



**St George the Great Martyr  
Orthodox Church - Weekly Bulletin**

**Sunday, March 31 2019**

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**SUNDAY, MARCH 31 TONE 7** Third Sunday of Lent: Veneration  
of the Holy Cross Repose of St Innocent of Alaska

**Tone 3 Troparion** (*Resurrection*)

Let the heavens rejoice! / Let the earth be glad! / For the Lord  
has shown strength with His arm. / He has trampled down  
death by death. / He has become the first born of the dead. /  
He has delivered us from the depths of hell, / and has grant-  
ed to the world // great mercy.

**Tone 1 Troparion** (*for the Cross*)

O Lord, save Thy people, / and bless Thine inheritance! / Grant  
victories to the Orthodox Christians / over their adversaries; /  
and by virtue of Thy Cross, // preserve Thy habitation!

**Tone 7 Kontakion** (*for the Cross*)

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Eden; /  
it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the  
Cross. / The sting of death and the victory of hell have been  
vanquished; / for Thou, O my Savior, hast come and cried to  
those in hell: // "Enter again into Paradise!"

*(In place of the Trisagion, we sing:)*

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master,  
and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify.

## Mark 8:34-9:1 (*Gospel*)

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.” And He said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power.”

### **Sunday of the Cross**

Before us is the Cross. This is the Cross of Christ. But on Golgotha there were two more crosses: Christ in the middle and on either side of Him were crucified two thieves. Christ on the Cross performed the sacrifice of redemption for the whole world. But what brought those crucified with Him to these crosses? Their crimes—after all, they were thieves.

What made them thieves? There was a time when they were innocent children and maybe even played together. This was the bright time of childhood. And later, they felt, as each of us does, two opposing forces influencing them: a good one and a bad one. And their will had to yield to either one or the other side. In the beginning they wavered, but later on, because the evil appeared more alluring, they began more and more often to consent to the evil. At first, conscience reproached them, but later it became hardened and stopped tormenting them. And then, without a backward glance, they completely took the side of evil. First, in the realm of will and feelings, and later they fell into open crimes which brought them to these crosses, to death sentences. And here they were both dying. Not only their hours, but even their minutes were numbered. And between them the Lord was dying on His Cross.

One of the hanging criminals reviled Him. But the other, on the contrary, silenced the abusive one and said to Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise (Lk. 23:42-43).

Christ died first and then the two thieves. On the face of the one who reviled the Lord was imprinted the grimace of blasphemy, and only the laugh of Mephistopheles rent the air above his cross. This laughter was terrible and triumphant. Yes, this was the final victory of the power of evil over this soul. But above the cross of the repentant thief was a triumphant peace and a kind of joyous radiance. And at this time, his soul, bright and pure, washed by sufferings and repentance, entered Paradise. With joy and wonder the orders of angels looked on this first soul entering Paradise, this soul of the first saint of the New Testament—the soul of a thief, washed with the Blood of Christ.

Now we are gathered together here in church before the Cross of Christ. In the eyes of human judgment we are not law-breakers or criminals. But are we as well-off before the Judgment of God? No. All of us have broken and are breaking the commandments of God. And if this is so, it means we are law-breakers. If until now we have not committed visible crimes, this is only because the Grace of God and our Guardian Angels have not let us. But if we were left to ourselves, God alone and our conscience know what might happen to us. And what still may happen if God abandons us. Let us honestly examine our conscience; let us ask it, and it will answer that according to the Judgment of God, we are no better than the thief, and maybe even worse. His sufferings on the cross alone could redeem so much. And we, with what can we redeem ourselves? He was a wise thief, but we... we live carelessly and think that we are going to live on and on. But our years, months, weeks, and maybe days and even hours are numbered. And also, will we have in the last moment that repentance which he had? What if suddenly another state of mind arises, opposite to it? May the Lord keep us from this!

Right now, as we approach and kiss the Cross, let us say with the wise thief, "Lord, remember me in Thy kingdom!" We may not have another minute. So let us use this minute which the Lord gives us: "Thy Cross, O Lord, we venerate and Thy Holy Resurrection we glorify."

From The One Thing Needful—Archbishop Andrei (Rymarenko)

## Calendar of Events – Starting today: March 31

Sunday	03/31	<b>9:10am</b> - Hours; <b>9:30am</b> - Divine Liturgy <b>Parish Council Meeting</b>
Monday	04/01	
Tuesday	04/01	
Wednesday	04/01	<b>6:00pm</b> - Presanctified Liturgy
Thursday	04/01	
Friday	04/01	<b>6:00pm</b> - Akathist
Saturday	04/01	<b>6:00pm</b> - Great Vespers and Confessions
Sunday	04/01	<b>9:10am</b> - Hours; <b>9:30am</b> - Divine Liturgy

### Weekly announcements

- ◆ **Thank you All** who decorated the temple, sang, and participated enthusiastically in the many services for the Annunciation to the Theotokos and memorial Saturday. It was a busy time!
- ◆ Many thank sto the generous donation of both money and time for our NEW church SIGN!! The new French drain!! And All who tirelessly cleaned out our Temple for Pascha!!
- ◆ We are collecting money for **flowers**.
- ◆ Lenten evening services begin at **6pm**. Presanctified Gifts Liturgy is celebrated on **Wednesday evenings** and we sing an Akathist to The Mother of God, on **Friday evenings**. We share a small **potluck meal and friendship after Presanctified services** at the hall.
- ◆ Saint George Myrrhbearers will meet today during coffee hour. Please plan to attend as we will discuss flowers for Pascha, baskets and etc.
- ◆ There are NO Office Hours during Lent. Please call Father to schedule an appointment as needed.
- ◆ **Holy week will arrive soon. PLEASE plan to celebrate with us. Our sisters in Christ from St Barbara monastery will be here Friday and Saturday for the many services. PLEASE come and bring your families.**

**Please** keep our brothers and sisters in your prayers this week:

**For good health and healing:** Peter, Juan, Ruth, Peter, Debrutu, Mary, Gregory, Souraya, Alice, Basil, Christina, Eddie, Nicholas, Dragosh, Sonia, Doreen, Denise, Traci and the child to be born of her. Matushka Joan, Michaela, Marius, Jordan, Nelly-Mary, Jason, Jerry, Gloria.

**Newly Departed:** Donald, Nun Olga, Leonard