

SAINT GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH, NORWOOD, MA

GREAT LENT

Forgiveness Vespers -

Sunday 13 March, following Liturgy

Sundays in Great Lent-

Matins, 9:00 am

Divine Liturgy, 10:00 am

20 March - Sunday of Orthodoxy

27 March - Saint Gregory Palamas

3 April - The Cross

10 April - Saint John of the Ladder

17 March - Saint Mary of Egypt

Mondays in Lent: Great Compline -

14 March - Norwood, 7:00 pm

21 March - Lowell, 7:00 pm

28 March - Boston, 7:00 pm

4 April - Pawtucket, 7:00 pm

11 April - Dedham, 7:00 pm

18 April - Worcester, 6:30 pm

Wednesdays in Lent: Pre-Sanctified -

16 March -20 April, 6:00 pm

Lenten Potluck Dinner Follows

Fridays in Lent: Parish Supper & Akathist Hymn -

Parish Supper (no charge) served by The Choir, Church School, Teen SOYO & Parish Council, 6:00 pm
(no dinner on March 25)

Salutations on the Akathist (Madayeh)

18 March and 1, 8 & 15 April, 7:00 pm

25 March, 6:30 pm at Saint John of Damascus, Dedham

Each Saturday, Vespers, 5:00 pm (except March 26)

Teen SOYO Lenten Retreat

25-27 March - Saint Methodios Retreat Center,
Contoocook, NH

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

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EVENING DIVINE LITURGY

THURSDAY 24 MARCH

6:00 PM

LAZARUS SATURDAY - PALM SUNDAY HOLY WEEK - PASCHA

23 April - Lazarus Saturday

8:30 am Divine Liturgy

Sunday School Breakfast and church clean-up follows

24 April - Palm Sunday

10:00 am Divine Liturgy and Procession of Palms

24 April - Sunday in Holy Week

7:00 pm - Bridegroom Service / Confessions

25 April - Great and Holy Monday

7:00 pm - Bridegroom Service / Confessions

26 April - Great and Holy Tuesday

7:00 pm - Bridegroom Service / Confessions

27 April - Great and Holy Wednesday

6:00 pm - Service of Holy Unction

28 April - Great and Holy Thursday

8:30 am - Vespers Liturgy

7:00 pm - Service of the Passion Gospels

29 April - Great and Holy Friday

8:30 am - Royal Hours

Followed by decorating of the tomb

1:00 pm - Vespers at the Taking Down from the Cross

7:00 pm - Lamentations and All-night Vigil

30 April - Great and Holy Saturday

8:30 am Vespers Liturgy

Followed by decorating of the church

The evening of April 30th - Great and Holy Pascha (1 May)

10:00 pm - Rush Procession

Matins & Liturgy

12:00 noon Sunday - Agape Vespers

Confessions will be heard before and after Great Vespers each Saturday; before and after the Bridegroom services of Holy Week or by appointment.

The Feast of Great-Martyr George, our Patron

As April 23 is Lazarus Saturday, our feast day is transferred to a date in Bright Week.

Updates and information online: www.StGeorgeNorwood.org

GENERAL RULES OF THE LENTEN FAST

The Lenten Fast rules that we observe today were established within the monasteries of the Orthodox Church during the sixth through eleventh centuries. These rules are intended for all Orthodox Christians, not just monks and nuns.

The first week of Lent is especially strict. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, a total fast is kept. In practice, very few people are able to do this. Some find it necessary to eat a little each day after sunset. Many Faithful do fast completely on Monday and then eat only uncooked food (bread, fruit, nuts) on Tuesday evening. On Wednesday, the fast is kept until after the Presanctified Liturgy.

From the second through the sixth weeks of Lent, the general rules for fasting are practiced. Meat, animal products (cheese, milk, butter, eggs, lard), fish (meaning fish with backbones), olive oil and wine (all alcoholic drinks) are not consumed during the weekdays of Great Lent. Octopus and shell-fish are allowed, as is vegetable oil. On weekends, olive oil and wine are permitted.

According to what was done in the monasteries, one meal a day is eaten on weekdays and two meals on weekends of Great Lent. No restriction is placed on the amount of food during the meal, though moderation is always encouraged in all areas of one's life at all times.

Fish, oil and wine are allowed on the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25) and on Palm Sunday (one week before Easter). On other feast days, such as the First and Second Finding of the Head of Saint John the Baptist (February 24), the Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (March 9), the Forefeast of the Annunciation (March 24) and the Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel (March 26), wine and oil are permitted.

HOLY WEEK

The week before Easter, Holy Week, is a special time of fasting separate from Great Lent. Like the first week, a strict fast is kept. Some Orthodox Christians try to keep a total fast on Holy Monday, Holy Tuesday and Holy Wednesday. Most eat a simple Lenten meal at the end of each day before going to the evening Church services.

On Holy Thursday, wine is allowed in remembrance of the Last Supper. Holy Friday is kept as a strict fast day, as is Holy Saturday. Holy Saturday is the only Saturday in the entire year when oil is not permitted.

In short, these are the Lenten rules for fasting. Traditionally, the Church Fathers recommend that someone new to fasting begin by resolving to faithfully do as much as he or she is able during the Lenten period. Each year as one matures as a Christian, a fuller participation can be undertaken. However, it is not recommended that a person try to create their own rules for fasting, since this would not be obedient or wise. The Faithful are encouraged to consult with their priest or bishop regarding the Fast when possible.

Personal factors such as one's health and living situation need to be considered as well. For example, an isolated Orthodox Christian required to eat meals at their place of employment, school or in prison may not be able to avoid certain foods. The Church understands this and extends leniency.

It is important to keep in mind that fasting is not a law for us—rather, a voluntary way of remembering to not sin and do evil, and to help keep our focus on prayer, repentance and doing acts of kindness, for we “are not under the law but under grace” (Romans 6:14).

EASTER, BRIGHT WEEK AND THE PASCHAL SEASON

The Lenten Fast is broken following the midnight Easter service. With the proclamation, “Christ is risen!” the time of feasting begins. The week after Easter is called Bright Week and there is no fasting. For the next 40 days, the Church celebrates the Paschal (Easter) season. Joy and thanksgiving are the fulfillment of our Lenten journey.

A PRAYER FOR LENT

The Prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian is traditionally said many times throughout each day during Great Lent:

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, faintheartedness, lust of power, and idle talk.

But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to your servant.

Yes, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own sin and not to judge my brother, for You are blessed from all ages to all ages. Amen.