



The Tower

March 2020

The Christian Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr,
Overleigh Cemetery, Overleigh Road, Chester CH4 7HW

Parish Website: <http://www.stbarbara.org.uk/>

Diocesan Website: www.thyateira.org.uk

Facebook: [Greek Orthodox Community of Saint Barbara the Great Martyr in Chester](#)

Charity No: 1144751

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Clean Monday is on the 2nd March and thus begins Great Lent.

The previous day is **Forgiveness Sunday** and we seek the forgiveness of all our brethren as the Liturgy ends. We ought not miss this short ceremony and should approach it and our brothers and sisters with sincerity and love. It is also the day on which we remember Saint David, the patron of Wales in which part of our parish lies.

The following Sunday, 9th, is the **Sunday of Orthodoxy** and we should remember to bring our family icons from home so that we carry our own special icons in procession around the church giving thanks for the restoration of the icons. We complete the morning by praising all those saints in history who have upheld the true Orthodox Faith against those who have held contrary views, of whose teachings which we must wholeheartedly reject.

Lent is a time of both anticipation and reflection. It is a time for considering the state of our soul and resolving to do something about it through a genuine act of Repentance and Father Pancratios will be available as required during Lent for you to make your Confession. Lent is also a time of anticipation, a preparation to meet the Risen Lord as He completes his saving work '... risen from the grave, trampling down death by death, and on those in the tombs bestowing life.' Yes, Lent is a busy time for us as Orthodox Christians, let us not waste a moment of it.

May God grant you strength this Lent

Fr Pancratios & Presb. Anna, Fr Dn John & Diaconisa Vera

Going Outside!

Some little while ago I was asked if it is alright to go out of church at the time when the curtains are closed while the clergy receive Communion.

The question has to be asked: Why do we want to go out of church at this moment? The choir is singing, those who wish to receive Communion are composing themselves and lining up, while the rest of us should be standing quietly offering prayers for ourselves and especially for those who will receive the Body and Blood of the Saviour.

So, in short, the answer is: No, it is not alright.

Do we have an urgent need? The toilet, or the baby's nappy, matters that simply cannot wait. Well yes, for us to attend to these matters as quickly as possible and return quietly to our place. But to go outside for a gossip or a cigarette is simply unacceptable; we are offering an insult to the Christ who has called us together to worship Him and receive the Holy Mystery of His Body and Blood.

Ideally, we ought to train ourselves to arrive for the beginning of the services and not leave until the distribution of the Antidoron and final dismissal.

Lastly, I draw your attention to the section on Holy Communion and Confession to be found in the Hemerologion on pages 294/5. Copies are still available in the Refectory.

Fr Pancratios

Priest in Charge:

Very Rev'd Protopresbyter Pancratios Sanders

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Fr Pancratios is *normally* in church during the day on Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays. Please check before setting out to avoid a wasted journey.

Church (Sunday) School is held after the time of Communion every Sunday of each month during school term times (except on major feasts).

Pastoral Visits, Weddings, Baptisms, Receptions, Catechism Classes, etc., by arrangement with Father Pancratios.

Confessions before or after Vespers, or before the Divine Liturgy, at other times by arrangement.

Memorials may be celebrated on Saturday evenings before Vespers

Principal Services for March

1 st	Sunday	10.00am 11.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	Saint David, Patron of Wales Forgiveness Sunday, Sunday of Cheesefare
<i>First Week of Great Lent</i>				
2 nd	Monday	6.30pm	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete (i)	
3 rd	Tuesday	6.30pm	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete (ii)	
4 th	Wednesday	6.30pm 7.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete (iii)	
5 th	Thursday	6.30pm	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete (iv)	
6 th	Friday	6.30pm 7.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts Akathist to the Mother of God (i)	
7 th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
8 th	Sunday	10.00am 11.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	Sunday of Orthodoxy Followed by the Procession of Icons and the Anathemas
11 th	Wednesday	6.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts	
13 th	Friday	6.30pm 7.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts Akathist to the Mother of God (ii)	
14 th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
15 th	Sunday	10.00am 11.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	Second Sunday – St Gregory Palamas
18 th	Wednesday	6.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts	
20 th	Friday	6.30pm 7.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts Akathist to the Mother of God (iii)	
21 st	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
22 nd	Sunday	10.00am 11.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	Third Sunday – Veneration of the Cross
25 th	Wednesday	11.00am	Divine Liturgy	Feast of the Annunciation to the Theotokos
27 th	Friday	6.30pm 7.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts Akathist to the Mother of God (iv)	
28 th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
29 th	Sunday	10.00am 11.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	Fourth Sunday – St John Climacus

