



Holy Protection of the Mother of God, Denver

And the Byzantine Catholic Outreach of Fort Collins

Pastor's Reflection

Penitential Fasting and Abstinence

How we use the terms 'fasting' and 'abstinence' can be confusing because, in our Metropolitan church, the terms are almost synonymous, with the emphasis falling on abstinence from certain foods rather than on not-eating. So, for example, the particular laws for our metropolia and eparchy define to 'Simple Fast' and 'Strict Fast' this way:

- "Simple fast or abstinence forbids the use of meat and meat products but does not forbid the use of eggs and dairy products" (Eparchy of Phoenix, *Pastoral Handbook 2020* [PH2010], no. 473). This roughly equates to "vegetarian."
- "Strict Fast forbids the use of meat, eggs, and dairy products" (PH2010, no. 475). This roughly equates to "vegan."

One of the reasons every household needs a wall calendar is that it is the easiest way to know on which days fasting is required. Look for the fish, which indicates a day of Simple Fast. The notes give information about other fasting requirements and recommendations.

Strict Fast is imposed only for the First Day of the Great Fast (called "Pure/Clean Monday") and Good Friday. It is, however, said to be "highly commendable but not required" on certain vigils of feasts and on the fasting feasts.

"Commendable or recommended but not required" is an important aspect of the Byzantine tradition of fasting. The traditional "rules" for the Great Fast are quite severe, and for many centuries, it has been well understood that few people will be able to keep the full rigor of the Great Fast. Even in communities that attempt to follow the rules of

abstinence strictly, it is fairly rare to find them applying the rules restricting the number of meals with equal rigor.

The legislated rules for Simple Fast found on the calendar are meant to identify a level of ascetical effort that can be undertaken by most people at most ages without posing a risk to their health. "Expectant and nursing mothers, infants and those who are in poor health are exempt from the laws of strict fast" (PH2010, no. 480). Beyond that, pastors can grant individuals and families a dispensation from both Simple and Strict Fasts or a commutation to another equivalent form of penance (no. 481).

Nonetheless, the traditional rules of Byzantine fast, which are more rigorous even than Strict Fast, remain "highly commendable" and, in some cases, "highly recommended." None of us should be content with the legal minimum; we ought at least to measure ourselves against the full rigor of the traditional rules[1] as part of our war both against the flesh and against any drift toward Pharisaic self-satisfaction. However, it is best that this testing and stretching of ourselves be done under the supervision of a spiritual father or one's pastor.

I have written the above mainly for the benefit of the ascribed members of the Byzantine Catholic Church of Pittsburgh. As with Days of Precept and other obligations, Latin Catholics will need to consult their own canonical laws and traditions, although in the case of mixed families, a united discipline following the laws of one or the other of the parents is permissible.

Sts Cyril and Methodius Russian Greek Catholic Community is in a slightly different position. Although bound by the same Pastoral Handbook as members of Holy Protection, the aspirational goal of that community is to conform itself as closely as possible to the discipline and practices of the Orthodox Church of America, which is the proximate representation of the Russian Orthodox tradition that the community has chosen to emulate.

Finally, a reminder that *fasting* is only one of the traditional works of religion; *prayer* and *almsgiving* are the others. The penitential seasons of the year, and especially the Great Fast, are times for intensifying our practice of all three. Moreover, the gateway to these practices is always charity. The entrance to the Great Fast proceeds through Forgiveness Vespers, a reminder that none of our works of piety will do us any good if we do not forgive those who have trespassed against us in the same measure we hope God will forgive us. If the traditional rules of fasting are a daunting standard, the Lord's standard of forgiving wrongs done to us is more daunting still. This Lent, let us stretch ourselves here as well as in our other works of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

-Fr Joel

[1] For a classic summary of the Rules of Fasting, see *The Lenten Triodion*, transl. By Mother Maria and Kallistos Ware (St Tikhon's Seminary Press, repr. 1994), pp. 35-37.

Contact Information

Fr Joel Barstad

Parochial Administrator

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Office: 720-910-3084

Mobile: 720-910-3082
Making Appointments with Fr Joel
Text or email works best.

Flocknote/Parish Roster

If you haven't joined Flocknote, please do so. Flocknote is our primary way of communicating directly with members and friends of the parish.

Also, **if you are already receiving Flocknotes** and would like to be included on the parish roster, please update your contact information, including your mailing address. We will use this information to update our roster.

Text HPDEN to 84576 or visit us online at holyprotectiondenver.flocknote.com

Holy Protection Website

We have recently changed the web host for the HP website and are working on updating the website. As the communication team works through these changes and additions, please be patient with us.

