

## COME BACK

We hope to see you next week.

Each Sunday we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ with our morning Matins service at 8:45am followed by the main Sunday service, Divine Liturgy at 10am. Sunday School for the Children follows Communion.

Fr. Elia would love to speak with you and answer any questions you may have.

Please fill out our Guest Form.

There's also a place where you can let us know any specific needs or concerns and we will lift them up in prayer.

We welcome everyone who would like to learn more about the Orthodox Christian Faith.



## ABOUT COMMUNION

*We are happy that you have joined us today. Indeed, we pray for the "unity of the Faith" for the day when all of Christianity are united as ONE and can share a common Chalice. However, this is not the case as yet. Please note that Holy Communion, the actual Body & Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, is only for Members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting, and confession, & arrived before the Gospel reading. However, everyone is welcome to partake of the blessed bread and receive a blessing from the pastor at the dismissal. If you are interested, you may inquire with the pastor how you can become a member.*

*If you are a guest or otherwise not a regular communicant, please give your baptismal name when receiving.*



## Welcome to St. Anthony The Great Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

FEBRUARY 15, 2026

**SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT (MEAT FARE)**



**4031 Aurora Rd., Melbourne, Florida 32934**

**Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor & Dean of South Florida Deanery**  
**Phone: (305) 812-4940 , E-Mail: [elia\\_shalhoub@yahoo.com](mailto:elia_shalhoub@yahoo.com)**

## WELCOME TO ST. ANTHONY'S

Where people from around the world come together to serve God and our community. We are glad you are worshipping with us today! This Church is one community of many in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. The Church of Antioch belongs to two thousand years of evangelization, teaching, history, and tradition which expresses the continued commitment of its members to the Orthodox Christian faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! St. Anthony Church is a Pan-Orthodox community, under the omophorion of His Eminence Metropolitan SABA within Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. If you are a first time visitor, please fill out the guest form located on the literature table. We want you to feel at home in prayer and worship. Please submit your names to the ushers and introduce yourself to Fr. Elia at the end of the service so he may welcome you personally. Following services, please join us for sharing of fellowship, coffee, and food.

### DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2026

#### TONE 3 / EOTHINON 3

#### SUNDAY OF LAST JUDGMENT (MEAT FARE)

**APOSTLE ONESIMOS OF THE SEVENTY; VENERABLE EUSEBIOS OF SYRIA; MARTYR MAJOR OF GAZA**

~ During the Little Entrance, chant the Resurrectional Apolytikion. The Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is "O come, let us worship... save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead..." After the Little Entrance, chant these hymns in the following order:

#### RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE THREE

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and become the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the Great Mercy.

#### APOLYTIKION OF ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

Thou didst become like the zealous Elijah in his condition, and followed John the Baptist in his upright ways. Becoming a dweller in the wilderness, and an establisher of the universe by thy prayer O Father Anthony. Wherefore intercede thou with Christ our God to save our souls.

#### KONTAKION FOR SUNDAY OF LAST JUDGMENT IN TONE ONE

When Thou comest, O God, to earth with glory, and all creatures tremble before Thee, and the river of fire floweth before the Altar, and the books are opened and sins revealed, deliver me then from that unquenchable fire, and make me worthy to stand at Thy right hand, O righteous Judge.

#### THE EPISTLE

*Sing praises to our God, sing praises. Clap your hands, all ye peoples.*

**The Reading from the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (8:8-9:2)**

Brethren, food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. Only take care, lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if any one sees you—a man of knowledge—at table in an idol's temple, might he not be

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She writes: “Emotions are the fire, and thoughts are the logs—the combustible material. Let us note that the devil does not attack us through our emotions. Sin does not enter us through sadness, fear, hatred, or pride expressed as feelings. These are the energies of a sick soul, bursting forth from our fallen nature, beyond the control of our will. Sin enters through evil thoughts that promise deliverance from the pain caused by those feelings—thoughts that lead us to the Evil One, to evil words, and to destructive actions.” She continues: “There is addiction to negative emotions just as there is addiction to alcohol; therefore, healing is difficult.” (p.93) And she adds: “What matters to me is the pain of the person before me. When I come into contact with another’s pain, I can transform it into the ‘body of prayer’ on their behalf. Their pain reverberates within me—it hurts me without becoming my own pain—but I experience it, and this makes my prayer for them possible, just as I pray for myself when I am in pain.” (p.95)

Throughout her book, she stresses the importance of listening and the modern person’s deep need to be heard. She insists that one must not suppress the effects of trauma but instead bring them before God.

