

# **THE LIGHT OF THE EAST**



## **ST. ATHANASIUS THE GREAT** **BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

1117 South Blaine Ave. Indianapolis, IN 46221

Website: [www.saindy.com](http://www.saindy.com) Email: [sabcc@indy.rr.com](mailto:sabcc@indy.rr.com)

Served by:

**Pastor: Very Rev. Protopresbyter Bryan R. Eyman. D. Min. D. Phil.**

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**Business Manager: John Danovich**

**Phones: Rectory: 317-632-4157; Pastor's Cell Phone: 216-780-2555**

**FAX: 317-632-2988**

### **WEEKEND DIVINE SERVICES**

**Sat: 5 PM [Vespers with Liturgy]**

**Sun: 9:45 AM [Third Hour] 10 AM [Divine Liturgy]**

**Mystery of Holy Repentance [Confessions]: AFTER Saturday  
Evening Prayer or ANYTIME by appointment**

**SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 9, 2014**

**SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY.**

**FIRST SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST.**

**MEMORY OF THE HOLY PROPHETS.**

**THE FORTY MARTYRS OF SEBASTE.**

**PLEASE COME FORWARD AFTER THE DIVINE LITURGY;  
KISS THE HOLY ICONS, KISS THE HAND CROSS [OR RECEIVE  
THE HOLY ANOINTING], & PARTAKE OF THE ANTIDORAN  
[BLESSED BREAD].**

SAT. MAR.8	5 PM	<i>For the Health of Austin McGoff</i>
	6:15 PM	MYSTERY OF HOLY REPENTANCE [CONFESSIONS]
SUN. MAR. 9	9:45 AM	THE THIRD HOUR
	10:00 AM	<i>FOR THE PEOPLE</i>
	11:30 AM	PROCESSION WITH THE HOLY ICONS AND THE RITE OF ORTHODOXY
	12NOON	LENTEN SUNDAY LUNCHEON
	1:15 PM	SUNDAY LENTEN VESPERS
MON. MAR. 10	<b><u>The Holy Martyr Codratus and His Comp.</u></b>	
	NO DIVINE SERVICES ~ FATHER'S DAY OFF	
TUE. MAR. 11	<b><u>Our Holy Father Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem.</u></b>	
	9 AM	LENTEN TERSEXT [FATHER IN PITTSBURGH]
WED. MAR. 12	<b><u>Our Ven. Fr. and Conf. Theophane of the Sygrian Mountain. Our Holy Father Gregory, Pope of Rome. Our Holy Father Simeon the New Theologian.</u></b>	
	[FATHER BRYAN IN MUNSTER]	
	9 AM	LENTEN TERSEXT
	7 PM	AKATHIST OR PARACLIS
THU. MAR. 13	<b><u>The Translation of the Relics of our Holy Father Nicephor, Patriarch of Constantinople.</u></b>	
	FATHER BRYAN IN MUNSTER UNTIL AFTERNOON	
	9 AM	LENTEN TERSEXT

**WE WELCOME ALL OF OUR VISITORS PLEASE JOIN US FOR  
OUR PARISH SOCIAL IN OUR ST. MARY HALL.**



<u>Candles Available</u>	<u>Monthly Donation</u>	<u>Intention</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
Eternal Lamp	\$40.00	In Thanksgiving	Karen Ybarra
Icon Screen (6)	\$40.00	<b>AVAILABLE</b>	
Tetrapod (2)	\$30.00	Special Intention	Al Macek
Nativity Icon	\$25.00	Jesus, Mary ,Joseph	Richard Medwig
Theotokos of Vladimir Icon	\$25.00	Special Intention	Glen Grabow
Resurrection Icon	\$25.00	Ukraine	Olga Vaughn
Annunciation Triptych	\$25.00	<b>AVAILABLE</b>	
Holy Table	\$40.00	Family & Friends	Dan & Olga Vaughn

**Give a spiritual Gift to someone in need.** We have candle Gift Cards you can send or give to a loved one, friend or someone in need of prayers. A single 6-day candle is \$5. For an entire month the cost is \$25. When giving your donation use the candle envelope in the back of the Church. Paired with it, take the candle card to give as a gift. In addition to the name on the candle, please specify a start date if you would like the Church to light the candle[s] in front of the Icons of our Lord or the Theotokos for you on a future date.

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:** our parishioners, family members, friends and others who are ill or infirm: **AMY CHIAPPE, ETHAN EYMAN, CULVER “RED” EYMAN, BOBBI SPAK, JULIE COLLINS, BJ NOVAK, DONALD STEIN, ELAINE WILSON, CORY ROMERO, KEVIN ZAHN, DR. CHARLOTTE NEUMANN, SONIA DOUGLAS-STANTON, RON ZELLER, NICHOLE RICHARDS, JUDY ERNST, BR. JAMES BROWN S.M., WILLIS WILLIAMS, BELINDA DORNEY, DAVID BLEVINS, FIREFIGHTER ROBERT KRAMER, KEITH SCOTT, DANNY ENCISO, AUSTIN MCGOFF, FR. DEACON MICHAEL GEORGE, MONICA KING GILBRECH, KATHERYN LOIDOLT.**

**Upcoming celebrations of the Paraclis to the Theotokos and Mystery of Holy Anointing “Ancient Healing Service” at 7 PM.**

**PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE!**

Friday March 28 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy and Holy Anointing

Wednesday April 16 Pre-Sanctified Liturgy and Holy Anointing [Holy Week]

