

Forgiveness Sunday

The last of the preparatory Sundays has two themes: it commemorates *Adam's expulsion from Paradise*, and it is also the *Sunday of Forgiveness*. There are obvious reasons why these two things should be brought to our attention as we stand on the threshold of the Great Fast. One of the primary images in the Triodion is that of the return to Paradise. Lent is a time when we weep with Adam and Eve before the closed gate of Eden, repenting with them for the sins that have deprived us of our free communion with God. But Lent is also a time when we are preparing to celebrate the saving event of Christ's death and rising, which has reopened Paradise to us once more (Luke 23:43). So sorrow for our exile in sin is tempered by hope of our re-entry into Paradise.

The second theme, that of forgiveness, is emphasized in the Gospel reading for this Sunday (Matthew 6:14–21) and in the special ceremony of mutual forgiveness at the end of Vespers on Sunday evening. Before we enter the Lenten fast, we are reminded that there can be no true fast, no genuine repentance, no reconciliation with God, unless we are at the same time reconciled with one another. A fast without mutual love is the fast of demons. As the commemoration of the ascetic saints on the previous Saturday has just made clear to us, we do not travel the road of Lent as isolated individuals but as members of a family. Our asceticism and fasting should not separate us from our fellow men but link us to them with ever stronger bonds. The Lenten ascetic is called to be a *man for others*.

St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church

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St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox Church

Port Townsend, WA



Sunday, February 18th, 2018

Forgiveness Sunday; Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise

37th Sunday after Pentecost

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Readings

Epistle Romans 13:11-14:4
Gospel Matthew 6:14-21

Tone 4 Troparion (*Resurrection*)

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of thy Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the apostles: "Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen, // granting the world great mercy!"

Tone 4 Kontakion (*Resurrection*)

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb and delivered the earth-born from their chains. He has shattered the gates of hell, and as Master, // He has risen on the third day!

Tone 6 Kontakion (*from the Lenten Triodion*)

O Master, Teacher of wisdom, Bestower of virtue, Who teachest the thoughtless and protectest the poor, strengthen and enlighten my heart! O Word of the Father, let me not restrain my mouth from crying to Thee: Have mercy on me, a transgressor, // O merciful Lord!



This Week at St. Herman's

Sunday, February 18th - Forgiveness Sunday *Cheesefare*

- 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy followed by Forgiveness Vespers
- Coffee Hour in the parish hall

Monday, February 19th - Beginning of the Great Fast

- 6:45 AM - Matins
- 7:00 PM - Compline with Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Tuesday, February 20th - St. Leo of Catania

- 6:45 AM - Matins
- 7:00 PM - Compline with Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Wednesday, February 21st - Ven Timothy of Symbola & St. Eustathius

- 6:45 AM - Matins
- 7:00 PM - Compline with Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Thursday, February 22nd - Uncovering of the Relics of the Martyrs at the Gate of Eugenius in Constantinople

- 6:45 AM - Matins
- 7:00 PM - Compline with Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

Friday, February 23rd - Hieromartyr Polycarp of Smyrna

- 6:45 AM - Matins
- 5:45 PM - Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts

Saturday, February 24th - St Theodore the Recruit; Finding of the head of St. John the Baptist

- 6:30 PM - Jesus Prayer
- 7:00 PM - Great Vespers