourage parents to participate alongside their children.

The workshop will be done in one day on Saturday, February 22\textsuperscript{nd}, with lunch provided. The workshop will be followed by a special session on February 29\textsuperscript{th} for all participants to receive the Sacrament of Confession.

Please RSVP for the workshop to frtimothycook@gmail.com.

CONFESSION DAY - FEBRUARY 29\textsuperscript{th}
WITH FR. TIMOTHY

ST. DEMETRIOS
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

MEATFARE POTLUCK
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23\textsuperscript{RD}, 2020
AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY

Every year, the Church eases us into the Great Fast week by week. Triodion begins on February 9\textsuperscript{th} with a fast free week, then continues the week of February 16\textsuperscript{th} with the last week for meat. On Sunday, February 23\textsuperscript{rd}, we will celebrate the last day for meat with a parish potluck after the Divine Liturgy.

This is an opportunity to clear out our homes, refrigerators, and freezers, and share a festal meal with our parish family (and if you have more meat than you can eat or freeze on your own, we can help with that, too!)

Bring a dish to share - salads, sides, and desserts are also welcome (even if they don’t have meat in them!)
February 9th
Triodion Begins
Great Lent is part of a period in the Church calendar known as "Triodion," which includes the whole of the Paschal cycle leading up to the Great Feast. Triodion begins three weeks and four Sundays before Great Lent with the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee. The first week of Triodion is always fast-free.

February 15th
Church Cleaning Day
Traditionally, cleaning is often done the first week of Lent, but we do our Church "Spring Cleaning" a few weeks before Lent, so that everything is clean and polished for the Great Fast.

February 23rd
Meatfare Sunday & Potluck
"Meatfare Sunday" is the second Sunday before Great Lent, and the last day for eating meat until Pascha. Our parish celebrates this day together with a festal potluck meal after the Liturgy.

March 1st
Forgiveness Sunday
The last Sunday before Great Lent - also called "Cheesefare" (as it is the last day for dairy before the fast). We celebrate this day with pizza and "Forgiveness Sundaes" after the Liturgy. In the evening, we gather again at the Church for the first service of Great Lent - Forgiveness Vespers - at the end of which we ask, give, and receive forgiveness from the entire community as our final preparation for the Great Fast.

March 2nd – 7th
Clean Week
Great Lent begins on March 2nd, always known as Clean Monday, as that entire week is commonly called "Clean Week." This first week of Great Lent is often the most strict with regard to fasting, especially in the monasteries, and is often the hardest as we adjust to a new rhythm of personal and communal prayer.

Every week during Great Lent
Lenten Weekly Services
As we increase our personal fasting and prayer disciplines during Lent, we also increase our communal prayers with special weekly services. Every week during Lent, we will gather to pray the service of Great Compline on Monday evenings, and the service of the Presanctified Liturgy on Wednesday evenings. Though not (strictly speaking) a Lenten service, we will also sing the Akathist Hymn with the Salutations to the Theotokos in the evenings of the first five Fridays of Lent.

March 8th
Triumph of Orthodoxy
Each Sunday in Lent celebrates a particular saint or feast to help lead us to Pascha and inspire us as we work through Great Lent. The first Sunday is dedicated to the Triumph of Orthodoxy over the heresy of iconoclasm and the return of the holy icons to adorn the churches of God. In celebration of this feast, at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy we will process the icons around the nave of the Church. Bring an icon to Church today, and join in the procession!
The following items are needed for the celebration of the special services for Great Lent, Holy Week, and Pascha. If you would like to donate one or more of these items, please sign up at the Pangari or call the Church Office. This will be on a first come first serve basis.

In the event that the item in which you are interested has already been donated, please consider either another item or a general donation toward this list. Thank you!

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<td>Icon of the Akathist</td>
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<td>White Burial Shroud</td>
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<td>7 June</td>
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Annunciation to the Theotokos

is one of the Great Feasts of the Orthodox Church, celebrated on March 25. Greeks also celebrate Greek Independence Day this day.