Wednesday May 28 Festal Evening Prayer of the Ascension with Holy Anointing

Wednesday June 25 Paraclis and Mystery of Holy Anointing

# **UPCOMING HOLY DAYS & SPECIAL SERVICES**

## **AT ST. ATHANASIUS THE GREAT CHURCH**

<b><u>WED. MAR. 12</u></b>	<b>7 PM</b>	<b>AKATHIST OR PARACLIS [LEAD BY CANTORS]</b>
<b><u>FRI. MAR. 14</u></b>	<b>7 PM</b>	<b>LITURGY OF THE PRE-SANCTIFIED GIFTS</b>
<b><u>SAT. MAR. 15</u></b>	<b>9 AM</b>	<b>2<sup>ND</sup> ALL SOULS SATURDAY</b>
	<b>5 PM</b>	<b>VESPERS WITH DIVINE LITURGY</b>
	<b>6:15 PM</b>	<b>MYSTERY OF HOLY REPENTANCE</b>
<b><u>SUN. MAR. 16</u></b>		<b><u>SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS.</u></b> <b><u>2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST.</u></b> <b>9:45 AM THIRD HOUR</b> <b>10 AM DIVINE LITURGY</b> <b>11:30 AM PARISH SOCIAL</b> <b>12 NOON PRE-ASSEMBLY PRESENTATION</b> <b>1:15 PM SUNDAY LENTEN VESPERS</b>
<b><u>WED. MAR. 19</u></b>	<b>7 PM</b>	<b>AKATHIST OR PARACLIS [LEAD BY CANTORS]</b>
<b><u>FRI. MAR. 21</u></b>	<b>7 PM</b>	<b>LITURGY OF THE PRE-SANCTIFIED GIFTS</b>
<b><u>SAT. MAR. 22</u></b>	<b>9 AM</b>	<b>3<sup>RD</sup> ALL SOULS SATURDAY LITURGY</b>
	<b>5 PM</b>	<b>VESPERS WITH DIVINE LITURGY</b>
	<b>6:15 PM</b>	<b>MYSTERY OF HOLY REPENTANCE</b>
<b><u>SUN. MAR. 23</u></b>		<b><u>SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS.</u></b> <b><u>3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST.</u></b> <b>REGULAR ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE</b>

## **Pre-Eparchial Assembly Presentations Continue~**

The final Presentation will be:

**Sun. Mar. 16** "An Eastern Christian Understanding of Evangelization by Fr. Tom Loya, Syncellus Midwest Region.

## **Adult Eastern Christian Formation Program Continues after Parish Social!**

**"Living the Liturgy"** [An introduction to the Liturgy of the Byzantine Churches] In this class Fr. Bryan will continue to present and discuss the various aspects of the Liturgical Life of the Byzantine Churches. It will include the development of the Byzantine Church's Liturgical Cycle, Evening Prayer, Morning Prayer, the Hours, and the Divine Liturgies. **WE WILL NEXT MEET AFTER THE LITURGY ON SUNDAY MARCH 23rd.** We will begin the classes at around 11:45 AM and end at around 1 PM. Please join in!

## **WELLNESS CLASSES CONTINUE!**

**Every Tuesday during the Great Fast Glen Grabow is providing a series of DVD's to help permit the wellness of everyone of us. Please join us Tuesday evenings at 6 pm in our St. Mary Hall. Refreshments will be provided.**

**All Souls Saturdays** ~ Following the Holy Tradition originating in 2 Maccabees 12, the Byzantine Catholic Church has developed the custom of keeping 5 All Souls Saturdays during the year. Yesterday we celebrated the First of the All Souls Saturdays. The successive All Souls Saturdays are the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the Great Fast [March 15], 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the Great Fast [March 22], 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the Great Fast, the Saturday before Pentecost [June 7]. Typically the All Souls Saturdays are celebrated with Vespers for the Departed on Friday Evening, and/or a Divine Liturgy on the day itself. A special part of these services is the Chanting of the Parish Dyptychs [List of the Departed].

## **CATHOLIC RADIO 89.1 & 90.9 FM**

**FR. BRYAN WILL BE APPEARING ON THE "FAITH IN ACTION" RADIO SHOW ON THE WEEK OF MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup>. THE SHOW IS HEARD MONDAYS AND FRIDAYS AT 10 AM, TUESDAY AND THURSDAY AT 4 PM, AND SATURDAY AT 9 AM. YOU CAN ALSO HEAR IT AT [WWW.CATHOLICRADIOINDY.COM](http://WWW.CATHOLICRADIOINDY.COM).**

***BE STRONG...IN LOVE; IN ADVERSITY; IN WITNESS***

***ANNUAL MEN'S RETREAT***

***FRIDAY MARCH 28 THROUGH SUNDAY MARCH 30***

***LIAL RENEWAL CENTER NEAR TOLEDO, OHIO***

***SPECIAL GUEST PRESENTER: FR. G. SCOTT BOGHOSSIAN***

***OF THE PASSAIC EPARCHY***

***DISCOVER HOW TO BE THE AUTHENTIC MAN GOD CREATED YOU TO BE, AND ENCOUNTER THE STRENGTH GOD GIVES YOU TO LIVE YOUR VOCATION AS A MAN OF FAITH. FOR MORE INFORMATION,***

***VISIT [WWW.BYZCATHCULTURALCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.BYZCATHCULTURALCENTER.ORG) OR EMAIL***

***[RETREAT@BYZCATHCULTURALCENTER.ORG](mailto:RETREAT@BYZCATHCULTURALCENTER.ORG) OR CALL 216-357-2933***

***OR "LIKE" THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CULTURAL CENTER***

***FACEBOOK PAGE.***

***ADULT GREAT FAST REFLECTION [MIDWEST REGION]***

Sunday April 6<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 6 PM

Annunciation Byzantine Catholic Church

14610 Will-Cook Rd. Homer Glen, IL

*The Desert: The Spiritual Home of the Modern Day Disciple*

\Presented by: Father Deacon Michael Lee, STL, OCDS

"In the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place, and there He prayed."