She writes: “When we repress the effects of trauma and do not offer them to God, we contribute to passing them on to our children and grandchildren.” (p.101) She adds: “We must remember that every child who enters a family is a potential savior for that family and its descendants.” Mother Siluana teaches that the mystery of Orthodoxy lies in transforming all that we are—everything we have received from God—so that it may return to Him. The human heart is the arena where created energies are transformed into divine human energies by the power and operation of grace. This is a book well worth reading, especially for all those involved in education, pastoral work, and spiritual guidance.

**SATURDAY OF  
ORTHODOXY**

**PAN  
ORTHODOXY**  
*Vespers*

**Join your South Florida  
Pan-Orthodox brothers  
and sisters to celebrate  
the restoration of icons  
in the Church.**

**FEBRUARY 28, 2026**

**5:00 PM:** Great Vespers on the Eve of  
the Sunday of Orthodoxy  
(Guest Homilist:  
**Dr. Philip Mamalakis, HC**  
Professor and Author)

**6:00 PM:** Fellowship Hour  
(Saint Mark Fellowship Hall)

**Parents are encouraged to join us  
from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM for a  
retreat with Dr. Philip Mamalakis,  
on Parenting Toward the Kingdom.**

Scan the QR  
code to attend.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
Please contact the church office at  
561.994.4822 or office@saintmarkboca.net

encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother’s falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall. Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord? If to others I am not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.

### THE GOSPEL

#### **The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew. (25:31-46)**

The Lord said, “When the Son of man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. Before Him will be gathered all the nations, and He will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and He will place the sheep at His right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at His right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave Me food, I was thirsty and you gave Me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed Me, I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you visited Me, I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see Thee hungry and feed Thee, or thirsty and give Thee drink? And when did we see Thee a stranger and welcome Thee, or naked and clothe Thee? And when did we see Thee sick or in prison and visit Thee?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’ Then He will say to those at his left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave Me no food, I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome Me, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see Thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to Thee?’ Then He will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to Me.’ And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

### **ABOUT THE DIVINE LITURGY**

The Divine Liturgy expresses the entire Christian faith in a continuous song of praise and prayer addressed to God. It is focused on God, not on us. There is nothing just for amusement or entertainment. Since much of the service is the same every week, worshippers know it and can participate personally, either by singing along or just by prayerful attention. Worshippers are surrounded by icons (pictures of Christ and the saints), which remind us that we are participating, while on earth, in the worship of all the angels and saints in heaven. The entire service (except for the sermon) is sung. The words are all from Scripture or ancient Christian texts. Please follow the service in the books available in the pews. Weekly changes will appear below and marked with a corresponding letter in the service book.

# Upcoming Events

<p><b>This Week</b>  <b>Sunday, 2/15</b> 8:45 am: Matins Service,          10:00 am: Divine Liturgy,  <i>followed by Fellowship Hour, Sunday School &amp; Antiochian Women Monthly Meeting</i>  <b>Wednesday 2/18</b> 5:30 pm: Daily Vespers  <b>Saturday, 2/21</b> 2:30 pm: Marriage class          4:00 pm: Catechism Class          5:30 pm: Great Vespers  <i>followed by Confessions</i>  <b>Sunday, 2/22</b> <b>Forgiveness Sunday</b>          8:45 am: Matins Service,          10:00 am: Divine Liturgy,  <i>followed by Fellowship Hour and Antiochian Men monthly meeting</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CONGRATULATIONS</b>  </p> <p><b>February Birthdays and Anniversaries</b>          02: Isaac Vaughn B-day          04: Alyssa Stumpf (Karas) B-day          06: Stuart Zolton B-day          Samuel Brown          Marsha Good          11: Adrian Matos          14: Jeffrey and Holly Dick Wedding Anniversary          15: Susan Perers B-day          17: Lilly Munoz B-day          23: Mike and Janet Gorczynski Wed. Anniversary          24: Clay (Richard) Gardenhire B-day</p> <p>If you don't see your Birthday and/or Anniversary, please let Yuliya know so she can update our list.</p>
<p><b>Monday 02/ 23 (Clean Monday) Begining of Great Lent:</b> Great Compline at 5:30 PM  <b>Tuesday 02/24</b> Great Compline at 5:30 PM.  <b>Wednesday 02/25</b> Daily Lenten Vespers 5:30 PM  <b>Thursday 02/26</b> Great Compline at 5:30PM  <b>Friday 02/27</b> Presanctified Liturgy at 5:00 PM  <i>Followed by the 1st Akathist at 6:30PM and a Pot-luck Dinner.</i></p>	<p> If you are working on decluttering, please consider donating it to the Church. We will be collecting unwanted gently used goods the whole month of February. All proceeds from the Garage Sale will go to our Sunday School Fund.</p> <p>For Questions, ask Yuliya.</p>