According to the Gospel of Luke 1:26-38, the Archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary to announce to her that she would conceive and bear a son, even though she "knew no man." According to holy tradition Mary had come home to her parents when she was only fifteen when she was visited by Gabriel. This date was selected by the Church Fathers to be exactly nine months ahead of the Nativity of Our Lord (or vice-versa?), indicating that Christ was conceived in perfection at that time "of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. Many men and women in Greece are named for this event and celebrate their name day on this date.

Greek: Evangelia (f) and Evangelos (m)

English: Evangeline (f) and Evan and Angelo (m)

In Arabic traditions, the names Beshara, Beshara, or Bashar (all of which mean “good news”) are used by men for whom this feast is also their name day.

Ingredients

- 2 - 10oz fresh spinach chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped, 3 minced garlic cloves
- 2 cups tomato sauce, 2 cups water
- 3/4 cup long grain rice
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- Tbps Dill (optional)
- Salt, pepper to taste

Directions

- Rinse rice in cold water and set aside. Rinse the spinach well and chop. Set aside.
- In a large pot sauté in the olive oil the onions and garlic for 2 – 3 minutes, stirring constantly so that they do not burn. To the pot add the spinach. It may appear that there is too much spinach for the pot, but as it heats it will wilt and decrease in volume. Add rice on top of the spinach.
- Add 2 cups water and 2 cups tomato sauce to the pot. Add the dill. Cover and cook over medium heat for approximately 30 minutes. After 30 minutes check to see how much liquid is in the pot, and test to see if the rice is cooked. If the spanakorizo appears too liquidy, continue to cook, uncovered, for a few minutes. Remove from the heat, and let sit a few minutes before serving; The longer it sits, the more it will thicken.
- Add salt and pepper to taste.
- Top with crumbled feta if desired. Enjoy!

Lenten Recipe

Spanakorizo
Spinach & Rice
with Tomato Sauce
On the Road to Easter Word Search

Ash
Wednesday
Sacrifice
Almsgiving
Prayer
Fasting
Lent
Holy Week
Palm Branch
Holy Thursday
Forty Days
Good Friday
Jesus
Holy Saturday
Passover
Easter
Foot Washing
Palm Sunday
Resurrection
Purple
Love

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In a world of confusion, Jesus is the clear choice.

Start

Jesus

Choose Kindness
"Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom."
Psalm 90:12

A TIME FOR EVERY PURPOSE UNDER HEAVEN

In gratitude for God’s blessings, I/we pledge to contribute for Christ’s work at St. Demetrios Church for 2020.

$________ weekly $________ monthly $________ quarterly $________ semi-annually

Our goal as a parish is to raise our stewardship by $20/month for the 2020 calendar year.

Please indicate areas of expertise or interest where you would like to serve:
(Individuals should provide a check mark and families provide "H" for husband, "W" for wife and "C" for children)

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<th>ADMINISTRATION</th>
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<td>___ Website / Email</td>
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<td>___ Adult Education</td>
<td>___ Hospitality / Welcome Ministry</td>
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<td>___ Finance Committee</td>
<td>___ Bookstore / Library</td>
<td>___ Outreach Ministries</td>
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<td>___ Intro to Orthodoxy</td>
<td>___ Visitation Ministries</td>
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<td>___ Property Maintenance</td>
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<td>___ Coffee Hour Ministry</td>
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I/we would like to receive notifications from St. Demetrios by: ___ email ___ paper mail
You can also submit your stewardship card and your contributions online at www.stdemetrios.mi.goarch.org/stewardship

CONFIDENTIAL: For Authorized Parish Personnel Only
When you support the Friends of the Metropolis campaign, you are part of a greater outreach that proclaims with one universal voice that God is truly our hope and our rock of salvation. Because of your devotion to the Friends program, ministries and programs are implemented on a Metropolis-wide basis which strengthen and enhance our faith and our joint ministry of service. I would like to invite you to join forces with the faithful throughout the Metropolis of Detroit in support of the ministries which are part of the Office of the Metropolitan.

