

# SS Peter & Paul Orthodox Church Newsletter

Volume 16, Issue 3

March 20166

### February Council Highlights

- ✘ January's Operating Income was \$15,032.15 and Operating Expenses were \$13,740.94, resulting in a positive balance of \$1,291.21 for the month of January.
- ✘ Discussion regarding Mike Wagner being ordained a subdeacon
- ✘ New A/C unit installed at the Church discussed
- ✘ BSA Troop 172 Interfaith Religious Recognition Committee will visit our Church on May 15<sup>th</sup>



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 Phoenix, AZ 85006  
 602.253.9515

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 Rector

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## What is Forgiveness?

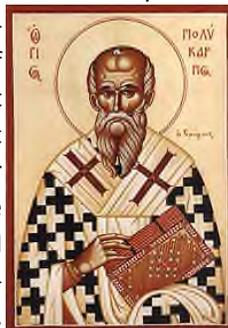
**This past week, a few days before the Sunday of Forgiveness, the Church celebrated the memory of Saint Polycarp of Smyrna. This man was a student of the Holy Apostles, and can teach us a something important about forgiveness.**

Polycarp was appointed Bishop of Smyrna by Saint John the Evangelist and Gospel writer sometime before John was banished to the island of Patmos in the year 96. Over the long years of his episcopacy, Polycarp attracted and taught many disciples of his own. They remembered the majesty of his countenance, the holiness of his behavior, and the conversations in which he told them the words he had heard from the Apostle John's own lips.

The one piece of writing we have from Polycarp's own hand is his letter to the Philippian Christians. In it, he mentions by name several believers who have undergone torture and died for the faith. Then, despite all the suffering he has seen, he cautions the Philippians never to

be vengeful, but to forgive and show mercy to everyone.

Yet it was said that Polycarp had once met the heretic Marcion in the street, and neglected to greet him. Marcion was offended and said, "Polycarp, what is this? Do you not know me?" Polycarp's



answer was, "Yes, I know you to be the son of the devil!" His disciples also said that Polycarp would literally stop his ears and flee from the room if he heard a heretical statement.

The encounter with Marcion and the description of Polycarp's "fleeing" show us that he never confused forgiveness with acceptance of heresy or sin. That is a temptation for many people in our day. When people do or say things that contradict the teachings of the Church, we may let it go in the name of tolerance, and tell ourselves that we are practicing Christian forgiveness.

But Polycarp would disagree. As he stood in the Roman arena awaiting martyrdom, he calmly prayed and asked forgiveness for everyone, including those eagerly gathering wood to build a fire and burn

him to death. But his prayers for forgiveness did not include accepting the sin and heresy of denying Christ and worshipping a false god. When urged to do so he said, "I have served Him these 86 years, and He never did me any harm, but much good, so how can I now blaspheme my King and Savior?"

On this Sunday before Great Lent we are called to forgive and to ask God's mercy. Polycarp's example reminds us not to confuse forgiveness with acceptance or toleration of anything people do or say.

As we struggle to do what is right and say only what is true, we can pray for others to do the same, and guide them when we have the chance. If we make that effort, we will be able to stand in our own "arena"—whatever trials and tests come—and say that we, too, refuse to blaspheme the One who "never did me any harm, but much good."

### Troparion (Tone 4)

By sharing in the ways of the Apostles,  
 You became a successor to their throne.  
 Through the practice of virtue,  
 You found the way to divine contemplation,  
 O inspired one of God;  
 By teaching the word of truth without error,  
 You defended the Faith,  
 Even to the shedding of your blood.  
 Hieromartyr Polycarp,  
 Entreat Christ God to save our souls.

# Message From Our Rector

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*Today is the joyful forefeast of the time of abstinence, the bright threshold of the Fast. Therefore, brethren, together let us run the race with confident hope and with great eagerness.* — Ode 1, Canon of Cheesefare Monday

These words, taken from the First Ode of the Canon of Cheesefare Monday, remind us that quite soon (March 14) we will enter into the season of the Great Lenten Fast. Yes, once again, Great Lent is upon us. These words are also words of encouragement, inviting us to run the race that is Great Lent, not to avoid it, and to enter the fast with hope and great eagerness and with enthusiasm.