The new site will be going live shortly. Once it does, one of the first changes you will notice is a prayer request button on the front page of the website. This prayer request button is now live and ready for use. The button is located in the upper right corner.

The calendar is also new and will eventually have many features, from sign-ups for trained volunteers to those who would like to sign up to bring food for social events.

Calendar

We are experimenting with new monthly calendars on our website. It can be found at <https://holyprotection.org/about/calendar/> .

A Letter from Sophia Montessori

**Dear Holy Protection Community,
Glory to Jesus Christ!**

With great excitement, we are able to announce the location to which [Sophia Montessori Academy](#), a Catholic school founded on our Byzantine tradition, will be moving this summer! We have received approval from the Archdiocese of Denver to relocate our school to the property adjacent to St. Francis de Sales church at 320 S. Sherman St., Denver 80209.

We are thrilled to be making this move to a location that is less than three miles away from our current school building and which will allow us to immediately expand to include a second primary classroom

and a lower elementary (6-9-year-olds) classroom with the hopes of adding a third primary and an upper elementary (9-12-year-olds) classroom within the next five years.

Our new space will allow us direct access to a Catholic Church to celebrate Divine Liturgy and pray, an outdoor space, office spaces, and room for continued growth!

You can learn more about our school [here](#).

We are now looking to fill more spots and hire amazing faithful teachers. Please share with others about our [openings](#) and keep us in your prayers!

2023 will be a year filled with excitement, growth, changes, and many wonderful adventures!

You are also all invited to join us to celebrate SMA's 5th anniversary on Friday, February 17th at the current school location (2626 E. Louisiana Ave) at 6:30 pm. We will have food, and drinks, current parents will share their Montessori journey, and you can try out the Montessori materials yourself!

Thank you for your continued prayers and support and for joining us on this journey.

In Christ,
The SMA Team

View the SMA- Room to Grow-Capital Campaign video [here](#).

Upcoming

Feb 2: Meeting of Our Lord with Simeon and Anna

Feb 12: Sunday of Meat-Fare (Ruthenian)

Feb 19: Sunday of Cheese- Fare (Ruthenian), Sunday of Meatfare (Russian)

Feb 20: First Day of the Great Fast (Ruthenian)

Feb 26: Sunday of Forgiveness (Russian)

Feb 27: First Day of the Great Fast (Russian)

Prayer Requests

For those who are sick or in special need of prayer

- Alexis
- Alexis Daly
- Kate
- Chelsea Wegman

- Christian B.
- Jack

To add someone to the prayer request list, please use the new prayer request button on the front page of the HP website.

Ways to Give

King Soopers Community Rewards - If you haven't already designated Holy Protection as your local charity and you shop at King Soopers, please follow the steps here.

<https://www.kingsoopers.com/i/community/community-rewards>

We are listed as Holy Protection Byzantine Catholic Church. Thank you!

AmazonSmile - If you haven't already designated Holy Protection as your charity and you use Amazon, please follow the steps here.

<https://www.aboutamazon.com/news/community/how-to-sign-up-for-amazon-smile>

We are listed as Pastor of Holy Protection of the Mother of God Byzantine Catholic. Thank you!

Financial Statement

Holy Protection of the Mother of God
Profit & Loss
December 2022

	Dec 22
Income	
Collections Income	11,217.81
Interest/Investment Income	47.99
Other Income	120.00
Candles/Votives	24.00
Social Income (Gala)	1,195.00
Total Income	12,604.80
Expense	
Parish Admin. & General	4,738.64
Church Operating Costs	743.09
Rectory Expenses	394.93
Personnel Expenses	4,830.96
Total Expense	10,707.62
Net Income	1,897.18

A note on the Financial Statement: Thank you for your faithful giving! Many Catholics have a vague feeling that they ought to be giving more, but without precise needs and guidelines, it is hard to know how much is reasonable. I look forward to presenting a budget for the parish and its outreach communities, but in the meantime, if you have general questions about our financial condition, please direct them to Fr. Joel. If you have specific questions, please direct them to Melanie at admin@holyprotection.org. -Fr Joel

How Much Should I Be Giving?

“Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

In this passage, St Paul is writing about a special collection he was gathering from his Gentile churches for the Christians of Jerusalem who were in dire need, but the principles of sowing and reaping, cheerfulness in giving, and abounding in good works of almsgiving are fundamental to the Christian attitude about money. Even the Desert Fathers who had abandoned the world for a life of asceticism were encouraged to do enough manual labor to feed themselves and to have something left over to give to the poor.