## Fasting Calendar

No Fast 2/15

Dairy, eggs, fish, oil and wine are allowed. Refrain from meat 2/16 - 2/22. Great Lent Fast is 2/23– 4/11

## THANK YOU FOR TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR

WE NEED SPONSORS FOR MARCH PLEASE

PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE CALENDAR IN THE NARTHEX TO PREPARE AND SERVE FOOD FOR OUR COFFEE HOUR.

FEBRUARY 22 - PANCAKE BREAKFAST, FUNDRAISER SERVED BY SUNDAY SCHOOL



**Please pray for the healing of** Gregory Warner, Joni DeBaldo, Georgia Davis, Laney Ricketts, Michealle Carey, Debbie Thieme, Adriana Theodoropoulos, Beverly Delida, Alix Hall, Nina and Diogo Penas, Beth Manzini, John Archambeau, Alex & Soula, Susan Moran, Susan Perers, Ceara Jacobs, William Snell, Vasilika Yardines, Faouzi Najjar, Marie Williams, and His Grace Bishop Nicholas

## “God, Where is the Wound?”

By Metropolitan Saba (Isper) (Isper)

Mother Siluana is a radiant face – an illumined person. She is a witness to our times of what divine grace does in those who allow it to dwell within them—when that grace encounters a person open to both human beings and the knowledge of their era, discerning wisely what is good to receive.

Mother Siluana was born during the Second World War, in 1944. In her youth, she experienced deep suffering caused by the lack of meaning in life, and the emptiness and dryness of the soul. She sought to confront this void. After discovering Christ, she experienced the work of divine grace through prayer and self-knowledge. She became certain that He had accompanied her in her pain, waited for her, forgiven her, and—most importantly—loved her with an infinite love. She consecrated her life to Him, striving to love Him passionately and limitlessly with all her heart.

Her wounded heart, healed by the grace of faith, found great consolation in the writings of St. Silouan the Athonite. Metropolitan Theophan of Moldovia and Bukovina, Romania, said of her: “Saint Silouan offered her the image of true prayer, the icon of the love of God and neighbor, and the strength to rise from the hell of despair.”

She studied philosophy and taught it for a year, after which she engaged in social work among youth. In 1999, she entered a period of monastic discernment while continuing her charitable and social efforts, focusing especially on street children and offering spiritual guidance to young people.

She was tonsured a nun in 2001 and, with the blessing of Metropolitan Theophan, she founded the Center of the Archangels Michael and Gabriel for Formation and Counseling, serving as its coordinator. In 2008, she moved with the center to the city of Iași and, together with several nuns, founded the Monastery of St. Silouan the Athonite in Iași, Romania.

She gave important lectures at many conferences and workshops in Romania and abroad, addressing topics such as relationships among youth, stages of love, family 1 and contemporary society, the causes of depression in modern man, self knowledge, the spiritual life, etc. She reposed in the Lord in 2021. Her explanations of Christian anthropology are profoundly attractive. Readers discover with amazement, through her precise descriptions of psychological experience, how deeply they relate to her insights. She uses concepts from modern science to make it easier to understand the common human experiences with which every reader can identify.

She distinguishes between life as mere survival and life as a gift from God. The life for which God created us becomes possible only when we open ourselves to His grace through prayer and the keeping of His commandments. She gives great importance to discovering God as a living Person, active in every moment of the soul and life of Orthodox Christians. She writes, “God is enamored of us.”