Principal Services for April

1 st	Wednesday	6.30pm	Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete	
2 nd	Thursday	6.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts	
3 rd	Friday	6.30pm 7.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts Akathist to the Mother of God	
4 th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
5 th	Sunday	10.00am 11.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	Fifth Sunday – St Mary of Egypt
8 th	Wednesday	6.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts	
10 th	Friday	6.30pm	Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified gifts	
11 th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
12 th	Sunday	10.00am 11.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	Entry of Our Lord into Jerusalem – Palm Sunday
Great & Holy Week – details will be posted in the April edition of The Tower				
Holy Pascha				
18 th	Saturday	11.00am 11.30pm	Vesperal Liturgy of Saint Basil Midnight Office	
19 th	Midnight		ἘΠΙΣΤΟΥΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ, Matins of Pascha and Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom Paschal Feast follows	
22 nd	Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers	Saint George, Patron of England
25 th	Saturday	5.30pm	Vespers	
26 th	Sunday	10.00am 11.00am	Matins Divine Liturgy	2nd Sunday of Pascha – St Thomas Sunday
30 th	Wednesday	6.30pm	Vespers Holy Apostle James, the son of Zebedee	

A Scripture Reading Calendar for March with Irish Saints (where known)

1	Meatfast	Romans 13:11b-14:4	Matthew 6:14-21	<i>Saint David of Wales (c589)</i>
2	Fast	Isaiah 1:1-20	Proverbs 1:1-20	St Fergna, 'the White', Abbot of Iona (637)
3	Fast	Isaiah 1:19-2:3	Proverbs 1:20-33	St Faile, sister of St Colgan (6thC)
4	Fast	Isaiah 2:3-11	Proverbs 2:1-22	<i>St Owin, monk at Lasingham and Lichfield (c680)</i>
5	Fast	Isaiah 2:11-21	Proverbs 3:1-18	St Colman of Armagh, disciple of St Patrick (5thC)
6	Fast	Isaiah 3:1-14	Proverbs 3:19-34	<i>Sts Kyneburga, Kyneswide & Tibba, ladies of the Mercian Royal Family (c680)</i>
7	Fast**	Hebrews 1:1-12	Mark 2:23-3:5	<i>St Deifer, founder of Bodfari (6thC)</i>
8	Fast**	Hebrews 11:24-26,32-40	John 1:43-5:1	St Senán mac Geirrcinn, monk in Kilmanagh (c540)
9	Fast**	Isaiah 4:2-5:7	Proverbs 3:34-4:22	<i>St Bosa, Bishop of York (705)</i>
10	Fast	Isaiah 5:7-16	Proverbs 5:1-15	St Sétina, Bishop of Ossory (c570)
11	Fast	Isaiah 5:16-25	Proverbs 5:15-6:3	St Óengus the Culdee, Bishop of Clonenagh (824)
12	Fast	Isaiah 6:1-12	Proverbs 6:3-20	St Mura McFeredach, Abbot of Fahan, Donegal (c645)
13	Fast	Isaiah 7:1-14	Proverbs	St Mochoemoc, monk at Bangor who founded Liath-Mochoemoc (c656)
14	Fast**	Hebrews 3:12-16	Mark 1:35-44	St Talmach, disciple of St Barr at Lough Erc (7thC)
15	Fast**	Hebrews 1:10-2:3	Mark 2:1-12	St Leocritia, virgin at Cordoba, Spain (859)
16	Fast	Isaiah 8:13-9:7	Proverbs 8:1-21	St Finian Lobhar, Abbot of Swords Abbey nr Dublin (c560)
17	Fast	Isaiah 9:9-10:4	Proverbs 8:32-9:11	St Patrick, Bishop of Armagh, Enlightener of Ireland (461)
18	Fast	Isaiah 10:12-20	Proverbs 9:12-18	St Frediano, prince & hermit, Bishop of Lucca (588)
19	Fast	Isaiah 11:10-12:2	Proverbs 10:1-22	St Auxilius, Bishop of Killosey, Co. Kildare (c460)
20	Fast	Isaiah 13:2-13	Proverbs 10:31-11:12	<i>St Herbert of Derwentwater, hermit, priest & friend of St Cuthbert (687)</i>
21	Fast**	Hebrews 10:32-38a	Mark 2:14-17	St Enda of Aran, Abbot of Arranmore, early leader of monastics(530)
22	Fast**	Hebrews 4:14-5:6	Mark 8:34-9:1	St Trienan, disciple of St Patrick & Abbot of Killelga (5thC)
23	Fast	Isaiah 14:24-32	Proverbs 11:19-12:6	St Mo-Mhaedog, Abbot of Fiddown in Kilkenny (5thC)
24	Fast	Isaiah 25:1-9	Proverbs 12:8-22	St Donard, patron of Maghera, hermit of Slieve-Donard (c500)
25	Fast***	Hebrews 2:11-18	Luke 1:24-38	St Caimin, Bishop-Abbot of Inis Cealtra, first Bishop of Killaloe (653)
26	Fast	Isaiah 28:14-22	Proverbs 13:19-14:6	St Mocheallóg, patron of Kilmallock, Limerick (c639)
27	Fast	Isaiah 29:13-23	Proverbs 14:15-26	St Suairlech, first Bishop of Fore, Westmeath (c750)
28	Fast**	Hebrews 6:9-12	Mark 7:31-37	<i>St Gunthrammus, repentant King of Burgundy (592)</i>
29	Fast**	Hebrews 6:13-20	Mark 9:17-31	St Lassera, nun and niece of St Forchera (6thC)
30	Fast	Isaiah 37:33-38:6	Proverbs 14:27-15:4	St Tola of Clonard, Bishop-Abbot of Disert Tola, Meath (c733)
31	Fast	Isaiah 40:18-31	Proverbs 15:7-19	<i>St Aldo, Abbot of Hasnon, Belgium (8thC)</i>