[Mark 1:35]

You are invited to come away from the world to a solitary place -a desert- to learn, to pray, to listen, and to enter deeply into the time of the Great Fast. In light of our modern, hectic lives, we will reflect on our need for the desert today, what the desert is, how do we enter it, and how to thrive in this deserted place. The great saints and spiritual masters will lead us on the inward journey to the center of our heart where God dwells.

For more Information: visit [www.byzcathculturalcenter.org](http://www.byzcathculturalcenter.org), e-mail

[info@byzcathculturalcenter.org](mailto:info@byzcathculturalcenter.org), call Father Deacon Michael Lee at (208) 861-3817, or "like" the Byzantine Catholic Cultural Center Facebook page.

# **BYZANTEEN LENTEN REFLECTION**

## **"WHATEVER"**

**"BELIEVE WHATEVER YOU WANT. DO WHATEVER WORKS FOR YOU." THAT'S THE MESSAGE WE GET EVERY DAY. SO HOW DOES A GOD WHO IS "EVER-EXISTING, YET EVER THE SAME," A GOD WHO SAYS "I AM THE TRUTH," FIT INTO OUR WORLD, WHERE EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE A MATTER OF PERSONAL OPINION? FIND OUT HOW YOUNG ADULTS LIKE ISHANI PETEYA, ROB FETSKO, TOMMY MARTIN AND THERESA PLISHKA DEVELOPED A RELATIONSHIP WITH ETERNAL GOD IN THEIR FAST PACED, EVER CHANGING LIVES, AND DISCOVER THE REAL CONCRETE DIFFERENCE HE HAS MADE.**

**GET TO KNOW WHY WE BELIEVE WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT OUR GOD, AND KNOW THE JOY YOU'LL HAVE IF YOU "DO WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU."**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT**

**[WWW.BYZCATHCULTURALCENTER.ORG](http://WWW.BYZCATHCULTURALCENTER.ORG), OR E-MAIL [INFO@BYZCATHCULTURALCENTER.ORG](mailto:INFO@BYZCATHCULTURALCENTER.ORG), CALL 216-357-2933, OR "LIKE" THE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CULTURAL CENTER FACEBOOK PAGE.**



# **Fasting Regulations – 2014**

## **Abstinence**

The law of abstinence forbids the use of meat or meat by-products, permitting the use of eggs and dairy products.

Abstinence is to be observed on all Wednesdays and Fridays during the Holy Season of the Great Fast and on Holy Saturday.

## **Strict Abstinence**

The law of strict abstinence (fast) forbids the use of meat, eggs and dairy products or any of their by-products.

All of the adult faithful of the Eparchy who receive Holy Communion are obliged to observe Strict Abstinence. Those with valid medical reasons; pregnant or nursing mothers are not bound to fast.

Strict Fast and Abstinence is to be observed on the First Day of the Great Fast, Monday, March 3rd and on Great and Holy Friday, April 18th.

## **Dispensation**

Pastors and administrators may, for a just cause, grant to the individual faithful and to individual families, dispensations or commutations of abstinence and strict abstinence into other pious practices.

## **Liturgical Directives**

### **Presanctified Liturgy**

The Liturgies of St. John Chrysostom or St. Basil the Great are not to be celebrated on the weekdays of Great Lent – **not even for funerals**. In compliance with the liturgical prescriptions of the Byzantine Catholic Church pastors and administrators should celebrate the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts during the Great Fast, that is, on Wednesdays and Fridays, if possible, and at least one of the first three days of Great and Holy Week. A stipend may be accepted for this Divine Liturgy and it is to be the only Divine Liturgy celebrated on that particular day.

## **GREAT FAST SUNDAY AFTERNOON VESPERS**

*The Great Fast is a time for all of us to spend more time in personal and community prayer. To help us to accomplish this goal, in keeping with our Byzantine Catholic Tradition, St. Athanasius the Great Parish will be celebrating Vespers on Sunday Afternoons during the Great Fast. The plan is to celebrate this Liturgy 15 minutes after the close of either our Lenten Luncheon [Cheesefare Sunday and the Sunday of Orthodoxy] or our Eastern Christian Formation Adult Enrichment Class, usually around 1:15 PM. Please join us for this special time of prayer, and also for the Akathist [Wednesdays at 7 PM] and the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts [Friday at 7 PM].*



### **It is time to order your Pascha and Pierogies [Pyrohi or Veranyky]**

*It is NOT too early to start ordering your Pierogies for each week during the Great Fast. Please call John Danovich at the Parish Office at 317-632-4157 to find out which varieties will be available and to place your order. YOUR HELP IS NEEDED TO MAKE PIEROGIES AND TO PREPARE OR*

*OTHER BAKED GOODS, SO PLEASE ALSO CALL JOHN TO VOLUNTEER. You may also call the Parish Office to order your Paschas now for your Paschal Baskets!*