Every year, as Great Lent draws nearer, I hear people lamenting the sacrifices that are requested of us. Sometimes people look for ways to avoid the stringencies of the Fast (think of looking for alternatives to butter, for example, as a way to alleviate the rigors of the Fast). Others seek to



find ways to maintain an active social life while still wanting to be seen as faithful to the requests the Church makes of us. In groups or as individuals, we sometimes belabor the challenges of the special dietary requirements to be observed, the additional services to attend, and the heightened call to acts of charity. We might not think too much of our thoughts in this regard... and to begrudge the season of the Fast might seem very natural... because the demands are great, but this approach reflects an stingy attitude, a holding back, and a minimalism that prevents us from entering fully into the spirit of the Fast and thus keeps us from receiving of all the spiritual benefits and blessings which Great Lent provides to those who enter into it with the desire to live it fully.

This year, let's attempt to accept the challenge of Great Lent with open and joy-filled hearts. And with the desire to do all we possibly can in fulfillment of the Fast. It seems obvious that the Lord is looking to our hearts when we are making sacrifices to honor Him and to grow in our relationship with Him and His Church. He takes no delight in those

whose efforts and sacrifices are made begrudgingly yet who at the same time say they're doing these things for His sake.

It's true that, in the days and weeks ahead, we may feel like we're unable to maintain the all the requirements of Great Lent. We may feel overwhelmed by the sacrifices. We may grow tired in the demands. If that becomes the case for you, then seek the support of those around you who, most likely, are experiencing the same challenges that you are. At the same time, reach out to those around you and encourage them in their own Lenten efforts. Anticipate the needs and cares of others. The more we support one another, the more success we will have. And the more success we have in our Lenten efforts, the more blessings we will receive when we gather for the great Feast of Feasts on Holy Pascha.

Be assured of my own prayers and support in the days and weeks to come. May we all complete a successful journey, the journey that brings us to Calvary, the Cross, and, finally, the Empty Tomb.

With love in the Lord,

+ *Bishop Daniel*

## SS Peter and Paul Pascha Card

Name(s) : \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) to appear on card:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Suggested Donation: \$10.00

Amount of Donation:  \$100  \$50  \$25  \$10  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Deadline: April 17, 2016

*Return completed form to Stephanie Homyak*



# Captured But Free in Christ

**It could be a question for an Orthodox version of Jeopardy: What two saints, both commemorated in this third week of March, were captured by pirates?**

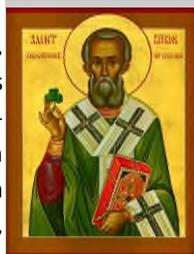
The answer would be Saint Gregory Palamas, whom we remember today, and Saint Patrick of Ireland, whose feast day is on the 17th. Though their experiences with pirates came at different times in their lives, both must have experienced terror. And both lost their liberty, at least for a time, after their capture.

Patrick, born in southwest England, was taken by Irish pirates at the age of sixteen as was sold into slavery in Ireland, toiling for years there in isolated misery. He managed to escape and to convince some sailors to take him back to England, where he was reunited with his family.



We might assume that Patrick would want nothing more to do with Ireland or the Irish after years of such humiliating hardship. Yet in the year 435, already ordained, he agreed to go back to Ireland and preach the faith. He did it so well and so lovingly that besides becoming Ireland's most revered saint, he was given the title "Equal to the Apostles" because he brought a whole country to Christianity.

Nine hundred years later, Gregory Palamas was writing about monasticism and the Christian life. As Father John Meyendorff has written, Gregory believed that:



*naturally to their bodily eyes, while Christians now, sacramentally united to the Redeemer after His death and resurrection, can contemplate the light interiorly, within their hearts. They can develop the potentialities of this gift and its divine character ever more and more until they find God Himself.*

St. Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality, SVS Press, 1974 (p. 117)

While sailing from Thessalonica to Byzantium, Gregory had his own experience of being capture by pirates. They were Muslim Turks, and they kept Gregory and his fellow passengers in captivity for almost a year. Far from keeping aloof from his "hosts", he spent the time in amicable theological disputes with the son of the Emir, and expressed the hope that "a day will soon come when we will be able to understand each other" (Meyendorff, 106.) This great saint, as we can see from the quotation above, clearly believed in the uniquely authentic relationship of Christians with God through Jesus Christ. Yet his mind and heart were open to exploring another faith.