Her book God, Where is the Wound? contains the texts of three conferences she delivered in Germany in 2012. In this work, she addresses the common difficulties modern people face in their relationship with God: what prevents them from receiving or even desiring divine grace, what preserves that grace once received, and how it operates within us. She addresses anxiety, stress, depression, trauma, suicide, relationships, sexuality, and the consequences of inherited family traumas that remain unresolved.

She speaks of the effect of deep-seated trauma stored in the subconscious, noting that some philosophies suggest avoiding or ignoring it. She explains that the thoughts emerging from repressed wounds poison the soul. Therefore, “we must pay attention to them, to what lies beneath them, to what we feel through them— and we must offer them to the Lord for healing.” She calls this offering to God “the body of prayer.”

makes me encounter in my life. This distinction is important because today more and more Christians tend to identify Christian love with political economic, and social concerns; in other words, they shift from the unique person and its unique personal destiny, anonymous entities such as "class," "race," etc. Not that these concerns are wrong. It is obvious that in their respective walks of life, in their responsibilities as Citizens, professional men, etc., Christians are called to care, to the best of their possibilities and understanding, for a just, equal, and in general more humane society. All this, to be sure, stems from Christianity and may be inspired by Christian love. But Christian love as such is something different, and this difference is to be understood and main-tained if the Church is to preserve her unique mission and not become a mere "social agency," which definitely she is not.

Christian love is the "possible impossibility" to see Christ in another man, whoever he is, and whom God, in His eternal and mysterious plan, has decided to introduce into my life, be it only for a few moments, not as an occasion for a "good deed" or an exercise in philanthropy, but as the beginning of an eternal companionship in God Himself. For, indeed, what is love if not that mysterious power which transcends the accidental and the external in the "other" his physical appearance, social rank, ethnic origin, intellectual capacity and reaches the soul of the unique and uniquely personal "root" of a human being, truly the part of God in him? If God loves every man it is because He alone knows the priceless and absolutely unique treasure, the "soul" or "person" He gave every man. Christian love then is the participation in that divine knowledge and the gift of that divine love. There is no "impersonal" love because love is the wonderful discovery of the "person" in "man," of the personal and unique in the common and general. It is the discovery in each man of that which is "lovable" in him, of that which is from God.

In this respect, Christian love is sometimes the opposite of "social activism" with which one so often identifies Christianity today. To a "social activist" the object of love is not "person" but man} an abstract unit of a not less abstract "humanity." But for Christianity, man is "lovable" because he is person. There person is reduced to man; here man is seen only as person. The "social activist" has no interest for the personal, and easily sacrifices it to the "common interest." Christianity may seem to be, and in some ways actually is, rather sceptical about that abstract "humanity," but it commits a mortal sin against itself each time it gives up its concern and love for the person. Social activism is always "futuristic" in its approach; it always acts in the name of justice, order, happiness to come, to be achieved. Christianity cares little about that problematic future but puts the whole emphasis on the now-the only decisive time for love. The two attitudes are not mutually exclusive, but they must not be confused. Christians, to be sure, have responsibilities toward "this world" and they must fulfill them. This is the area of "social activism" which belongs entirely to "this world."

Christian love, however, aims beyond "this world." It is itself a ray, a manifestation of the Kingdom of God; it transcends and overcomes all limitations, all "conditions" of this world because its motivation as well as its goals and consumma-tion is in God. And we know that even in this world, which "lies in evil," the only lasting and transforming victories are those of love. To remind man of this personal love and vocation, to fill the sinful world with this love- this is the true mission of the Church.

The parable of the Last Judgment is about Christian love. Not all of us are called to work for "humanity," yet each one of us has received the gift and the grace of Christ's love. We know that all men ultimately need this personal love-the recognition in them of their unique soul in which the beauty of the whole creation is reflected in a unique way. We also know that men are in prison and are sick and thirsty and hungry because that personal love has been denied them. And, finally, we know that however narrow and limited the framework of our personal existence, each one of us has been made responsible for a tiny part of the Kingdom of God, made responsible by that very gift of Christ's love. Thus, on whether or not we have accepted this responsibility, on whether we have loved or refused to love, shall we be judged. For "inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, you have done it unto Me"

(From Fr. Alexander Schmemman book "Great Lent")

# Announcements



February 15th  
February 22nd

*Epistle Readers*  
Carry Matos  
Corbin Dick



### Collection Plate Donations

**All the cash from collection plate goes to our untouchable building fund to build a bigger Church. Please use envelopes from the podium if you want to donate to our general operating account or other projects.**

