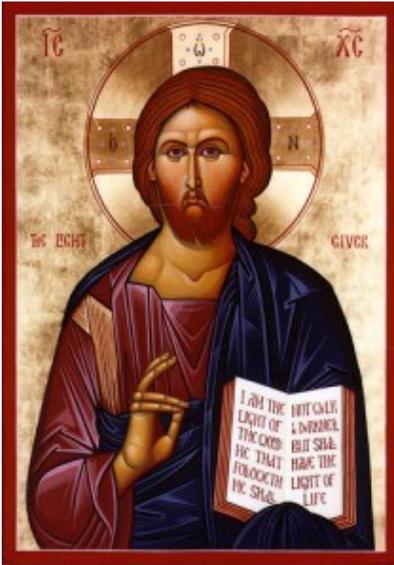


The Great Fast : 101



The Great Fast or Len—there are three others on the Byzantine calendar: before Christmas, before the Dormition (August 15) and before Ss. Peter and Paul (June 29) - the seven week period of preparation before the celebration of Pascha (Easter). It is like a retreat held by the whole

complete men and women possessing the life, grace and joy of God which completes and heals our nature as human beings.

The early Christians kept vigil during the last few days of Holy Week. As time went on, the vigil was extended to approximately forty days. It was a period in which the catechumens (candidates to become Christians) were given a last intensive preparation for baptism, chrismation and the Eucharist. It was also the time when the penitents (“big time” sinners, such as lapsed Christians) did penance, relearning the basic and beautiful lesson of the mystery and dignity of being a Christian and our way of life in the Lord. They were reconciled with the rest of the faithful at the end of Lent. Since the season was type

(Continued on page 3)

Church: a time of spiritual renewal, a time of repentance.

Lent Is About Repentance

Repentance is not “giving up”; it is a turning back to God who we realize is the very source and goal of our life. He is our life. By repentance we realize we aren’t where we should be; we are far from our Father. Our happiness, our wholeness, our sense of identity, well-being and joy flow from being close to God as the very center of our lives. So Lent, the time for repentance, is the time to rediscover this truth, to be convinced of it and make it more of a conscious reality in our everyday lives. In Pascha, the Easter mystery, Christ gives us a chance to be “born again” as children of God: as

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>GREAT FAST 101</i>	1
<i>EVENTS TO CELEBRATE THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE</i>	2
<i>ROOTED IN LOVE - THE LIFE AND DEATH STORY OF SR. DOROTHY STANG</i>	2
<i>SAINTS, SCRIPTURES & SOLEMNITIES</i>	4
<i>HOUSE OF PRAYER 2015 PROGRAM SCHEDULE</i>	4



For further information about the Year of Consecrated Life, visit www.nrvn.net.

Upcoming events hosted by the Sisters of St. Basil are listed on page 2. The list will be updated as more events are confirmed.

Visit www.sistersofstbasil.org for the most complete information.



Events to Celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life

In celebration of the Year of Consecrated Life, the Sisters of St. Basil are planning the following events throughout 2015. Please visit www.sistersofstbasil.org for the most up-to-date information.



February 2, 2015

World Day of Consecrated Life - Give thanks for Religious.

May 29-31, 2015

Young Adult Retreat and Prayer Weekend with the Sisters of St. Basil

Summer 2015: Days of Mission and Service with Religious

Events will include joining the Sisters of St. Basil in their ministries or special projects such as:

- Helping Hands Day, June 6
- Pilgrimage Prep Day, August 22

Parish groups or individuals assisting on scheduled dates between August 24 and September 6

August 2015 through Pascha Season, 2016

Companioning Experiences - opportunities for women to shadow a Sister of St. Basil in prayer, community life and ministry.

Rooted in Love - The Life and Death Story of Sr. Dorothy Stang

Written and performed by Sr. Nancy Murray, OP (Sister of Bill Murray)



Sister Dorothy Stang

HER DREAM/OUR HANDS • 2005 -2015

"We must be poor with the poor and recapture a tender and kind relationship with Mother Earth. Then we will know how to act."

- Sr. Dorothy Stang, SNDdeN

On Sun., Feb. 8, 2015, at the O'Connor Auditorium Trinity Washington University, 125 Michigan Ave NE Washington, DC, there will be a free presentation of Rooted in Love - The Life and Death Story of Sr. Dorothy Stang.

Moved by the words of Pope John XXIII, Sr. Dorothy Stang moved to Brazil in 1966 to help poor farmers build independent futures for their families. She was shot to death on Sat. Feb. 12, 2005, in

Anapu, Para, a section of Brazil's Amazon rainforest.

A citizen of Brazil and the United States, Sr. Dorothy worked with the Pastoral Land Commission, an organization of the Catholic Church that struggles for the rights of rural workers and peasants, and defends land reforms in Brazil. Her death came less than a week after meeting with the country's human rights officials about threats to local farmers from illegal loggers and ranchers.

Sr. Dorothy was a member of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, an international Catholic religious order of women serving on five continents.

The presentation is sponsored by Billiard Center for Social Justice Trinity Washington University.

For information and reservation, contact: Sr. Camilla Burns, SND via email: burnsc@trinitydc.edu.

The Great Fast : 101

of “boot-camp” in Christianity for the catechumens and penitents, all the faithful entered into the instructions, prayers, fasting and preparation as well as a type of renewal and “refresher” course” in their own living of the new life in Christ given to us at Pascha.

Lent Is About Being

Don’t “do”: rather “be” a Lenten Christian. Live a Lenten style of life. Remember the basics: you are trying to turn more fully to God (repentance) and taste more fully the beauty and dignity that are yours as a child of God. You must think about that—which means eliminating some distractions—and seriously turn to Him. The Church has three traditional helps for this: fasting, prayer and almsgiving.