## Troparion - Tone 3 St. Patrick

Holy Bishop Patrick,  
Faithful shepherd of Christ's royal flock,  
You filled Ireland with the radiance of the Gospel:  
The mighty strength of the Trinity!  
Now that you stand before the Savior,  
Pray that He may preserve us in faith and love!

*...the difference between the apostles who went up Mount Tabor with Jesus and the Christians of today lies in the fact that Peter, James and John saw the light "exteriorly," as an object appearing super-*

*If Patrick had refused to return to the place where pirates sold him into slavery, Christianity might not have come to Ireland. If Gregory had refused conversation with his Turkish captors, we would not have him as a model for our efforts to*

engage with Islam today.

Great saints, it seems, can use anything—including capture by pirates—to the glory of God.

## Imaging and Imagining the Ship of Salvation

Here is a Lenten exercise, something for us to consider.

The Church has sometimes been called the ship of salvation, taking an image from Noah's ark in which God saved His chosen people from the destroying deluge which drowned sin and sinners alike. As we are continuing our sojourn through Great Lent struggling against the storm of temptations, we can consider a photograph with two possible images of the church as a ship. In your mind, which one best represents the church? Why?



The question isn't which one you would prefer to be on, but which best represents what the Church is and what your place on the ship of salvation is.

The above two ships are heading in different directions, that too is something for us to consider in the season of repentance. Repentance means to completely change one's direction in life. It matters whether one is moving toward the Kingdom or moving away from it.

Reprinted from Fr. Ted's Blog, March 5, 2015, <https://frted.wordpress.com/>

# Lenten Fasting

A special word must be said about fasting during lent. Generally speaking, fasting is an essential element of the Christian Life. Christ fasted and taught men to fast. Blessed fasting is done in secret, without ostentation or accusation of others (*Mt 6:16; Rom 14*). It has as its goal the purification of our lives, the liberation of our souls and bodies from sin, the strengthening of our human powers of love for God and man, the enlightening of our entire being for communion with the Blessed Trinity.

The Orthodox rules for lenten fasting are the monastic rules. No meat is allowed after Meatfare Sunday, and no eggs or dairy products after Cheesefare Sunday. These rules exist not as a Pharisaic "burden too hard to bear" (*Lk 11:46*), but as an ideal to be striven for; not as an end in themselves, but as a means to spiritual perfection crowned in love. The lenten services themselves continually remind us of this.

Let us fast with a fast pleasing to the Lord. This is the true fast: the casting off of evil, the bridling of the tongue, the cutting off of anger, the cessation of lusts, evil talking, lies and cursing. The stopping of these is the fast true and acceptable. (Monday Vespers of the First Week)

The lenten services also make the undeniable point that we should not pride ourselves with external fasting since the devil also never eats!

The **ascetic fast** of Great Lent continues from Meatfare Sunday to Easter Sunday, and is broken only after the Paschal Divine Liturgy. Knowing the great effort to which they are called, Christians should make every effort to fast as well as they can, in secret, so that God would see

and bless their openly with a holy life. Each person must do his best in the light of the given ideal.

In addition to the ascetic fasting of the lenten season, the Orthodox alone among Christians also practice what is known as **eucharistic or liturgical fasting**. This fasting does not refer to the normal abstinence in preparation for receiving the holy eucharist; it means fasting from the holy eucharist itself.

During the week days of Great Lent the regular eucharistic Divine Liturgy is not celebrated in Orthodox churches since the Divine Liturgy is always a paschal celebration of communion with the Risen Lord. Because the lenten season is one of preparation for the Lord's Resurrection through the remembrance of sin and separation from God, the liturgical order of the Church eliminates the eucharistic service on the weekdays of lent. Instead the non-eucharistic services are extended with additional scripture readings and hymnology of a lenten character. In order that the faithful would not be entirely deprived of Holy Communion on the lenten days, however, the **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts** is celebrated on Wednesday and Friday evenings.