* Wine is allowed on this day

** Wine & Oil are allowed on this day

*** Fish, Wine & Oil are allowed on this day

Sundays are shown in Bold

† Note there are more readings on certain days - If you have no other Calendar, the Diocesan Hemerologion serves as a guide. Alternatively search the internet and download **Menologion 3.0** - a useful perpetual calendar.

The source of all sins - Pride

The sin, which synthesizes all the sins of the world is: “the pride of life.” That is the first sin in all the world: the sin of Satan. The source of all sins, which always was and will forever stay as such. It can be said: pride is the ultimate sin. Every sin, through its life force, comes from it and holds to it: “the pride of life”—woven from countless multifarious prides, both great and small, both short-term and long term. Let us remember the primary things: the pride of glory (scientific, government, in any rank or position in general), pride of beauty, pride of wealth, pride of benevolence, pride of humility (yes! of humility), pride of charity, pride of success... There is not a virtue that pride cannot convert into a vice. The

pride of prayer converts the person praying into a Pharisee, and the ascetic into a self-murderer. So, every sin, in reality is a sin through pride, because Satan is in reality Satan through pride. If it were not for pride, sin would not exist, neither in the angelic or the human world. All this “is not of the Father.” That which is of the Father is the Only Begotten Son of God. He is incarnate and personified humility before all of His divine perfections. In His Gospel, the beginning virtue, the ultimate virtue is humility (Matt. 5:3). Humility is the only medicine for pride and all other sins.

Saint Justin Popovich +1979

Some Further Thoughts on the Life and Traditions of our Church – The Triodion (ii)

The weeks of Great Lent have a character all their own and are fully detailed in The Lenten Triodion.

To begin with, on the Sundays we celebrate the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great where the text of the Anaphora (Prayer of Consecration) forms some of the most beautiful prose in any language. We should make the effort to hear it or read it in the language we best understand. It is described as 'the most concise and most perfect theological exposition of the history of our Salvation'. Since the beginning of the second half of the Fourth Century the Church has offered this liturgy each Sunday of Lent and on several other occasions during the year.