### Blessing of Homes 2026

*Fr. Elia is doing House Blessings by request, only if you fill the Request Form on the info table. Please keep in mind that Fr. Elia is available only on the weekend.*

### ARCHDIOCESE ASSESSMENT 2026

**IN 2026 OUR PARISH WILL BE SENDING THE ARCHDIOCESE ASSESSMENTS ON A MONTHLY BASIS IN THE AMOUNT OF ABOUT \$1100.00 TO DEFRAY THIS AMOUNT (\$50.00 per baptized soul) WE ASK YOU TO PAY YOUR ASSESSMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

## UPCOMING SUNDAY CALENDAR

Below lists the upcoming Sundays from February 1st until Holy Pascha, which falls on April 12th this year. We invite you to join us each week for Sunday Liturgy to celebrate this special commemoration of Jesus' life, death, and Resurrection.

Please mark these special dates on your calendar.

February 22	Cheesefare Sunday (Forgiveness Sunday)
February 23	Beginning of Great Lent
March 1	1st Sunday of Lent (Sunday of Orthodoxy)
March 8	2nd Sunday of Lent
March 15	3rd Sunday of Lent (Sunday of the Cross)
March 22	4th Sunday of Lent
March 25	Feast of the Annunciation (Wednesday)
March 29	5th Sunday of Lent & Celebration of the Feast of the Annunciation
April 5	PALM SUNDAY
April 10	GOOD FRIDAY
April 12	HOLY PASCHA
April 19	THOMAS SUNDAY



## SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGMENT (MEAT FARE SUNDAY)

### **How Will We Be Judged?**

**As Orthodox Christians, we must take care not to take the outcome of God's final judgment for granted. Just because we are part of Christ's Body the Church does not guarantee us anything in the age to come. This is why, in every Divine Liturgy, we pray "for a good defense before the dread Judgment Seat of Christ." One of the most deceptive aspects of our culture and society is the belief that when we die, we will become nothing. We just cease to exist. However, we as Christians understand the words of Jesus Christ as the truth and the reality of life. We test everything that we hear and see and understand against the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord reshapes and reforms our reality by His teachings, by His words. And through this reshaping of our reality, He then reshapes our lives and reshapes each of us. Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us when we die, we will not simply cease to exist. We will not simply vanish. Even among many of the Protestant and evangelical denominations we see the belief that when we die, all will be well if we have believed in Jesus Christ, if we were "saved." That we will avoid judgment and that God will not even judge us. All of these opposing philosophies seek to undermine the truth of the gospels. The truth as spoken by the Lord Jesus is that God is a judge, that there is indeed a judgement and that each of us will be judged and separated. Some will be numbered among the righteous and others will be numbered among the unrighteous.**

**What are the criteria for this judgment? How will God judge each of us? He will judge us based on our actions! Not only based on what we say or what we believe, but on our actions themselves. Jesus Christ tells us that at the judgment, each and every one of us will stand and have to give an account for our actions. What actions? Specifically these: Did we feed the hungry? Did we give drink to the thirsty? Did we welcome strangers? Did we clothe those who lacked clothing? Did we visit those who were sick? Did we come to those who were in prison? (Matthew 25: 31-46)**

**Our spiritual life and death are based in part, on our actions and those actions are determined by whether we know and are growing towards God. If we know God, we will know a life of love towards others. It's not enough that we do the things mentioned in the gospels every once in a while. It assumes that we busy ourselves with acts of love and have no time for the works of darkness. We have to avoid living sinfully, judging others, speaking ill of others, acting in uncharitable and unloving ways towards those around us, even those who disagree with us. We are not called to judge our brothers and sisters in Christ, but to humbly try to reconcile and love them. We have to love everyone, the poor, the sick and naked, the prisoners, the strangers and we even have to go further. We have to love those whom we regard as our enemies because God will judge us and we cannot avoid this judgment. St. Silouan once wrote, "Whoever will not love his enemies cannot know the Lord and the sweetness of the Holy Spirit." Let us be His children and reflect this mercy and love in all of our dealings with others. May the Lord judge us worthy to be numbered among His faithful sheep.**