*Please let all of your friends, neighbors and even your enemies know about what is cooking at St. Athanasius the Great Byzantine Catholic Church.*

### **BYZANTEEN YOUTH RALLY JULY 10-13, 2014**

#### **The TRANSFIGURATION of Christ, of US, of our World**

*Mount St. Mary University Emmitsburg, MD*

*ages: 13-19 Cost: \$300.00 [plus transportation]*

*For more Information contact: Father Edward Cimbala*

*ByzanTEEN Rally 2014 at 908-725-06125*

## **FATHER'S LITURGICAL CORNER**



*Father, today is the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Why do we call it that? Why are icons so important in the Byzantine Church?*

*The First Sunday of the Great Fast has been called the Sunday of Orthodoxy since shortly after the final restoration of the use and veneration of Icons in 843 AD. The name of this Sunday reflects the great significance which icons possess for the Byzantine Catholic Church and the*

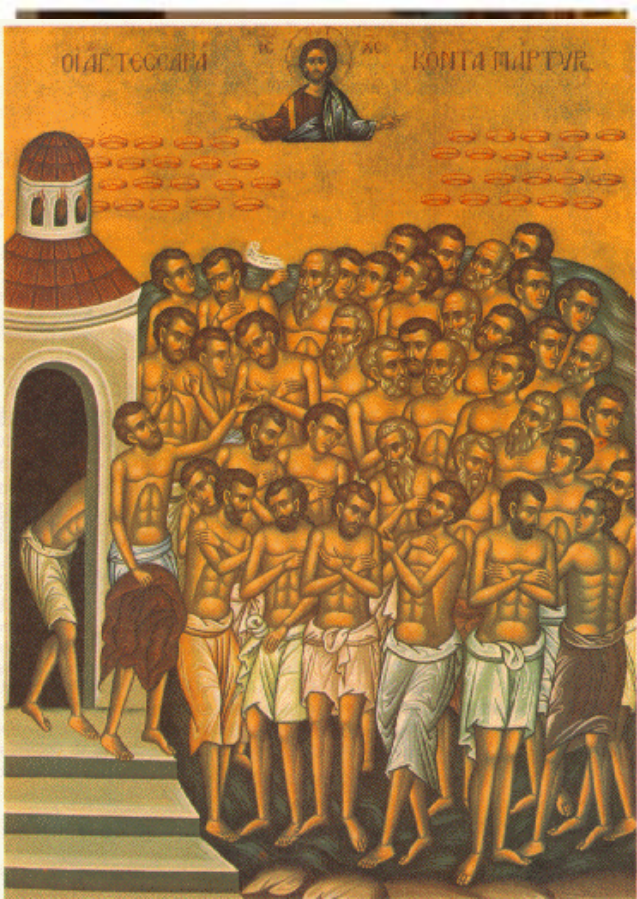
*Orthodox Church.*

*Icons are not optional devotional extras, but an integral part of our Orthodox Byzantine Catholic faith and devotion. The debate involved important issues: the character of Christ's human nature, the Christian attitude towards matter, and the true meaning of Christian redemption. Icons are held by all Orthodox and Byzantine Catholics to be a necessary consequence of Christian faith in the Incarnation of the Word (John 1:14), Jesus Christ. Icons are considered by us to have a sacramental character, making present to the believer the person or event depicted on them. However, the Byzantine Catholics and Orthodox always make a clear doctrinal distinction between the veneration (proskynesis) paid to icons and the worship (latria) which is due to God alone.*

*The heresy of Iconoclasm began during the reign of the Byzantine Empire Leo (III) the Isaurian. Taking the Scriptural "prohibition" of images out of its proper context, he began the public destruction of Icons on public buildings. He began the persecution of the Orthodox Catholic Christians almost immediately; even sending troops into Churches to tear out and destroy or whitewash the icons within.*

*For over 100 years this persecution continued, ending briefly around the time Seventh Ecumenical Council [787 AD]. The persecution resumed in the early 9<sup>th</sup> Century, ending finally with the restoration of the Holy Icons in 843 AD during the regency of the Empress St. Theodora.*

*Since Iconoclasm was the last of the great Christological controversies to trouble the Church, its defeat is considered to be the final triumph of the Church over heresy. All subsequent heresies tend to be merely offshoots of the earlier great heresies*



*March 9*

*The Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste*

## Forty Good Men

UNTIL FAIRLY RECENTLY it was popular in Christian circles to identify oneself as a “soldier of Christ.” There was biblical precedent for the image. St Paul, for instance, told Timothy that he “...*must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*” (2 Tm 2:3). Catholics maintained various “knighthoods,” recalling the Middle Ages. Protestants even devised a “paramilitary” church, the Salvation

Army with its popular theme song, “Onward, Christian Soldiers.”

While the Gospels offer negative images of soldiers whipping Christ and gambling for His clothes, they also show us soldiers in another light. We see soldiers listening to John the Baptist and asking him what they should do (see *Lk 3:14*). We hear of God-fearing soldiers, like the centurion in Capernaum who “*loves our nation, and has built us a synagogue*” (*Lk 7:5*). And the first fruit of the Gospel among the Gentiles was an officer of the Italian Regiment stationed in Caesarea, Cornelius the Centurion (see *Acts 10*).

Perhaps because armies do see more of the world than many other people, Christian soldiers grew in number, even during the time of the Roman persecutions. They were often targeted by their anti-Christian superiors and many were martyred. Military martyrs like St George and Ss. Sergius and Bacchos, who suffered in Asia Minor during the great persecutions at the beginning of the fourth century, became models for other Christian

## *The Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste [Page 2]*

soldiers in the East who saw themselves as, first of all, in the army of the Lord.