As Lent is the penitential season *par excellence*, we do not celebrate the Divine Liturgy on weekdays (other than for the Feast of the Annunciation if it falls in Lent) but the Church recognises our need for the nourishment that the Body and Blood of Christ grants us. Therefore, on certain days, mostly Wednesdays and Fridays we will celebrate the Divine Liturgy of Saint Gregory the Dialogist, Pope of Rome, more simply known as the Divine Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts.

The service begins with Vespers and gradually leads us towards the latter part of the Liturgy of the Faithful. On the way, we will hear readings from the Old Testament; from Genesis and Proverbs. Unlike the other Liturgies in use by the Orthodox Church, there is no Anaphora or Consecration as the Gifts were prepared and consecrated on the previous Sunday and 'reserved' for these weekday celebrations.

The Pre-sanctified Liturgy is served in the evening in semi-darkness, a time of both of peace and repentance. It is a special time of reflection on what Christ has done for each one of us. If we have never before attended this Liturgy, we should make every effort to do so – we will never be the same again. Yes, it calls us to repentance but offers us hope – the hope that only the Paschal Resurrection of Christ can transform from hope to certainty.

This Liturgy is not the only weekday service unique to Lent, we will encounter several other very special services.

Over the first four days of the First Week of Lent we will hear the Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete. Saint Andrew lived in the 8th Century and wrote the Canon as a sign of his repentance. It consists of 250 troparia or short hymns and is separated into four parts over this week. The Canon is sung within the context of Great Compline, the beautiful late evening service. On the fifth week we will sing it in its entirety on the Wednesday evening within the Office of Matins. Special to this singing of the Canon is the reading of the Life of Saint Mary of Egypt. This is the story of the complete repentance of this saint – her transformation from woman of lust to desert hermit – a

repentance that lasted for the many years until her death.

Great Lent ends on the Friday of the Fifth Week. The following day, Lazarus Saturday, we recall the friend of Christ whom He raised from the dead. Then comes Palm Sunday, the Entrance of Our Lord into Jerusalem, the day we raise our palm branches and cry 'hosanna in the highest'.

We will look at Holy Week next month.

What then does Lent mean for us? Is it merely a matter of giving up some foodstuffs – God forbid! that is only a diet!

Lent should be much more than that. Lent is a time of struggle, within our capabilities, to 'calm the passions'. Yes, fasting from meat and dairy products is important for cooling the blood and cleansing our systems of the poisonous products of an over-rich way of life but it is useless without the other aspects of an Orthodox way of life intended to bring us nearer to Christ and our Salvation.

Lent calls us to make greater effort in our private prayer life, to conform our lives to the Christian ideal of praying daily at least three times each day and striving towards that 'prayer without ceasing' best found in the Jesus Prayer: 'Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, the sinner'.

By its very nature, in Lent we are called to gather more frequently to attend the public worship of the church, not only on Sundays but on weekdays as well.

Furthermore we are called to attend the needs of others even more than at other times of the year and it will pay us to study that passage in the Gospel of Saint Matthew that relates as to how we shall fare at the Judgement (25:31-46) if we do not live according to Christ's teaching. Not that we should neglect the hungry, the naked or those sick or in prison at other times of the year any more than we should neglect our prayer and worship, but the Lent is the straight and narrow road that leads to His saving Passion and His Resurrection for our sake.

Lest we forget a most important word which should ever be on our lips: LOVE. Our Lord loved and loves beyond our understanding. We can never begin to comprehend the measure of His Love, so it is surely for us to endeavour to soak up that love for us and to radiate it to all those who we meet. As followers of His Way, there should be no place for anger or hate within us. No matter if we are among friends or enemies there is only one response: love! Christ, as they crucified Him, could only say 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do' (Luke 23:34).

No matter whether the times are good or bad for us, let our hearts never harden, let us express our love for all those we meet, in imitation of Christ begging forgiveness for our faults and have prayer always on our lips and in our hearts.

Let us do our prayer rule. Let us not neglect our vigil. Let us not be sluggish when it comes to attending church and the Liturgy. Let us love one another, because love is God, and "he who remains in love, remains in God and God in him"
Elder Ephraim of Arizona +2019