

**The Weekly Messenger – March 1, 2020**  
**St. John Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church**  
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*Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21*

**Sunday of Forgiveness/Cheesefare:** As we begin the Great Fast, the Church reminds us of Adam's expulsion from Paradise. God commanded Adam to fast (Gen. 2:16), but he did not obey. Because of their disobedience, Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden and lost the life of blessedness, knowledge of God, and communion with Him, for which they were created. Both they and their descendants became heirs of death and corruption. Let us consider the benefits of fasting, the consequences of disobedience, and recall our fallen state. Today we are invited to cleanse ourselves of evil through fasting and obedience to God. Our fasting should not be a negative thing, a mere abstention from certain foods. It is an opportunity to free ourselves from the sinful desires and urges of our fallen nature, and to nourish our souls with prayer, repentance, to participate in church services, and partake of the life-giving Mysteries of Christ. At Forgiveness Vespers we sing: "Let us begin the time of fasting in light, preparing ourselves for spiritual efforts. Let us purify our soul, let us purify our body. As we abstain from food, let us abstain from all passion and enjoy the virtues of the spirit...."

**Commemorations for the Departed:** Archbishop Nikon, Sara Dimitri, Deacon Stephen Stefani and those servicemen and women who have fallen asleep in the Lord in the service of their Country. *If you have a name to add to the Commemorations for the departed or the living please email [info@stjohnsphila.org](mailto:info@stjohnsphila.org)*

**Commemorations for the Living:** Newborn Kyrie Amari, Alexa, Dorothy Tomassini, Roxane Ghicondey, Lee Constantine Elia, Janice Leyden, William, Lisa Kosta Bowser, Erin Thack, Paul, Lee Gedremenc, Diane Mallios, Evangeline Prifti, Lisa Kelley, Donna Hlavcek, George Robos, Virginia Daka, Haretina (Papa) Milo, Dhimiter Ndrecka, Pandeli, Jorgaq, Lefteri, and the men and women serving in the Armed Forces.

**Parish News:** We are happy to announce the birth of Kryie Amarii, son of Alexa Rhodes and Andrew Lewis, grandson of Sarah Rhodes and great-grandson of Father Dennis. Kyrie was born February 13, 2020, weighing 7 lbs., 5 oz and was 20" long. Congratulations and Many Years to the Rhodes family!

Janice Leyden is recovering at home after her long hospital stay. She is getting stronger every day. Roxane Ghicondey is working hard to get her knee in shape after surgery. Please keep Janice, Roxane and their families in your prayers.

**Metropolitan Tikhon's Visit:** Last Sunday was a very special day for our parish! We have received all positive feedback for the Metropolitan's visit. The church was half full before 10:00 am, our children greeted His Beatitude and gave him a yellow tulip when he entered the church. The Metropolitan was then greeted by the priests and deacons who served in the Altar; Frs. Dennis, Gregory, Nicholas, Theophan, Dn. Andrew Rubis, the Altar Servers and our parishioners. The Divine Liturgy was beautiful, the choir sounded wonderful and His Beatitude concluded the Liturgy with Memory Eternal for our beloved Archbishop Nikon and with his thanks to our parish. He also explained the quest is underway to find our Archdiocese a Bishop. The luncheon was spectacular, with our parishioners bringing in delicious food for all to share! Photos of the day and a video of the Divine Liturgy will be on our website: <https://stjohnsphila.org/photos> Thank you!!

**Great Lent** begins Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Father Dennis will serve and we will have **Pre-sanctified Liturgy on Wednesday nights beginning March 4<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00pm.** Lenten (Pot Luck) dinner and fellowship will be held in the church hall following the Pre-sanctified Liturgy.

**Coffee Hour Sponsors:** *if you are sponsoring coffee hour it would be greatly appreciated if you could stay after to assist with the clean-up - thank you! Thank you to our sponsors.*

**Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>** Parishioners will bring various items (as we do at our Nameday Celebration)

**March 1<sup>st</sup>** Sunday School

**March 8<sup>th</sup>** No Sponsor

**March 15<sup>th</sup>** Stephanie Kosta

**March 22<sup>nd</sup>** Betty Subashi

**March 29<sup>th</sup>** No Sponsor

**Upcoming Events:**

**March 1<sup>st</sup>** Sunday of Forgiveness - Cheesefare

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>** Great Lent Begins

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>** Parish Council Meeting 7:00 pm

**Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18** Presanctified Liturgy @ 7:00 PM

**March 15<sup>th</sup>** Semi Annual Parish Meeting during coffee hour.

**March 25<sup>th</sup>** Annunciation

**April 5<sup>th</sup>** Clergy Brotherhood Service @ 4:00 pm

**Saturday April 11<sup>th</sup>** Liturgy and Lazarus Saturday Retreat 10:00 am

**March Namedays** Per **Shume Vjet! Gezuar!** To our parishioners who celebrate their Nameday in March: 10<sup>th</sup> St. Theodore the General, 17<sup>th</sup> St. Alexander, 25<sup>th</sup> The Annunciation

**Welcome to our visitors.** Our church community thanks you for celebrating the Divine Liturgy with us. We invite you to join us for coffee hour and fellowship in the church hall following the Divine Liturgy.

**Monthly Giving for March:** paper napkins. *Thank you for serving today Father Dennis!*