### **The Thundering Legion**

In AD 312 St Constantine the Great experienced his famous vision of the Cross. The next year, as Emperor of the West, he issued an edict of religious toleration, thus ending the persecution of Christians in his realm. Licinius, as Emperor of the East, signed on, but kept a wary eye on the Christians he ruled. Licinius knew that, if he were to fight Constantine, the Christians would side with their protector. As the struggle for universal control intensified, Licinius began ordering the extermination of Christians.

Licinius was particularly wary of Christians in the army. They refused to offer the usual sacrifices to the Roman gods and were considered a threat to the traditional Roman social customs. There were a number of Christians – soldiers included – in Asia Minor where the Twelfth or “Thundering” Legion was stationed near Sebaste to protect the eastern border of the empire. In 320, when Licinius ordered a major persecution of Christians, forty soldiers from this unit refused to take part.

We learn what happened next from St Basil the Great who lived nearby only a few years after the soldiers’ ordeal. St Basil’s mother, Emilia, had erected a chapel at Ennesi, the family estate, to house their relics and their story was part of the family lore. According to St Basil, the legion commander and the local governor each tried to convince the soldiers to comply with the orders they had received. They were unsuccessful. Threats, torture and imprisonment followed but the men remained firm. Finally the unit was condemned to a slow but certain death.

The soldiers were ordered to march naked onto a frozen pond during a particularly bitter winter night. A warm bath was set up nearby to tempt the men to recant. Ignoring the urging of their guards, the forty encouraged each other to remain firm and not give way: they were soldiers of Christ.

## *The Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste [Page 3]*

### **The Victors Revealed**

Frostbite and hypothermia began taking their toll, when one of the soldiers gave in and recanted. Then, Basil reports, the most remarkable thing happened. One of the guards had a vision of angels richly adorning the soldiers who had remained faithful to Christ. Overcome by the sight, he tore off his own clothes and joined his suffering comrades on the ice. St Ephrem the Syrian, commenting on the martyrs' ordeal, likened this guard to St Matthias replacing Judas in the company of the Apostles.

Some icons of these saints depict a woman seemingly helping one of the soldiers. St. Basil tells it this way. By morning most of the soldiers had succumbed to the bitter cold. The prefect ordered all the bodies to be taken away in wagons and be burned. One was found still alive and the guards set him aside, but, at a sign from him, his own mother hoisted him onto the cart alongside his dead comrades for their final journey.

Licinius' fears were well founded. In four years Constantine defeated him, taking control of the whole empire. He was imprisoned and later hanged by order of Constantine.

What remained of the martyr's relics were collected and enshrined at Emilia's chapel. Emilia's granddaughters gave a portion to the Bishop of Brescia in northern Italy who built a church in their honor. Relics were also sent to Constantinople as the fourth century historian Sozomen described.

The Forty Holy Martyrs are remembered for their steadfastness in trial. They came to be seen as personifying the words of Christ in the Gospel, "*He who shall endure to the end will be saved*" (Mt 24:13). Their endurance earned them remembrance in our liturgical services. In the mystery of Crowning bride and groom are blessed with these words: "Remember them, O Lord our God, as you remembered Your Holy Forty Martyrs, sending down upon them crowns from heaven." The martyrs' faithfulness to Christ was rewarded; the couple's fidelity can expect a like reward.

## *The Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste [Page 4]*

As models of endurance the Forty Martyrs are the only saints commemorated on a weekday during the Great Fast, encouraging us to endure whatever hardships we may experience in this season.

“O martyrs of Christ, you have made the holy Fast resplendent by your glorious deeds. Being forty in number, you hallowed the forty days of the Fast, imitating the redeeming Passion through your sufferings for Christ. Since you have boldness, intercede that we may celebrate in peace the third-day Resurrection of the God and Savior of our souls!”

*Sticheron from Orthros*

### **St Basil the Great on the Martyrs**

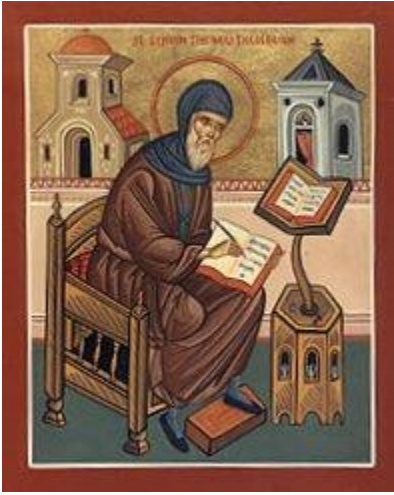
“What trouble would you not take to find some one to pray for you to the Lord! Here are forty, praying with one voice. Where two or three are gathered together in the name of the Lord, there is He in the midst. Who doubts His presence in the midst of forty? ...

“Let your supplications be made with the martyrs. Let the young men imitate their fellows. Let fathers pray to be fathers of sons such as these. Let mothers learn from a good mother. ... She herself lifted him in her arms and placed him on the cart with the rest bound for the pyre: a veritable martyr’s mother!

“O sacred troop! O glorious company! O invincible battalion! Flowers of the Church, yes, I repeat, human flowers! Stars that shine among the stars! Martyrs worthy of the praise of all the centuries! To you the doors of paradise were opened, and from the palaces of heaven the angels, prophets, patriarchs and all saints came out to witness your triumphal arrival. A sight worthy of the angelic army: forty warriors in the very flower of their youth who have disdained this life, who have loved the Lord above parents, children, wives and relatives. They disregarded this temporal life that they might glorify God in their members....

