Holy Apostles
Greek Orthodox Church
Priest: Fr. George Alexson
(cell) 703-314-6421
www.holyapostlesgreekorthodox.org
phone 703-421-7515, fax 703-956-9498

March 10, 2019: Forgiveness Sunday
(Cheesefare)

From the Fathers on Forgiveness
St. Cyril of Jerusalem

'And forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors.' For we have many sins. For we offend both in word and in thought, and very many things we do worthy of condemnation; and 'if we say that we have no sin' ({bible}1 John 1.8{/bible}), we lie, as John says. [...] The offenses committed against us are slight and trivial, and easily settled; but those which we have committed against God are great, and need such mercy as is His only. Take heed, therefore, lest for the slight and trivial sins against you, you shut out for yourself forgiveness from God for your very grievous sins. (Catechetical Lectures, 23.16)For God seeks nothing else from us, save a good purpose. Say not, How are my sins blotted out? I tell thee, By willing, by believing. What can be shorter than this? But if, while thy lips declare thee willing, thy heart be silent, He knoweth the heart, who judgeth thee. Cease from this day from every evil deed. Let not they… **(Continued on the back)**

EPISTLE READING:

St. Paul's First Letter to the Romans 13:11-14;14:1-4

Brethren, salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires. As for the man who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not for disputes over opinions. One believes he may eat anything, while the weak man eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgment on him who eats; for God has welcomed him. Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for God is able to make him stand.

GOSPEL READING:

The Gospel According to Matthew 6:14-21

The Lord said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. "And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

UPCOMING EVENTS

Parish General Assembly After Liturgy

Eligible stewards will vote on whether to buy a 7.5 acre property in Ashburn. Eligible stewards must sign in at the table in the hall and receive a red card to vote. **Childcare, pizza, snacks and activities will be provided upstairs during the General Assembly**

Women Giving Back, March 16th
8:30-10:30AM
20 Export Dr., Sterling

Volunteer with our Philoptochos! Sign up at womengivingback.org. Note that you are with the Holy Apostles Philoptochos.

AHEPA Chapter 542 Meeting,
March 21st, 7:30 - 9pm at church

Email info@ahepa542.org with questions.

Selling Tsourekia for Pascha,
Order by March 24th

Pick up will be on Palm Sunday. Order forms are on the bookcase in the hall and on our website.

Important Dates for Greek and Sunday Schools

***Feast of Annunciation and Greek Independence Day Celebration: March 24**

***Summer Camp (June 17-21): Registration begins March 14**

Easter Greeting Cards for Orthodox Prison Ministry Available through March 24

Please stop by the table in the church hall and sign words of Easter greetings on cards for our fellow brothers and sisters in prison. We need to show our support and encouragement by letting them know God loves them! Remember Matthew 25:36 "...I was in prison and you visited me..."

UPCOMING EVENTS

Attention High School Seniors! Applications for the Metropolitan Area 49th AHEPA Scholarship program must be postmarked **no later than March 30th**. The awards will be presented during the May 19th AWARD DINNER Donor applications are also available to contribute to this worthy program. Contact Steve Martnishn for the application and details: smartnishn@aol.com, 571-204-7048.

MOBILE HOPE of Loudoun

Collection for Mobile Hope, Through March

Bring in NEW (NOT USED) undergarments and socks for boys and girls (all ages) for Mobile Hope. Look for the box in the hall by the bookstore.

The Epitaphio/Altar Fund Committee will begin collecting donations on **March 30th** to decorate our church for Lent, Holy Week and Easter with beautiful floral arrangements. The parish is also invited on Holy Friday, **April 26th** at 9am to decorate the Epitaphio.

Annual Spring Cleaning, April 13th, 9am – 1pm

Volunteer to help clean and beautify our Church in preparation for Holy Week. Your help and time is most appreciated! Questions: Mariana Korulaki (571-432-7678)

AHEPA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Email **info@ahepa542.org** to get details on the **Chapter, District, and National Scholarship programs**, Since these programs usually support our Holy Apostles Youth, consider helping to raise money by buying or selling a **50/50 raffle ticket** from an AHEPAn Brother. For details, go to **ahepa542.org**.

