Fun Facts About Lent

Great lent or the great fast is the prepa-
ration before Pascha and Holy Week. 
Weeks of preparation and the Lenten Tri-
dion preside over the divine ser-
dices performed for Great Lent. In 
Middle English, the translation of Lent 
is spring. The reason the word great is 
used is to differentiate Lent from other 
important fasts. Here’s more informa-
tion about it:

Purpose of Great Lent

Great Lent was previously called the 
pre-Pascha Fast. The original purpose 
was the fasting of Christian youths get-
ting ready for confirmation and Chris-
tian conversions prior to baptism as 
preparations were made for entering 
the church. Eventually, Christians be-
gan using this time in preparation for 
the feast symbolizing the Resurrection 
of Christ. This is a living symbol for the 
entire life of man.

Structure of Great Lent

Cheesefare Sunday takes place on the 
first Monday after Forgiveness Sunday. 
According to John 1:43-51, this is the 
Sunday of Orthodoxy. Once Meatfare 
Sunday has passed, all meat is elimi-
nated from the diet. After Cheesefare 
or Forgiveness Sunday, dairy is also 
eliminatd. This is the beginning of the 
strict fast observed for Great Lent.

Observing Great Lent

The main characterizations of Great 
Lent are public and private prayer, ab-
staining from numerous foods, almsgiv-
ing or a gift of goods, food or money 
and personal improvement. Traditionally, 
dairy and meat products, oil, wine 
and fish are not consumed during 
Great Lent. Some traditions only elimi-
nate vegetable oil and others olive oil.

Strict fasting is generally forbidden for 
both the Lord’s Day and the Sabbath, 
although oil and wine are acceptable 
on Saturdays and Sundays. When the 
Feast of the Annunciation occurs dur-
ing Great Lent, observers can enjoy oil, 
wine and fish on this day. The expecta-
tion for Orthodox Christians is an addi-
tional concentration on private prayers.

Prayers are also said more frequently.

Fasting with Prayer

According to the fathers, fasting without 
prayer is referred to as the fast of the 
demons because demons do not pray 
or eat. On the weekdays, a fast occurs 
when no celebration is held for the Di-
vine Liturgy. During this time, receiving 
the Holy Mysteries is especially impor-
tant. This is called the Liturgy of St. 
Gregory the Dialogist and the Liturgy of 
the Presanctified Gifts.

The Liturgy celebration takes place on 
Wednesdays and Fridays. A vesperal 
service is held including the distribu-
tion of the blood and body of Christ. The Di-
vine Liturgy is celebrated on Saturdays 
and Sundays as usual. On Sunday, 
the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great takes 
place as opposed to St. John Chrysos-
tom. Great Lent is celebrated for forty 
days including Sundays.

Great Lent officially starts seven weeks 
before Pascha on a Monday. The 
conclusion takes place on the night of 
Lazarus Saturday. The following week 
is called Passion Week, Holy Week or 
Great Week with fasting continuing un-
til Pascha.

Weekday readings during Great Lent 
only come from the Old Testament. The 
focus is placed on Isaiah, Proverbs and 
Genesis. Holy week follows Great Lent. 
This precedes Pascha and begins with 
the week starting with Palm Sunday.

Great Lent is about renewing prayer, 
devotion, deeds, hearts and minds to 
conform with the teachings of Christ. 
This is a time to honor the great com-
mandments of God through prayer and 
fasting.
Pledged List of Stewards for 2024 Thus Far