Even during Great Lent, Saturday (the Sabbath Day) and Sunday (the Lord's Day) remain eucharistic days, and the Divine Liturgy is celebrated. On Saturdays it is the normal Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, usually with prayers for the dead. On Sundays it is the longer Liturgy

of St Basil the Great.

The well-known teaching that Saturdays and Sundays are never days of fasting in the Orthodox Church, an issue emphasized centuries ago when controversy arose with the Latin Church, refers only to this eucharistic-liturgical fast. During Great Lent, even though the **eucharistic fast is broken** on Saturdays and Sundays, the **ascetical fast continues** through the weekends since this fasting is an extended effort made from Meatfare Sunday right to Easter itself.

## CONGRATULATIONS AND MANY YEARS!

Before the beginning of the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, February 14, John Hecht and Andrew Romanov were tonsured as Readers and Michel Wagner was ordained a Subdeacon for the service of our parish community. His Grace Bishop DANIEL performed the rites of tonsuring and ordination with the blessing of our Diocesan Hierarch, His Eminence Archbishop BENJAMIN. May the Lord bless His Servants, the Reader John, the Reader Andrew, and the Subdeacon Michael with continued joy and dedication in service to His Church and



grant  
them  
Many  
Years!



# 2016 Pan-Orthodox Lenten Vespers

Please join our Brothers & Sisters at the host parishes for these  
Sunday Evening Lenten Vespers Services

All Vespers Services Begin at 6:00 PM



## The Sunday of Orthodoxy

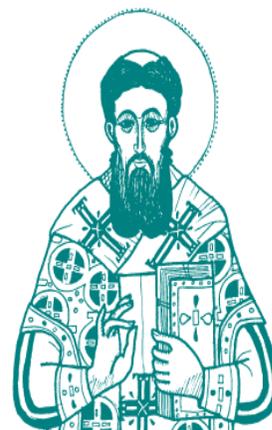
March 20, 2016

Host Parish: Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral  
1973 E. Maryland Ave., Phoenix (602) 264-7863

## The Second Sunday of Lent

March 27, 2016

Host Parish: St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church  
4436 E. McKinley Street, Phoenix (602) 275-7360



## The Third Sunday of Lent

April 3, 2016

Host Parish: Assumption Greek Orthodox Church  
8202 E. Cactus Road, Scottsdale (480) 991-3009

## The Fourth Sunday of Lent

April 10, 2016

Host Parish: SS. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church 1614 E  
Monte Vista Road, Phoenix (602) 253-9515



## The Fifth Sunday of Lent

April 17, 2016

Host Parish: Exaltation of the Holy Cross Church  
10030 N 32<sup>nd</sup> Street, Phoenix (602) 867-6025

Sponsored by the Arizona Council of Eastern Orthodox Churches

More Information at: [WWW.AZORTHODOX.ORG](http://WWW.AZORTHODOX.ORG)

# A Saint From Salzburg

**Many people know Salzburg, Austria as the birthplace of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who was born there in 1756. But on March 27 we commemorate Saint Rupert of Salzburg, who lived there ten centuries earlier and did great work in spreading the Gospel and building up the Church.**

Before his years in Salzburg, Rupert was bishop of the area around Frankfurt, Germany and was confessor to the Frankish king Childebert. Though he had himself been born into the proud Frankish nobility, Rupert believed humility and simplicity were the most important qualities for a Christian to cultivate. He used up his inherited money in caring for the poor, fasted strictly, and spent hours in prayer.

In his administrative duties as a bishop, Rupert became known for his willingness to hear all sides of a disagreement. He would then make decisions that were carefully and prayerfully thought out, and as fair as possible to everyone.

Like most priests, he especially loved to

preach and teach about Jesus Christ and the Gospel. His sermons attracted listeners from far beyond the region he oversaw, and as a confessor he strengthened the faith of people who came to him. His reputation for giving wise advice, always based on the teachings of Christ, motivated political leaders from the vicinity and even from other countries to consult him.

But Rupert's prominence inspired jealousy and resentment in some. The problem was compounded by the fact that powerful pagan influences were still at work among the people. Rupert's ability to advance Christianity was feared by the most superstitious among them. The growing feeling against Rupert finally led to his being beaten with rods and exiled.