Interested in joining the staff this summer at Camp Good Shepherd? Look for details and the application on our website and in our weekly parish emails.

Thank you to our **Greek School** for sponsoring today's coffee hour!

Weekly Feature: Forgiveness (Cheesefare) Sunday Why is it that the Church wants us to begin Lenten season with forgiveness and reconciliation? This question is in order because for too many people, Lent means primarily, and almost exclusively, a change of diet. They understand fasting as an end in itself, as a "good deed" required by God and carrying in itself its merit and its reward. But, fasting is but a means, one among many, towards a higher goal: the spiritual renewal of man, his return to God, true repentance and, therefore, true reconciliation. The Church warns us against a hypocritical and pharisaic fasting, against the reduction of religion to mere external obligations. As a Lenten hymn says: "In vain do you rejoice in no eating, O soul! For you abstain from food, but from passions you are not purified. If you persevere in sin, you will perform a useless fast." Forgiveness stands at the very center of Christian faith and of Christian life because Christianity itself is, above all, the religion of forgiveness. God forgives us, and His forgiveness is in Christ, His Son, Whom He sends to us, so that by sharing in His humanity we may share in His love and be truly reconciled with God. And it is primarily the renewal of that love, a return to it, a growth in it, that we seek in Great Lent, in fasting and prayer, in the entire spirit and the entire effort of that season. Thus, forgiveness is both the beginning of, and the proper condition for the Lenten season. One may ask, however: Why should I perform this rite when I have no "enemies"? It is true, that open enmity, personal hatred, real animosity may be absent from our life. But there are much subtler ways of offending Divine Love. These are indifference, selfishness, lack of interest in other people, of any real concern for them—in short, that wall which we usually erect around ourselves, thinking that by being "polite" and "friendly" we fulfill God's commandments. The rite of forgiveness is so important because it makes us realize that our entire relationship to other men is wrong, makes us experience that encounter of one child of God with another. We know why we shall fast and pray, what we shall seek during the long Lenten pilgrimage. Forgiveness Sunday: the day on which we acquire the power to make our fasting – true fasting; our effort – true effort; our reconciliation with God – true reconciliation.

(Cover Message Cont.) tongue speak unseemly words, let thine eye abstain from sin, and from roving after things unprofitable. (Procatechesis) St Philotheos of Sinai "Do we forgive our neighbours their trespasses? God also forgives us in His mercy. Do we refuse to forgive? God, too, will refuse to forgive us. As we treat our neighbours, so also does God treat us. The forgiveness or non-forgiveness, then, of your sins—and hence also your salvation or destruction—depend on you yourself, man. For without forgiveness of sins there is no salvation. You can see for yourself how terrible it is."

Schedule of Services for March

March 11 Clean Monday 6:00 PM, Great Compline
March 15 1st Salutation to the Virgin Mary 7:00PM, Salutation
March 16 Saturday of Souls 8:15AM, Orthros. 9:30AM, Divine Liturgy
March 18 Great Compline 6:00 PM, Great Compline
March 22 2nd Salutation to the Virgin Mary 7:00PM, Salutation
March 24 Great Vespers for the Annunciation 6:00 PM Vespers
March 25 Annunciation to the Theotokos 8:15AM, Orthros. 9:30AM, Divine Liturgy
March 29 3rd Salutation to the Virgin Mary 7:00PM, Salutation

GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION:
Holy Communion is offered in the Orthodox Church only to those individuals baptized and Chrismated (Confirmed) in the Orthodox Faith. One must be in good standing with the Church spiritually (for example, married people must have had their marriage blessed in the Church; and, all must be without grave sin on their hearts). For all Orthodox Christians, the proper preparation for Holy Communion must be observed: that is, examination of conscience, confession, reading the prayers for Holy Communion, and the proper fasting and abstinence prior to Holy Communion. For questions, please speak with our Parish Priest. Women should remove all lipstick when approaching for Holy Communion.

Last week our children spoke about their faith for the Oratorical Festival. Let's give them a permanent church campus to continue proclaiming it. **DONATE to our Capital Campaign TODAY!**