Aleck, Demetria
Aleck, Patricia
Ambus, Anthony & Zetta
Ambus, Dr. Antonia
Ambus, Dr. George & Tessa
Apostolopoulos, Demitria
Arsinoos, Mariam
Arvanitidis, Athena & Nicholas
Athanasiades, Philip & Diala
Banks, Bradley
Bardis, John & Kathleen
Barlas, Constantine
Bazgan, George
Bissas, Maria
Boutiette, Mary Ann & Andrew
Cheong, Bryan
Contos, Christopher
Dakis, Mrs. Elli
Davies, Ethel
Decker, Christina
Dekaristos, Mrs. Anastasia
Dekaristos, Evangelos
Delis, Nicholas & Stephanie
Dhawan, Anirudh & Brittany
Economides, Nicholas & Janine
Eliopoulos, Mr. John
Eliopoulos, Louie
Elite, Dr. Anthony
Fanourgiakis, Mike & Mia
Fkiaras, Evgenia
Fonti, George & Sophia
Fousekis, Shareen & Spiros
Fragakis, Charalampos & Marianthe
Garibaldi, David & Kathie
Gazulis, Theodore & Christine
Georges, Alexander C. W.
Giannikopoulos, Petros & Maria
Gikas, Paul & Meltem
Glafkides, Mr. & Mrs. Constantine
Grampsas, Bonnie
Grigoropoulos, Costas & Mary
Grohs, Katie and Bob
Haginikols, Leo & Tiffany
Haralambopoulos, Constantine & Eleftheria
Hernandez, Mr. Jose & Sofia Kleftogionne
Hillas, Patrick
Holloway, Vicki Eleni
Kallas, Mrs. Louise
Kalligeros, Eleni V.
Karas, Bill
Karas, Chris
Karas, Kathy
Karsant, Katerina
Kavouniaris, Saki
Kleinekorte, Mr. & Mrs. Richard
Konstantinidis, Deno C. & Bella
Kontonis, Mr. & Mrs. Nick
Kosaris, Paul & Irene
Kottas, Angelos
Koutoulas, Angelo & Victoria
Koutoulas, Pete & Voula
Kozak, Alexandros & Elisavet Erin
Kratsas, John & Dwa
Kyriacou, Mr. & Mrs. Chris
Kyriacou, Rev. Stephen & Ailiki
Kyriacou, Stelios
Lampros, Aristotelis
Lampros, Mr. John & Magda
Lyberopoulos, Bob & Lea
Makras, Elaine
Makras, Sophie
Makras, Thalia
Manetas, Mr. & Mrs. Peter
Markanton, Helen
Mastrokyriakos, Christos & Melisa
Mattis, Mr. & Mrs. George
Mavrakakis, Mary
Mavroudis, Georgia
Mavroudis, Michael
Mavroudis, Tasso & Natalia
McKnight, Nektarios L.
Melitas, Irene

Icons and Books for Sale
Icons and Books will be available for purchase every Sunday during Lent in the Narthex. You will find a nice selection for both adults and children. Many items are perfect for Easter Baskets! We have just restocked the Holy Week Books. Hurry while supplies last.