The Duke of Bavaria had heard of Rupert's excellent work, and was appalled by the harshness with which his countrymen were treating the humble bishop, though he himself was still a worshipper of idols. He invited Rupert to come to Bavaria so that he and his people could be enlightened in the faith. Rupert

accepted the invitation with joy and a bit of trepidation at the enormity of the task.

Once the Duke had received baptism and understood what a great, saving gift it was, he gave Rupert a ship and crew to sail down the Danube River. In the towns and villages along the way the bishop preached and taught, heard confessions, and baptized.

In time Rupert went to live in the ancient, now desolate city of Juvavia, and with financial backing from the Duke built an episcopal cathedral high in the remote mountains nearby. He added land and buildings, creating a center for spiritual learning from which trained priests went out to spread the faith. He built a women's monastery and encouraged women to take up the monastic life.

Rupert promoted the mining of the abundant salt in the area as a means of supporting his missionary work. Some depictions of the saint show him holding a large container. It's filled with salt, appropriate for Saint Rupert, who is largely responsible for the fact that the city once known as Juvavia is now Salzburg.

## Around SS Peter & Paul

### MARCH BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES

- March 9 Mara Hecht  
 10 Stephanie Homyak  
 13 Sasha Golowatsch  
 14 Elizabeth Michel  
 17 Mike Wagner  
 19 Christi and David Sourk  
 22 Ann Michkofsky  
 29 Tania Booriakin

*Mnogaya Leta!  
 Many Years!*

**CONGRATULATIONS and MANY YEARS**  
 to John Hecht, Andrew Romanoff, and  
 Mike Wagner!



### PRAYER LIST

*"I was sick and you visited me."  
 Matt 25:36*

We offer prayers to all of our parishioners who are ill or unable to attend services:

Protodeacon Alexis  
 Ann Garza  
 Rose Koval  
 Rose Kurowski  
 Tillie (Tatiana) Kulek  
 Larry Gardner  
 Ted Demos  
 Ann Carroll  
 Vickie Mendez  
 Anna Michkofsky

*If you know of anyone else in need of our prayers, please contact Bishop Daniel.*

# Bits and Pieces

## PATRONAL ICONS

Many visitors have commented on the beautiful arrangement of patron saint icons we have placed in the entryway to the Parish Hall. This arrangement is a reminder to us of the saints whose names are borne by the members of our parish family and of their intercession on behalf of all of us. If an icon of your patron saint is not already enshrined in the entryway to the Parish Hall, please see Katrina Del-sante who can provide guidance concerning your heavenly patron and can also arrange for a purchase of an icon for you to have placed with the others.

## MEMORIAL SATURDAYS

As we approach and enter the season of the Great Lenten Fast, beginning our journey to Holy Pascha, we pause to remember and pray for our loved ones who have gone before us in hope of the Resurrection. See Vladyka DANIEL if you need to provide a list of names you would like commemorated or if you otherwise need to update your current list. Please check the calendar for dates and also please note that on March 26, we will also celebrate a **Memorial Divine Liturgy**.

## ARCHPASTORAL VISIT

His Eminence, **Archbishop BENJAMIN**, our diocesan bishop, will be paying an Arch-pastoral Visit to our parish community the weekend of March 26-27. Please mark your calendars now and plan on greeting our Archpastoral and on joining in prayer for both Vespers on Saturday evening and the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday morning. Both are at the usual times.

## LITURGY OF THE PRESANCTIFIED GIFTS

The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts (aka the "Presanctified Liturgy") is celebrated in our parish church every Wednesday evening throughout the Great Fast. The Liturgy begins at 6:00 p.m. and is followed by a light Lenten-fare meal (soup, bread, and fruit) and a short presentation. Please share of your own blessings and volunteer to bring something for the meal.

## BOOKSTORE

Great Lent is right around the corner! Prepare yourself now by picking up a spiritually edifying book from the bookstore or from our parish library. There truly is a book for every person at any stage of their life, from babies to the newly converted to those of us who have been around awhile. Be ready to go on March 14th!

## LENTEN MEAL AFTER PREANCTIFIED LITURGY

There will be a lenten meal after the Pre-sanctified services. Please speak with Barbara Peterson if you would like to contribute.

## SUNDAY VESPERS

Again this year, the local Orthodox Clergy Council will sponsor the celebration of Vespers on the Sunday evenings of Great Lent. Please see the complete schedule on page 5.