These three are recommended by the Scriptures and Tradition. They get to the very root of repentance, which is turning back to God. They help strip away the glitter of a false self, a false view of the world and others (secularism) and aid in discovering our true identity, our relation to God, others, the world and ourselves. Fasting helps us discover our true hunger for God at the root of our being and our total dependence on Him as the source of our life and strength. Serious prayer puts us in communion with Him. Almsgiving helps us share God, His gifts and ourselves with

others, establishing a true communion with them in the Lord.

Fasting

The reason for giving up something is that something better may take its place: especially the things of God. We fast so the we may “lay aside all earthly cares, that we may receive the King of all”. Does your life depend on food? You must eat to live, but no matter how much you eat, you are going to die. Life depends, not on food, but on God, the Giver of life. We fast to experience that on a deep level. Fasting has been prescribed by Christ Himself. The Church can and should remove from the realm of obligation this or that exercise of fasting, but the Church **cannot dispense us from Christ’s command to fast.**

We must comply with that command as best we can. And, of course, the abstaining from food should lead to an abstaining from sin and evil intentions.

In practice, fasting is expressed through abstaining from certain foods for certain times. To follow our full

Eastern program of fasting would mean:

1. **Abstaining from all food and drink** from midnight until noon on all weekdays; and,
2. **Not eating any meat or dairy products** during the whole time of Lent.

The minimum asked by our Church for Lent is that we keep this fast on at least the following days: the first day of Great Lent and the last three days of the Great Week (the abstinence from meat applies to **all** Fridays of the year). As an intermediate step, some people are accustomed to observe the entire first week, the whole of Great Week and every Wednesday and Friday.

Each family or person should understand why we fast (the spiritual purpose, pray over it and then decide what is to be done in this regard during the holy season.

Almsgiving

Material gifts were given to us by God as gifts over which we are to be responsible stewards. You are to use

those gifts—and the gifts that you are—sacramentally. All things are potentially sacramental, since they are intended for communion with God and with each other. When we share the goods of earth in love, we are “in communion”, in fellowship in and with the Lord.

How are you handling your material possessions? They are not ends in themselves, but they are to produce that communion. Are they? Look around you, and the Lord will show you how to give alms, and exactly what you should share. One idea is to save the money gained by fasting and use it for charitable purposes.

Lent actually begins on Clean Monday, the day after the last of these pre-Lenten Sundays, Cheese-Fare Sunday. And since the Church day always begins at sunset, our first Lenten service is on Sunday evening. We have the beautiful *Forgiveness Vespers*, at which we are reconciled with each other before beginning the Lenten journey and usually have the opportunity for the sacrament of penance.

Monday, February 16 marks the beginning of the Great Fast

“This is the time of repentance! This is the day of salvation, the arrival of the Fast! Be watchful, my soul, close all the doors to passion, and look to the Lord alone.” - Matins for Pure Monday: Canon, Ode One

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Saints, Scriptures & Solemnities



Annunciation of the Theotokos

Sun., Feb. 8
Sunday of Meat
Fare

I Cor 8:8-9:2
Mt 25:31-46

Sun., Feb. 15
Sunday of
Cheesefare

Rom 13:11-14:4
Mt. 6:14-21

Mon., Feb. 16
First Day of the
Great Fast

Pamphilus & Others
Martyrs
Gen 1:1-13; Prov 1:1-20

Sun., Feb. 22
1st Sunday of the
Great Fast

Heb 11:24-26.32-12:2
Jn 1:43-51

Sun., Mar. 1
2nd Sunday of the Great
Fast

Heb 1:10-2:3
Mk 2:1-12

Sun., Mar. 8
3rd Sunday of the Great
Fast

Veneration of the Cross
Heb 4:14-5:6; Mk 8:34-9:1

Sun., Mar. 15
4th Sunday of the Great
Fast

John Climacus Venerable
Heb 6:13-20
Mk 9:17-31
Wednesday, March 25

Wed., Mar. 25
Annunciation of the
Theotokos

Heb 2:11-18
Lk 1:24-38

House of Prayer - 2015 Program Schedule

Lenten Morning Retreat

Sat., Feb. 28, 9:15 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Presenter: Rev. Thomas Dansak
Registration Due: Feb. 23. Offering: \$30, includes lunch

Lenten Afternoon Retreat

Sun., March 1, 1:15 p.m.-5 p.m.

Presenter: Very Rev. Robert Pipta
Registration due: Feb. 24. Offering: \$30, includes supper

Healing Retreat

Sat., March 7, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Presenter: Father William Kiel
Registration Due: March 2. Offering: \$35, includes lunch

Monday Reading Series

March 9, 16, 23, 30, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Presenter: Sr. Barbara Jean
Registration Due: March 2. Free will offering

Poustinia Weekend

Mar. 13-15, 7 p.m. Fri. - 11 a.m., Sun.

Registration due: February 13. Offering: \$85

Praying with Scripture

Tuesday, March 17, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Presenter: Sr. Carol
Registration Due: March 12. Offering: \$30, includes lunch

Women's Overnight Scripture Retreat

April 24-25, 6 p.m., Fri. - 4 p.m., Sat.

Presenter: To Be Announced
Registration Due: April 17. Offering: \$85

Young Adult Weekend Retreat

May 29-31, 7 p.m., Fri. - 11 a.m., Sun.

Presenter: Sr. Barbara Jean & Young Adult Team
Men and Women - Ages 18-35
Registration Due: May 22. Offering: \$100