**In Christ,**

*Fr. Elia Shalhoub*

**Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor**

### ***Pledges and Offerings:***

***Please do not forget your contributions to the Church. This year, without the Fund raising activities your church will face difficulties in meeting expenses. The approximate monthly expenses are \$8,000.00, without unexpected expenditures. If you have not done so already, please consider an offering.***

## **TODAY'S FEAST: SUNDAY OF THE LAST JUDGEMENT**

The foregoing two parables -- especially that of the Prodigal Son -- have presented to us God's extreme goodness and love for man. But lest certain persons, putting their confidence in this alone, live carelessly, squandering upon sin the time given them to work out their salvation, and death suddenly snatch them away, the most divine Fathers have appointed this day's feast commemorating Christ's impartial Second Coming, through which we bring to mind that God is not only the Friend of man, but also the most righteous Judge, Who recompenses to each according to his deeds. It is the aim of the holy Fathers through bringing to mind that fearful day, to rouse us from the slumber of carelessness unto the work of virtue, and to move us to love and compassion for our brethren. Besides this, even as on the coming Sunday of Cheese-fare we commemorate Adam's exile from the Paradise of delight -- which exile is the beginning of life as we know it now -- it is clear that today's is reckoned the last of all feasts, because on the last day of judgment, truly, everything of this world will come to an end.

All foods, except meat and meat products, are allowed during the week that follows this Sunday.

### **ONESIMUS THE APOSTLE OF THE 70**

This Apostle, who was from Colossae, was a bond-servant of that Philemon to whom the Apostle Paul addressed his epistle. Onesimus escaped from Philemon and fled to Rome, where he became a disciple of Saint Paul. Saint Paul brought him to the Faith of Christ, and then sent him back to his master, who in turn gave him his freedom and sent him back to Rome again, where he ministered to Saint Paul. Later, he was seized because he was a Christian and was sent to Puteoli, where he was beaten to death with

### **PREPARATION FOR GREAT LENT, by FATHER ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN**

#### **Meatfare Sunday (Sunday of the Last Judgement)**

This Sunday is called "Meat-Fare" because during the week Following it a limited fasting-abstention from meat is prescribed by the Church. This prescription is to be understood in the light of what has been said above about the meaning of preparation. The Church begins now to "adjust" us to the great effort which she will expect from us seven days later. She gradually takes us into that effort-knowing our frailty, foreseeing our spiritual weakness.

On the eve of that day (Meat-Fare Saturday), the Church invites us to a universal commemoration of all those who have "fallen asleep in the hope of resurrection and life eternal" This is indeed the Church's great day of prayer for her departed members. To understand the meaning of this connection between Lent and the prayer for the dead, one must remember that Christianity is the religion of love. Christ left with his disciples not a doctrine of individual salvation but a new commandment "that they love one another," and He added: "By this shall all know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Love is thus the foundation, the very life of the Church which is, in the words of St. Ignatius of Antioch, the "unity of faith and love." Sin is always absence of love, and therefore separation, isolation, war of all against all. The new life given by Christ and conveyed to us by the Church is, first of all, a life of reconciliation, of "gather-ing into oneness of those who were dispersed," the restoration of love broken by sin. But how can we even begin our return to God and our reconciliation with Him if in ourselves we do not return to the unique new commandment of love? Praying for the dead is an essential expression of the Church as love. We ask God to remember those whom we remember and we remember them because we love them. Praying for them we meet them in Christ who is Love and who, because He is Love, overcomes death which is the ultimate victory of separation and loneliness. In Christ there is no difference between living and dead because all are alive in Him. He is the Life and that Life is the light of man. Loving Christ, we love all those who are in Him; loving those who are in Him, we love Christ: this is the law of the Church and the obvious rationale for her of prayer for the dead. It is truly our love in Christ that keeps them alive because it keeps them "in Christ," and how wrong, how hopelessly wrong, are those Western Christians who either reduce prayer for the dead to a juridical doctrine of "merits" and "compensations" or simply reject it as useless. The great Vigil for the Dead of Meat Fare Saturday serves as a pattern for all other commemorations of the departed and it is repeated on the second, third, and fourth Saturdays of Lent. It is love again that constitutes the theme of Meat Fare Sunday. The Gospel lesson for the day is Christ parable of the Last Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46). When Christ comes to judge us, what will be the criterion of His judgment? The parable answers: love-not a mere humani-tarian concern for abstract justice and the anonymous "poor, but concrete and personal love for the human person, a human person, that God