“Having raised up the trophy of their victory against hell, each one received a crown from the hand of Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory and dominion to the ages of ages.”

*From Homily 19*



**St. Symeon the New Theologian** (949–1022 AD) was a Byzantine Christian monk and poet who was the last of three saints canonized by the Byzantine Catholic Church and given the title of "Theologian" (along with John the Apostle and Gregory of Nazianzus).

"Theologian" was not applied to Symeon in the modern academic sense of theological study, but to recognize someone who spoke from personal experience of the vision of God. One of his principal teachings was that humans could and should experience *theoria* (literally

"contemplation," or direct experience of God). The details of Symeon's life come from his own writings and from the *Life of Symeon*, written by his disciple Nicetas. He was born at Basileion in Galatia to Basil and Theophano Galaton, members of the Byzantine nobility who supported the Macedonian dynasty. His given name at birth is unclear—it was traditional at that time, when becoming a monk, to take on a new name with the same initial as one's birth name. Symeon may have ignored that tradition in order to take the same name as his spiritual father, Symeon the Studite. In his writings, he sometimes described the experiences of "George," which might have been his birth name.

At age fourteen he met Symeon the Studite (also called Symeon the Pious), a holy monk of the Monastery of Stoudios in Constantinople. That meeting convinced the younger Symeon to forego higher education and take on Symeon the Studite as his spiritual father. At that time he began studying the life of prayer and asceticism under his guidance, with the desire to immediately enter the monastery. Symeon the Studite asked the young Symeon to wait before becoming a monk, so he spent the years until age twenty-seven serving in the household of a patrician, though according to some sources he served the emperor instead.

Living a worldly life during the day, he reportedly spent his evenings in vigils and prayer, putting into practice the writings of two authors—Marcus Eremita and Diadochos of Photiki—that were given to him by his spiritual father. It was during this time that Symeon had his first experience of God as divine light, as he described later in one of his *Discourses* (*Disc.* 22.2–4). He attributed the experience to the prayers of Symeon the Studite. In spite of the experience, the young Symeon confessed that he still fell into worldly ways of living.



**St. Symeon the New Theologian [Page 2]** Direct personal experience of God was to become one of Symeon's central teachings in his writings, and to the monks who followed him.

At age twenty-seven, he entered the Monastery of Stoudios, giving his life over completely to discipleship to his teacher Symeon the Studite. The younger Symeon was extremely zealous in his practices and in following his teacher—to such an extent that the abbot of the monastery insisted that Symeon leave after only a few months.

Following the elder Symeon's advice, he left for the nearby Monastery of St. Mammias in Constantinople, which was described as run down, both physically and spiritually. During his time at St. Mammias he continued to follow Symeon the Studite's guidance. Within three years after moving to St. Mammias, Symeon was tonsured as a monk, ordained as a priest, and elected as the abbot of the monastery. He spent the next twenty-five years as abbot of St. Mammias, attracting many monks and clergy with his reputation for learning and sanctity.<sup>[7]</sup>

Not all of the monks were attracted by Symeon's zealous approach. Symeon attempted to reform the Byzantine monasteries, where monks had become subservient to the emperor and had acquired large holdings of property, libraries, and art. His writings and teachings were aimed at returning the monasteries to their traditional role in the early church, urging the monks to take up a life of simplicity, asceticism, purity of heart, and constant prayer.

In 1009 Symeon was sent into exile near Paloukiton, a small village near Chrysopolis on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorous. According to one account, he was left by church authorities alone and without food, in the middle of winter. There he reconstructed a ruined Church and established the Monastery of St. Macrina.

Symeon remained at the Saint Macrina monastery, where many close disciples, both monks and secular people, gathered around him. He also wrote during that time and made himself accessible to all who wanted to see him. Symeon spent the last thirteen years of his life in exile, dying from dysentery on March 12, 1022. According to his biographer and disciple, Nicetas, St. Symeon foretold his own death many years previously, and on his last day called together all the monks to sing the funeral hymns.

**St. Theodora the Empress** (c. 815 – after 867) was a Byzantine Empress as the spouse of the Byzantine emperor Theophilos, and regent of her son, Michael III, from Theophilos' death in 842 to 855. For her restoration of the veneration of icons, which ended the Byzantine Iconoclasm, she is venerated as a saint in the Byzantine Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches; her Feast Day is February 11. She is the patron Saint of Churches.

Originally from Paphlagonia, Theodora was of Armenian aristocratic descent.

The names of her parents were preserved in Theophanes Continuatus, the continuation of the chronicle started by Theophanes the Confessor. They were Marinos, a drungarios, and Theoktiste Phlorina.

Theodora was a sister of Bardas and Petronas. Theophanes also records three sisters: Kalomaria, Sophia and Irene. Irene reportedly married Sergios, brother of Patriarch Photios I of Constantinople.

In 829, Theophilos succeeded to the throne. He was sixteen-years-old and unmarried. The following year his stepmother, Euphrosyne, proclaimed a bride-show. Potential brides from every theme travelled from their homelands to Constantinople, Theodora among them. The poet Kassia was said to have taken part.

The bride-show took place in May, 830, and Theodora was chosen to become empress, probably by her new mother-in-law. The marriage took place on 5 June 830, in Hagia Sophia. Euphrosyne soon retired to a convent and Theodora remained the only Augusta.