Ministry Sunday to be Held on Palm Sunday!!
Enjoy walking from table to table to see all the Ministries of our Church and learn about each! Walk around and get involved! So exciting to see the growth and the New ministries since last September!! Some of the ministries you will see: Elpida (Youth Religious education), Choir, Philoptochos, Greek School, Greek Folk Dance, Sports, Men’s Group, GOYA, JR. GOYA, JOY, HOPE, Stewardship, Community Kitchen, Festival and more!!!
Mellos, Faye & Michael Holland
Misthos, Michael & Christina
Montgomery, Mr. and Mrs. Monte
Morales, Mrs. Helen
Morales, Mrs. Helen
Moulas, Mrs. Vasiliki
Moulas, Vicky A.
Mourofas, Tula
Nager, Perri
Nashawati, Bashar & Roud
Nicolacakis, Maria & Dean
Nicolacakis, Victor
Novo, Dustin & Chrisula Bissas
Nuris, Matthew
Nuris, Thomas & Liberty
Panagiotopoulos, Magdalini
Pantages, Mr. & Mrs. Peter
Papageorgiou, Dr. Sophia
Papingu, Robert & Alma
Pappas-Walsh., Penny
Pappas, Rev. Angelo and Mary
Patropoulos, Joan
Pavlakos, Rose
Petrou, Janis G.
Piccinini, Pamela
Poulakidas, Dean
Poulakidas, Sakee & Irene
Poulos, Despina
Prokopos, Dimitri
Prokopos, Stavroula
Rakos, Alexis 1
Rakos, Anastasia
Rakos, Jim & Kelly
Rakos, Nicholas
Roberts, Ms. Erica
Sarantinos, Alexis
Sarikakis, Emilia
Sarikakis, Mr. & Mrs. Mike
Shatara, Nader & Sawsan
Siouris, Michele Y.
Sogotis, Mrs. Rose
Sogotis, Mr. & Mrs. Paul
Spachis, Mike & Vicky
Statopoulos, Mr. & Mrs. Marios
Stephens, Mr. & Mrs. Peter C.
Stratoudakis, George & Georgia
Svetcoff, Nicholas
Tamaras, Joy
Tarlson, Mr. & Mrs. Nick G.
Thomas, Mr. James
Thompson, Stephanie & Jeffrey
Tsagaris, Eleni
Tsagaris, Aphrodite
Tsiatis, Athanasios & Christina
Tsifouradis, Helen
Vafiadis, Mr. & Mrs. Konstantinos
Vafiadis, Mrs. Irene
Varanis, Nickolas & Lourdes
Vasilogiorgis, Foula
Vavuris, Mr. & Mrs. James & Maria
Vedros, Sally
Vellis, Aris and Kathy
Vellis, Costas & Meena
Verreos, Adrienne
Vlasakakis, Argyrios
Vorries, Angelo J.
Vorries, Denis J. & Renee
Vorries, Louise & James
Vorries, Mr. & Mrs. George
Vorries, Stephanie & Nanette
Yeilding, Denise
York, Bessie
Zarou, Andrew & Evangelia
Zografos, Mrs. Evanthia
If we have mistakenly left your name
off the STEWARDSHIP ROSTER,
please contact the Church Office.
God Bless You!

Please fill out both sides, cut here and return to church.

ANNUNCIATION GREEK ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL
2024 STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT CARD

Name ___________________________ Preferred Number ( _____ ) ___________________________

Spouse Name ___________________________ Cell Number ( _____ ) ___________________________

Address ___________________________ Email ___________________________

City ___________________________ State _____ Zip ____________

Names/ages of dependents ___________________________

<table>
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<tr>
<th>COMMITMENT</th>
<th>2024 STEP UP COMMITMENT</th>
<th>2025 STEP UP COMMITMENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>$ _______ per week, month, year (circle one)</td>
<td>Committing to an annual increase of _______% until such time as you change your designation</td>
<td>Committing to an annual increase of _______% until such time as you change your designation</td>
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☐ Please bill my Mastercard Visa Amex (Circle card.) Card # ___________________________ Exp. Date ____________

Name as appears on card ___________________________ Signature ___________________________
time & talent
Individual stewards should indicate areas of interest with a check (✔).

LITURGICAL
- Sanctuary & Altar-Care
- Altar Boys / Acolytes
- Rate-Ing Prosphyra
- Choir
- Greeter / Usher

MINISTRIES & PROGRAMS
- Welcome Team
- Stewardship
- Sunday Fellowship / Coffee
- Visitation – Hospital
- Visitation – Shut-ins
- Community Kitchen
- Food Festival Team
- Grief Bereavement Group
- Disaster Relief Projects
- Seniors Ministry
- Men’s Fellowship
- Women’s Fellowship

EDUCATION
- Bible Study
- Religious Education:
  - Adult
  - Youth
- Greek School Teacher
- Speakers
- Bookstore

YOUTH
- YAL, GOYA, JOY, HOPE
- Dance Group

BUILD & GROUNDS
- Garden & Landscape
- Electrical
- Interior Repairs
- Exterior Repairs
- Floor Maintenance
- Hall Rentals

COMMUNICATIONS
- Website & E-mail
- Bulletin & Newsletter
- Social Media

ADMINISTRATION
- Financial Management
- Audit Committee
- By-Laws
- Development / Fundraising
- Office Help
- Computer / IT
- Data Entry
- Legal
- Security
- Bookkeeping / Accounting

At last the cavalry arrived for the Community Kitchen in March! After four months of providing our own food with the help of some generous donations, our non-profit partner, Extra Food, delivered a truck load of Indian food from Curry Up Now on Valencia! Initially shocked at the amount of food that arrived, our team jumped into action to reheat, organize and get ready to serve to our neighbors! We are pleased to say that we served over forty plates of lamb vindaloo, butter chicken, samosas, salad and more that night! Music theme this month was jazz by the great Ibrahim Maalouf. Come next month and join us for some good old fashioned volunteering and get an earful of Maria’s music corner while you’re there!