## MBAS

Congratulations to the newly elected officers of the Myrrhbearers Altar Society:

Barbara Petersen	President
Jane Evans	Vice president
Sue Bieber	Treasurer
Betsy Begian	Secretary

## PARISH PASCHA CARD

Instead of sending individual Pascha greetings, why not list your name(s) on a beautifully designed Orthodox Pascha card and support SS Peter and Paul at the same time? If you would like to participate, please fill out the form at the bottom of page 2 and return it to Stephanie Homyak by April 17, 2016. The suggested minimum donation is \$10.

## MISSION WALK

This year's Mission Walk will take place on Saturday, April 16, 2016 at Kiwanis Park in Tempe from 8:00 am to 9:00 am. Please save the date for this worthy cause. Proceeds will benefit Project Mexico and the Orthodox Christian Mission Center.

## SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY PROCESSION

Youth will participate in the annual procession of icons on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, March 20, 2016. Icons will be provided for all youth to carry in the procession around the church. Children are also welcome to bring their own favorite icon from home to carry in the procession.



## BAKING OF EASTER PASCHAS

The Myrrh Bearers will be baking Pascha breads in April. There will be three bake dates, which will be announced shortly. In addition to baking the small Pascha breads for church, a limited number of larger Pascha breads will be available for purchase for \$10 each if we can get enough help with the baking. If you are interested, please contact Barbara Peterson.

## WELCOME

We welcome all visitors to SS Peter & Paul. We hope your visit was enriching and enlightening. Please join us in the Cultural Center, behind the church, for our Fellowship Hour. It's a chance to meet some of our members, other visitors, and enjoy some coffee and fellowship. It's also a great time to take a look at our bookstore. Katrina can help you find whatever you need!

## FOCA

Thank you to everyone who supported The FOCA brunch on February 21st. Approximately \$1200 was raised to provide 'Starter Kits' to support two soon-to-be graduating St. Herman's seminarians. The kits include a traveling communion set, a hand cross, cuffs, and stole.

## PARISH LIBRARY

Our parish library has many resources to assist you in your spiritual journey throughout the Lenten season. Stop by after services and pick a book to read as part of your spiritual exercises. There are over a hundred titles to choose from.

# March 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 Memorial Saturday  4:30pm Panikhida 5:00pm Vespers
Join us for a light lenten meal and discussion following Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. Please contact Barbara Peterson to sign-up to bring soup, fruit, or bread.			7:00pm Adult Education			
6 Meatfare Sunday Last Judgment 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School	7	8	9	10	11	12 Memorial Saturday Feodorovskaya Icon  4:30pm Panikhida 5:00pm Vespers
WEEK OF MEAT FARE — FASTING FROM MEAT BEGINS						
		6:00pm Council Mtg	7:00pm Adult Education			
13 Cheesefare Sunday 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Church School Cheesefare Luncheon followed by Forgiveness Vespers	14 GREAT LENT BEGINS  6:00pm Canon of St. Andrew	15  6:00pm Canon of St. Andrew	16  6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts Lenten Meal	17  6:00pm Canon of St. Andrew	18	19 Our Lady of Tenderness Icon  5:00pm Vespers
20 Sunday of Orthodoxy 8:30am Hours 9:00am Divine Liturgy Procession of Icons for Youth 6:00 Lenten Vespers Holy Trinity Cathedral	21	22	23  6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts Lenten Meal	24 Forefeast Annunciation  6:00pm Vespers of the Annunciation	25 Annunciation Most Holy Theotokos  9:00 Vesperal Divine Liturgy	26 Memorial Saturday  9:00am Divine Liturgy  5:00pm Vespers w/ Archbishop BENJAMIN
27 St Gregory Palamas 8:30am Hours 9:00am Hierarchical Divine Liturgy Church School 6:00 Lenten Vespers St. Sava Church	28	29	30  6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts Lenten Meal	31 Repose of St. Innocent	1	2 Memorial Saturday  5:00pm Great Vespers
MISSION WALK 8:00 am—9:00 am Saturday, April 16, 2016 Kiwanis Park, Tempe Contact: Antonia Adams-Clement						