The family of Theodora seems to have followed her to court. Her brothers became officials and her sisters married into the court aristocracy. During her own marriage she bore Theophilos five daughters and two sons, the younger of whom became the future Michael III.

Despite the fact that Theophilos was an iconoclast, Theodora held fast to the veneration of icons which she kept in her chambers in the imperial palace. One story holds that a servant witnessed her venerating her icons and reported her to the emperor. When her husband confronted her about the incident she stated that she had merely been "playing with dolls." Two of her icons are kept at the

**St. Theodora the Empress [con't]** monastery of Vatopedi on Mount Athos to this day and are referred to as "Theodora's Dolls". They are displayed annually on the Sunday of Orthodoxy.

Theodora is said to have intervened to save Lazarus Zographos from further torture under her husband. Whether their opposing religious beliefs strained their relationship is unclear. Theophilus' health however eventually failed and he died on 20 January 842. He was about twenty-nine years old.

Following the death of her husband, Theodora served as regent for her son Michael. She overrode Theophilus' ecclesiastical policy and summoned a council under the patriarch Methodius, in which the veneration, but not worship, of icons (images of Jesus Christ and the saints) was finally restored and the iconoclastic clergy deposed.

She carried on the government with a firm and judicious hand; she replenished the treasury and deterred the Bulgarians from an attempt at invasion. However, it was during her regency that a vigorous persecution of the Paulician heresy commenced.

In order to perpetuate her power she purposely neglected her son's education, and therefore must be held responsible for the voluptuous character which he developed under the influence of his uncle Bardas, who was Theodora's brother and likewise of Mamikonian heritage.<sup>[2]</sup>

Theodora endeavoured in vain to combat Bardas's authority; in 855 she was displaced from her regency at his prompting, and being subsequently convicted of intrigues against him was relegated to the monastery of Gastria. She died after his assassination at the hands of Basil I, thus witnessing the end of the dynasty she had worked so hard to preserve. She was canonized in recompense for her zeal on behalf of the restoration of icons as objects of veneration. Her feast day is February 11.

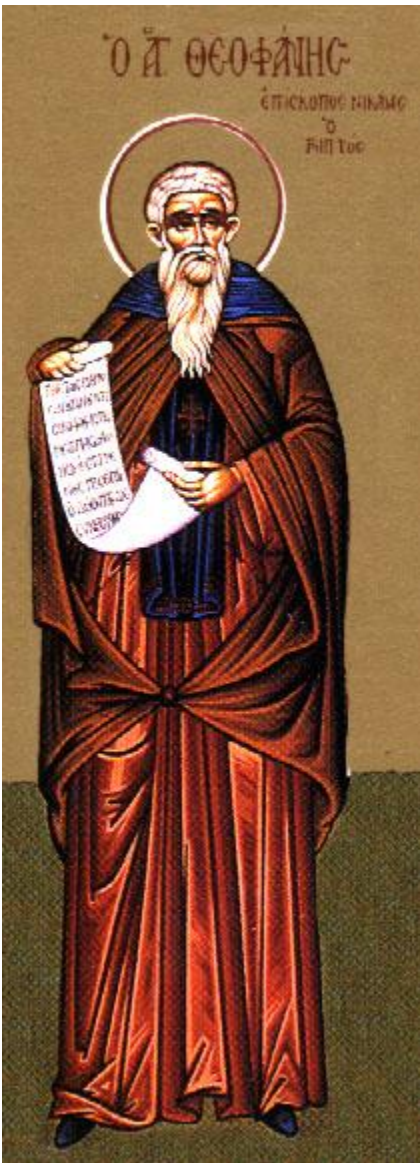
The incorrupt relics of St. Theodora the Empress are kept in the Cathedral of the Most Holy Theotokos Speliotissis in Corfu, Greece. The relics are carried in procession on the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, the first Sunday of Great Lent

**St. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem** (560 in Damascus – March 11, 638 in Jerusalem) was the Patriarch from 634 until his death, and is venerated as a saint in the Byzantine Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Churches. Before rising to the primacy of the see of Jerusalem, he was a monk and theologian who was the chief protagonist for orthodox teaching in the doctrinal controversy on the essential nature of Jesus and his volitional acts.

Sophronius was of Arab descent. A teacher of rhetoric, Sophronius became an ascetic in Egypt about 580 and then entered the monastery of St. Theodosius near Bethlehem. Traveling to monastic centers in Asia Minor, Egypt, and Rome, he accompanied the Byzantine chronicler St. John Moschus, who dedicated to him his celebrated tract on the religious life, "The Spiritual Meadow". On the death of Moschus in Rome in 619, Sophronius accompanied the body back to Jerusalem for monastic burial. He traveled to Alexandria, Egypt, and to Constantinople in the year 633 to persuade the respective patriarchs to renounce Monothelism, a heterodox teaching that espoused a single, divine will in Christ to the exclusion of a human will. Sophronius' extensive writings on this question are all lost.

Although unsuccessful in this mission, Sophronius was elected patriarch of Jerusalem in 634. Soon after his enthronement he forwarded his noted synodical letter to Pope Honorius I and to the Eastern patriarchs, explaining the orthodox belief in the two natures, human and divine, of Christ, as opposed to Monothelism, which he viewed as a subtle form of heretical Monophysitism .