If you are interested in getting involved and volunteering, please email: community.kitchen@annunciation.org

Community Kitchen
Youth Committee

Dear parishioners and friends of the Cathedral,

We’re thrilled to announce the revival of our Youth Ministries HOPE, JR. GOYA, and GOYA at Annunciation Cathedral!

The Greek Orthodox Youth of America (GOYA), will be organized into two distinct groups:

- **Jr. GOYA** will be for middle school students and
- **GOYA** will consist of high school students

Program Directors are as follows:

- **Jr. GOYA** (Middle School) will be led by Mia Fanourgiaakis
- **HOPE** (Elementary grades) will be led by Natalie Mavroudis
- **GOYA** (High School) will be led by Vicky Spachis.

Please look for communication from our Program Youth Directors and Christo Papaedemos on details pertaining to their Programs specifically. We envision holding these gatherings once a month, with quarterly events open to other parishes, allowing our youth to connect with peers from different communities.

This is a crucial time for our youth to stay connected to their faith and community. With your help, we can create a nurturing environment where they can grow spiritually and build lasting connections.

Through active participation in our cathedral community, we strive to lay a strong foundation of faith, equipping our youth with the necessary tools for their spiritual and communal journey, and empowering them to emerge as resilient leaders for the future.

With that all that being said, the GOYA program is ready to launch their very first activity with a Lenten “Make Your Own Pizza night and a discussion on the significance of fasting during Lent. Please refer to the flyer below for registration details and optional volunteer opportunities. We’re eagerly anticipating a delightful evening together!

Sincerely,

Annunciation Cathedral Youth Committee

GOYA 2024
Make Your Own Pizza Night!

JOIN US FOR A GOYA SOCIAL EVENT

- **WHO:** All GOYA (High School) Participants
- **WHAT:** Teachings of Great Lent followed by Creating your own Veggie or Cheese pizzas (reflecting on the significance of fasting for 40 days during Easter).
- **WHERE:** Annunciation Cathedral, San Francisco
- **WHEN:** Friday, April 26, 2024 Beginning at 6:30PM
- **RSVP:** [RSVP Here]

Get ready for a fun-filled evening of making new memories, new friendships, Great Lent teachings, taste testing, and so much more!
Annual Membership Drive
Our Philoptochos membership drive began in January and is on going. Through this membership Philoptochos has been a beacon of faith, hope and love to all those in need of our services, both spiritually and financially. As members of this national organization we reach out and give solace to those less fortunate in our communities and in the world. This is the great mission of philoptochos. It is “one woman asking another to care.” When you join you help meet the mission set so many years ago. In our changing world the needs of those less fortunate are greater and more demanding. Many of you have submitted your membership and we thank you for your prompt response. We need every woman in our Church community to support this important organization in whatever capacity you can give. The faces of philoptochos are many from older to younger women. All are important and all insure our legacy of hope and vision. Be part of a wonderful group of members that embraces, evolves and gives to others. Join today!

Email Meena Vellis with any questions: mvellis@comcast.com

Easter Bake Sale
This year Orthodox Easter will be held on Sunday, May 5th. As we do every year Philoptochos will be preparing breads, and cookies for our Easter Bake Sale. Keep an eye out for the order forms in April.

Mother’s Day Luncheon
Philoptochos will be hosting it’s annual Mother’s Day Luncheon on May 11th. A committee is being formed and we are looking for a new format for us to celebrate this special day. Save the date. More information coming.

