

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 descendents 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...."

## St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

2220 Reeves Road NE

Warren, OH 44483

[www.saintjohnswarren.org](http://www.saintjohnswarren.org)

Friend of the Bridegroom: "He must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:30)



**Sunday, Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026**

**Forgiveness Sunday**

Fr. Brian Crivella, **Rector**.....330-372-3895 / [BrianCrivella@gmail.com](mailto:BrianCrivella@gmail.com)

Dn. John Tutoki, **Hall Coordinator** ..... 330-720-3541

Nina, **Prayer List Coordinator**...440-487-6187 / [treasurerstjohnsorthodoxchurch@gmail.com](mailto:treasurerstjohnsorthodoxchurch@gmail.com)

**Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> Forgiveness Sunday / Cheesefare / Tone 4**

9:30 am Divine Liturgy followed by Coffee Hour

5:00 pm Vespers with the Rite of Forgiveness

**Monday, Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> Hieromartyr Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna**

6:00 pm Canon of St. Andrew of Crete followed by Confessions

**Tuesday, Feb 24<sup>th</sup> Ven. Erasmus of the Kiev Caves**

6:00 pm Canon of St. Andrew of Crete followed by Confessions

**Wednesday, Feb 25<sup>th</sup> St. Tarasius, Archbishop of Constantinople**

5:00 pm AA Meeting

6:00 pm Presanctified Liturgy followed by Confessions

**Thursday, Feb 26<sup>th</sup> "Mezhetsk" Icon of the Mother of God**

6:00 pm Canon of St. Andrew of Crete followed by Confessions

**Saturday, Feb 28<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of St. Theodore the Recruit**

9:30 am Divine Liturgy with the Commemoration of the Departed & Blessing of Koliva

5:00 pm Great Vespers followed by Confessions

**Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Orthodoxy / Tone 5**

9:30 am Divine Liturgy with the Procession of Icons & Reading of Synodicon

**Attendance/Stewardship February 15<sup>th</sup>**

Attendance: 63 Adults & 20 Children

Total: 83

**Prayer Corner**

Fr. Michael (Chris DiGiacobbe's Dad)	Sbdcn Eugene Stan
Sbdcn Joseph (Clyde)	Sbdcn George
Raymond	Sarah Crivella
Greg, Clara, Jeanie	Anna
Anna Marie & Donald Wood	Art & Sally Cogar
Azouria	Laura & Roy
Cara DeToro (Fr Dcn John's Friend)	Charles & Joanie Monroe
Cheryl Culei	Laura & Roy
James Livermore Jr.	David & Sharon McGhee
Elena Szakach (Niki Rice's Mom)	Eric
Patrick, Elizabeth, Patrick, Cassandra	Jim Adgate
Sam Marcello (Dean's friend in the hospital)	
Cherie & Don Davison (David Wood's Friends)	
Linda Antenelli & Tammy Wallace (Michelle Thomas's Aunt & Friend)	
The Faculty, Teachers, and Students of Holy Trinity Orthodox Academy	
The Suffering Christians in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East	

**Newly Departed:** Tom Hall (2/20) [Harry's Friend], David Campbell (2/9) & Virgil Stan (2/7) [Sbdcn Eugene's Brother], & Patricia Tutoki (1/13)

**Expecting:** Donald & Kayla Cunningham

**Catechumens:** Alexander Mackey, Max & Kelly Killian, Michael & Sarah Vidman, & Joseph Foster

**Birthdays:** Liev Corbett (24<sup>th</sup>) & Fred DiGiacobbe (26<sup>th</sup>)

**Anniversaries:** xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

**Candle Commemorations**

Theotokos	For Helen Szakach
Altar	For the Birthday of Fred DiGiacobbe
Christ	The Health of Clyde McKenzie

**Announcements**

**Liturgy for the Departed**

We will have a Liturgy for all the departed members and family of our parish followed by the blessing of Koliva *this coming Saturday*. Please check the list at the candlestand in case any names are missing and write them on the list or e-mail Father so he can make sure that they're prayed for on Saturday.

**Annual Meeting Date Changed to March 15th**

Our Parish Annual Meeting will be on March 15th after a brief coffee hour. Please be sure to attend!

**Iconostasis Beautification Project**

We will be repainting the Iconostasis on Sunday, March 29, immediately following Divine Liturgy/Coffee Hour, & again on Monday, March 30, beginning at 4:30 PM. All are welcome to help as we care for and beautify God's house. Due to the sensitive and detailed nature of the work, we kindly ask that only those with steady hands and patience assist with the painting. Gold and brushes will be provided, along with refreshments in gratitude for your time and helping hands. A sign up sheet is at the Candle Stand for those interested in helping! See you then!

**2025 Donation Statements**

Donation statements for 2025 are available from Carol Bobosh at the Candlestand. Contact her if you have any questions regarding your statement.

**Forgiveness Sunday & Confessions**

Tonight we will begin Great Lent with Forgiveness Vespers, where we all ask for and give each other forgiveness with the words "Forgive me brother/sister" "God forgives and I forgive" "May God forgive us both!" followed by the kiss of peace. All Orthodox Christians should make it a point to be present in order to start the Great Fast well! Also during Great Lent confessions are in order for all Orthodox Christians. Please be sure to approach in a timely manner.