In his Christmas sermon of 634, Sophronius was more concerned with keeping the clergy in line with the Chalcedonian view of God, giving only the most conventional of warnings of the Muslim-Saracen advance on Palestine, commenting that the Saracens already controlled Bethlehem. Sophronius, who viewed the Muslim control of Palestine as "unwitting representatives of God's inevitable chastisement of weak and wavering Christians", died soon after the fall of Jerusalem to the caliph Umar I in 637, but not before he had negotiated the recognition of civil and religious liberty for Christians in exchange for tribute - an agreement known as Umari Treaty. The caliph himself came to Jerusalem, and met with the patriarch at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Sophronius invited Umar to pray there, but Umar declined, fearing to endanger the Church's status as a Christian temple.



**Saint Theophanes the Confessor** (c. 758/760 – March 12, 817/818) was a member of the Byzantine aristocracy, who became a monk and chronicler. He is venerated on March 12 in the Byzantine Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Theophanes was born in Constantinople of wealthy and noble iconodule parents: Isaac, imperial governor of the islands of the Black Sea, and Theodora, of whose family nothing is known. His father died when Theophanes was three years old, and the Byzantine Emperor Constantine V Copronymus (740-775) subsequently saw to the boy's education and upbringing at the imperial court.

Theophanes would hold several offices under this patron.

He was married at the age of twelve, but convinced his wife to lead a life of virginity. In 799, after the death of his father-in-law, they separated with mutual consent to embrace the religious life. As an abbot he was present at the Second General Council of Nicaea in 787, and signed its decrees in defense of the veneration of icons.

When Emperor Leo V the Armenian (813-820) resumed his iconoclastic warfare, he ordered Theophanes brought to Constantinople. The Emperor tried in vain to induce him to condemn the same veneration of icons that had been sanctioned by the council. Theophanes was cast into prison and for two years suffered cruel treatment. After his release, he was banished to Samothrace in 817, where overwhelmed with afflictions, he lived only seventeen days. He is credited with many miracles that occurred after his death, which most likely took place on 12 March, the day he is commemorated in the *Synaxarion*.

St. Theophane the Confessor was also a noted chronicler and church historian. At the insistence of several Church leaders, he began to research the history of the Church from the time of the Emperor Diocletian [300 AD] until his lifetime. This detailed history developed into a six volume monumental work.

**REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN THE MILITARY ESPECIALLY THOSE SERVING IN AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ.**

**MAJOR CRAIG M. EYMAN DO~** is Fr. Bryan's 2<sup>nd</sup> youngest brother. He has reentered the Army Reserve and is currently serving with the 848<sup>th</sup> FST [Forward Surgical Team] stationed in Twinsburg, OH. He has returned to his family in Solon, OH.

**CAPTAIN BRIAN HEWKO~** has been a friend of Fr. Bryan. Brian is from St. Anne Byzantine Catholic Church in Austinburg, OH. He is a 2008 graduate of West Point. Brian became a Captain in the U. S. Army on July 1, 2011, and has been deployed to Afghanistan during 2011 and 2012. Brian is currently serving our Republic at an Army base in Arizona, where he is training for Army Intelligence. He thanks you for your prayerful support.

**CAPTAIN CHRISTINA MOMONIER~** is a friend of Fr. Bryan. Christina is from Baltimore, MD and was received into the Byzantine Catholic Church at St. Michael the Archangel Parish in Fairport Harbor, Ohio. She is currently serving at Ft. Drum, NY.

**CAPTAIN [FATHER] JOSEPH BRANKATELLI USA ~** is a friend of Fr. Bryan and a priest of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Cleveland and the Archdiocese for the Military Services USA. Fr. Joseph has returned to the United States and continues to serve the Military Archdiocese at Fort Bragg, NC.

**SPECIALIST 3 KATIE WELLER USAF and AIRMEN FIRST CLASS**

**JOHANN WELLER USAF ~** are friends of Fr. Bryan and members of St. Ann Byzantine Catholic Church in Harrisburg, PA. Before entering the Armed Forces they were active with the BYZANTEEN Youth Rallies.

**PRIVATE CODY ROMERO USA, STAFF SERGEANT NIKO ROMERO, and STAFF SERGEANT RORY ROMERO** Sons of Sonia Stanton. Cody recently received the Military Blessing at our Church and is serving at Fort Benning, GA. His brother Rory has been deployed to Afghanistan.

**PRIVATE JACKSON RUANE USA~** Jackson is formerly from St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Parish in Ashtabula, OH. He has completed Basic Training and was deployed to Korea on September 9, 2013.

**PRIVATE ABIGAIL BROWN USA~** is the Grand Niece of parishioner Belinda Dorney. She was recently promoted to PFC and is training in Army Intelligence at a base in Arizona. And she is scheduled to graduate on March 13<sup>th</sup>.

Please inform Fr. Bryan of any changes.

*May God, in His infinite Love and Mercy, guide and protect all of those serving our Republic in the Armed Forces.*

*Welcome to St. Athanasius Byzantine Catholic Church of Indianapolis, IN. We are a Byzantine Catholic Community that, as part of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy [Diocese] of Parma, is in Communion with Pope Francis I and the other Catholic Churches. If you remain until the end of the Divine Liturgy; you will fulfill your Sunday Obligation. [If you leave early you do not fulfill your Sunday obligation.] We welcome to Holy Communion all Orthodox and Catholic Christians, who are able to receive Holy Communion in their own parish Church. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, all should come forward to kiss the Holy Cross, or be anointed with blessed oil, and share in the Blessed Bread. Then join us in our St. Mary Hall for our Coffee Social. THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!*