Thanking you for your kind and generous response,
I remain, with paternal blessings and prayers,

+NICHOLAS
Metropolitan of Detroit

MORE INFO AT:
WWW.DETROIT.GOARCH.ORG/FRIENDS

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**GENERAL SUPPORT**

Fully fund the general expenses of the Metropolis office, including programs and travels.

**CLERGY/PARISH SUPPORT**

Develop and provide instructional seminars and services for clergy and parishes.

**OUTREACH/MISSIONS**

Create opportunities to introduce our faith to society. Participate in inter-Christian and interfaith activities. Provide quick responses to national and international disasters.

**YOUTH MINISTRIES**

Support the youth & young adult ministries, including our summer camps, as well as the activities of a full-time Metropolis Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries.

**EDUCATION**

Enhance various scholarship opportunities, adult education programs, and support Metropolis students at Hellenic College/Holy Cross.

**LEADERSHIP**

Organize Clergy-Lay Conferences, Oratorical Festivals, Youth Worker and Religious Education Training, and Adult Education Seminars.

**HELENISM**

Develop programs for Hellenic Cultural Outreach, including language, history, and arts.

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

Continued website development, hospitality to visiting dignitaries, charity and philanthropy.

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Name

Address

City  State  Zip

Email  Mobile No.

Parish Name  City/State

Credit Card  Check  Money Order

Credit Card No.

Exp. Date  CVC No.