Scholarships Awarded
Congratulations to the following recipients of the 2024 spring semester scholarships. The candidates are worthy students with excellent grades and showed a commitment to community, faith and devotion to our Greek Orthodox church.

- **Alexis Rakos**
  Andrew and Efrosine Vellis Memorial Scholarship
  Field of Study: English at UC Berkeley
  Parents: Jim and Kelly Rakos

- **Niko Rakos**
  Philoptochos Scholarship
  Field of Study: Religious Studies at Hellenic College
  Parents: Jim and Kelly Rakos

- **Anastasia Athanasiadi**
  Philoptochos Scholarship
  Field of Study: Political Science and Economics at Chapman University
  Parents: Philippos Athanasiades and Diala Batshoun

An invitation to host Coffee Hour!
Coffee hour represents a wonderful venue for drawing our parishioners together and promoting fellowship each Sunday. Earlier in the year we announced the launch of our new invitation-al coffee hour program that provides a more complete offering for our parishioners to enjoy. And our program has been gaining momentum!!!

Here’s where you come in… We’re calling on all ministries, organizations, and our parishioners (individually or in teams!) to sign up to host one or more coffee hours over the course of the year. We’ll supply the coffee/ cream/ sugar, tablecloths, napkins, utensils – and you supply the goodies (e.g., pastries, donuts, bagels & cream cheese, small sandwiches, fruit/vegetable/ cheese platters and assorted dips, or other similar items.)

Looking ahead, we’re seeking hosts for the following Sundays in May: the 12th, 19th and 26th. Please reach out to Irene Melitas (irene.melitas@annunciation.org, or, 925.212.8561) to sign-up and learn more.
COMING SOON – REALM Streamlining Giving for Our Cathedral Community

We’re thrilled to announce an upcoming feature that will revolutionize the way we give and manage our church finances: REALM Church Management Software. In the fast-paced world we live in, convenience and accessibility are key, and REALM offers just that and more.

Here’s a sneak peek at some of the incredible features that will soon be at your fingertips:

**Give from Anywhere:** Whether you’re at home, work, or on the go, you’ll be able to give conveniently using your computer, tablet, or smartphone. No need to worry about finding a check or making a trip to the ATM.

**Multiple Payment Options:** REALM allows you to give using your Checking/Savings Account or your Debit/Credit Card, providing flexibility and ease of use.

**Automated Giving:** With the ability to schedule gifts to occur automatically, you can set it and forget it, ensuring your contributions are consistent and reliable.

**Allocate Funds Easily:** Whether you want to give to one fund or multiple funds, REALM makes it simple and straightforward.

As we prepare to roll out this exciting new feature, stay tuned for more details on how you can start using REALM to support our church’s mission and ministries. We believe that this tool will not only streamline our giving process but also empower us to make a greater impact in our community and beyond.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our church family. Together, we are making a difference.

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**Men’s Fellowship Save the Date**

Our next Men’s Fellowship gathering will take place Thursday, May 23rd. Social hour at 6pm followed by dinner at 7pm. Please email Jim Rakos to RSVP if you would like to attend. There is no cost.

[jim.rakos@annunciation.org](mailto:jim.rakos@annunciation.org)

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**BASKETBALL PROGRAM**

The Annunciation Basketball program is underway. This year we have a middle school boys, high school boys and adult basketball teams representing our parish. Next year, we would like to have an Elementary school and a girls basketball team for each division (Elementary, Middle School, High School). We are also looking for coaches so if you have a child that would like to participate, please email [athletics@annunciation.org](mailto:athletics@annunciation.org).

The OYAA Schedule is [https://oyaasportscentral.com/](https://oyaasportscentral.com/)

ALSO - We have been having great success with our Wednesday nights Open Gym program. This is pick up basketball for adults. The group starts at 8 pm on Wednesdays and play full court basketball until 9:30 or 10 pm. This is open to all parishioners and guests. Feel free to email [athletics@annunciation.org](mailto:athletics@annunciation.org) if you would like to attend.
Annunciation Cathedral

Philoptochos

Mother’s Day Luncheon

Save the date
Saturday, May 11, 2024
Location to be determined