Total in $

Signature

Make checks payable to Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit. Fill out this card and send it with payment to Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Detroit  2560 Crooks Road  Troy, MI 48084
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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
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| 1    | Trypho the Martyr  
Romans 8:28-39  
Luke 10:19-21  
Mt. Pleasant Liturgy  
(10:00 am) |
| 2    | Presentation of the Lord  
Hebrews 7:7-17  
Luke 2:22-40  
Orthros (8:50 am)  
Divine Liturgy (10:00 am) |
| 3    | Synaxis of Sts. Symeon & Anna  
Hebrews 9:11-14  
Luke 2:25-38 |
| 4    | Isidore of Pelusium  
Nicholas the Confessor  
Ephesians 2:19-22; 3:1-7  
Mark 6:1-7  
Fr. Timothy - Office Hours @ Morning Emporium (10:00 am - 12:00 pm) |
| 5    | Agatha the Martyr  
Polyeuktos, Patriarch of Constantinople  
Ephesians 3:8-21  
Mark 6:7-13  
Chant Meeting (6:00 pm) |
| 6    | Photios the Great  
Bucolus, Bp. of Smyrna  
Ephesians 7:26-28; 8:1-2  
John 10:9-16 |
| 7    | Parthenius, Bishop of Lampsacus  
Ephesians 4:17-25  
Mark 6:45-53 |
| 8    | Theodore the Commander  
Prophet Zacharias  
Ephesians 2:4-10  
Matthew 10:16-22 |
| 9    | Sunday of the Publican & Pharisee  
Triodion Begins  
II Timothy 3:10-15  
Luke 18:10-14  
Orthros (8:50 am)  
Divine Liturgy (10:00 am)  
Philoptochos Meeting |
| 10   | Fast Free  
Hieromartyr Haralambos  
Anastasios of Jerusalem  
II Timothy 2:1-10  
John 15:17-27; 161:2  
Parish Council Meeting (6:30 pm) |
| 11   | Fast Free  
Blaize the Holy Martyr  
Theodora the Empress  
II Timothy 4:14-16; 5:1-6  
Matthew 10:1, 5-8 |
| 12   | Fast Free  
Meletius, Abp. of Antioch  
Antonius, Archbishop of Constantinople  
II Peter 3:1-18  
Mark 13:24-31  
Chant Meeting (6:00 pm) |
| 13   | Fast Free  
Martinius of Palestine  
Apostles Aquilla & Priscilla  
I John 1:8-10; 2:1-6  
Mark 13:31-37; 14:1-2 |
| 14   | Fast Free  
Auxentius of the Mountain  
Cyril, Apostle to the Slavs  
I John 2:7-17  
Mark 14:3-9 |
| 15   | Fast Free  
Onesimus of the 70  
Anthimus, Elder of Chios  
Philemon 1:1-25  
Church Cleaning Day (10:00 am) |
| 16   | Sunday of the Prodigal Son  
Pamphilus the Martyr  
I Corinthians 6:12-20  
Luke 15:11-32  
Orthros (8:50 am)  
Divine Liturgy (10:00 am)  
Daughters Meeting |
| 17   | Theodore the Recruit  
Marianne  
II Timothy 2:1-10  
| 18   | Pope Leo the Great of Rome  
Agapetus the Confessor  
I John 3:9-22  
Mark 14:10-42  
Fr. Timothy - Office Hours @ Morning Emporium (10:00 am - 12:00 pm) |
| 19   | Apostles Philemon, Apphia, Archippus, & Onesimus of the 70  
Mark 14:43-72; 15:1 |
| 20   | Leo, Bishop of Catania  
Agathus, Pope of Rome  
I John 4:20-21; 5:1-21  
Mark 15:1-15  
AHEPA Meeting (6:30 pm) |
| 21   | Timothy the Righteous  
John III of Constantinople  
II John 1:1-13  
Mark 15:20,22,25,33-41 |
| 22   | Saturday of Souls  
Thalassius & Baradatus  
I Thessalonians 4:13-17  
Orthros (9:00 am)  
Divine Liturgy (10:00 am)  
General Memorial |
| 23   | Sunday of the Last Judgement  
Meatfare Sunday  
I Corinthians 8:8-13; 9:1-2  
Matthew 25:31-46  
Orthros (8:50 am)  
Divine Liturgy (10:00 am)  
Oratorical Festival  
Meatfare Potluck |
| 24   | 1st & 2nd Finding of the Head of John the Baptist  
II Corinthians 4:6-15  
Matthew 11:2-15 |
| 25   | Tarasius of Constantinople  
II Jude 1:1-10  
Fr. Timothy - Office Hours @ Morning Emporium (10:00 am - 12:00 pm) |
| 26   | Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza  
Great-Martyr Photini, the Samaritan Woman  
I John 3:12-21  
Mark 2:12-26 |
| 27   | Procopius the Confessor  
Raphael of Brooklyn  
II Jude 1:1-25  
| 28   | Basil the Confessor  
Kyranna the New Martyr  
Zechariah 8:7-17  
Zechariah 8:19-23 |
| 29   | Saturday of Souls  
Righteous John Cassian  
Galatians 5:22-26; 6:1-2  
Matthew 6:1-13  
Orthros (9:00 am)  
Divine Liturgy (10:00 am)  
General Memorial |

- Shaded days denote a fast day. ✧ denotes a Liturgy ✦ Great Vespers/Compline ★ Akathist/Paraklesis ☼ Presanctified Liturgy ✂ fish/wine/oil allowed ☞ wine/oil allowed
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<td></td>
<td>The Holy Cross</td>
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<td>St. John Chrysostom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Divine Liturgy (1600 am)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- Shade day denote a fast day.
- *Denotes a Liturgy
St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church
4970 Mackinaw Rd.
Saginaw, MI 48603

ST. DEMETRIOS
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Great Compline</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Presanctified Liturgy</td>
<td>5:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Akathist Hymn &amp; Salutations</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Only celebrated on the first five Fridays of Great Lent.

Lenten Meal Schedule:
Daughters - March 4th; Philoptochos, March 11th; AHEPA, March 18th;
Parish Council - April 1st; Sunday School - April 8th.