The Old Testament principle of giving one-tenth (a tithe) of one’s income to support the Temple and its ministers was adopted by later Christians as a reasonable guide and measure for their own support of the work of the Church. Not everyone may be able to afford that much, others can afford much more, but a tithe is a good rule of thumb for most of us.

If 10% sounds daunting, you can start with a lower percentage, according to the measure of your faith in God’s faithfulness to support you in your needs and in your generosity. As God proves himself faithful to you, you will be ready to increase the percentage you set aside. Whatever amount you decide upon, give half to your parish and half to the poor or other ministries that serve the poor. Whatever amount you decide upon, give it consistently and joyfully, knowing that God will work with you and through you to bless the Church and those around you who are in need. -Fr Joel

Holy Mysteries (rev. 7 Feb 2023)

Canonical Ascription: Every Catholic is a member not only of the universal Catholic Church but also of one of the 22 particular, ritual, *sui juris* churches that comprise the Catholic Church. The largest of these churches is the Latin Church. Holy Protection Denver is a parish of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix, which is part of the *sui juris* Byzantine Catholic (Ruthenian) Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh. The Saints Cyril and Methodius Russian community is part of the Russian Greek Catholic Church.

A person’s ascription is generally determined at baptism or by the formal process of transfer from one church *sui juris* to another. A person’s canonical ascription can significantly impact the administration of the holy mysteries of initiation and crowning, regardless of where one regularly attends Divine Liturgy and for how long one has done so. Therefore, please allow ample time to address these issues when you request baptism or marriage.

Sacraments of Initiation: Full Byzantine initiation—Baptism, Chrismation, and First Communion—is the norm, even for infants, for ascribed members of the Eastern Churches

belonging to the Byzantine liturgical family. Latin Catholics baptized as infants normally receive Confirmation and First Communion separately and at a later age. A Byzantine Catholic priest can baptize a person who will be an ascribed member of the Latin Church with the permission of his or her territorial pastor; permission to Chrismate/Confirm, however, comes from the local Latin bishop.

Mystery of Crowning: The Eparchy requires a preparation period of at least six months. For couples, both of whom are Latin Catholics, the local archdiocese requires a preparation period of eight months, which will be followed in this parish to allow time for requesting the extra permissions required in such a case. Marriages should not be celebrated during the Fasting Seasons of the Church, especially not during the Great Fast.

Funerals: Please contact Fr Joel to arrange funerals and other memorial services.

Sick Calls/Anointing/Hospital Visits: Please contact Father Joel directly at 720-910-3082 if you or a family member needs Holy Communion, Anointing of the Sick, or a visit at home, a hospital, or a care facility. The Mystery of Holy Anointing will also be offered in the church once during each of the four penitential seasons.

Mystery of Holy Penance: The Mystery of Holy Penance will be celebrated an hour before evening feast day Divine Liturgies and, for now, on Saturday mornings. This service provides the framework for individual confessions. Individual confessions may also be scheduled at other times by appointment.

Divine Liturgy: Generally, Divine Liturgy will be celebrated on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, as well as on feast days. For obligatory and solemn feasts, a Vigil Divine Liturgy will, if possible, be celebrated the evening before the day and a regular Divine Liturgy on the day itself. In addition, the Divine Praises, mainly Matins and Vespers, will be celebrated most weekdays but especially in preparation for Divine Liturgies.

Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts: During the weekdays of the Great Fast, we are not supposed to celebrate the Eucharistic Divine Liturgy. Instead, we celebrate the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, which is a combination of Vespers, a solemn Entrance with the Holy Mysteries consecrated on the previous Sunday, and Holy Communion. If you want to see what solemn Byzantine Eucharistic devotion looks like, plan to attend one of the services during Lent!

Safe Environment

The Victim Assistance Coordinator for the Eparchy of Phoenix is available to help anyone who has been abused or victimized by someone representing the Catholic Church. We will listen to your needs and support you. We will also help you make a formal complaint and arrange a personal meeting with the Bishop or his delegate if desired.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR: Dcn. Michael Hanafin
(cell) (480) 307-5182 -- (email) vac@ephx.org

The Safe Environment Coordinator for the Eparchy of Phoenix is available to answer any inquiries and to receive reports regarding Safe Environment-related observations or concerns.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Sdcn. Paul Kilroy
(office) (602) 861-9778, ext. 204 -- (Cell) (480) 745-0316
(email) sbdcnkilroy@ephx.org

Saints Cyril and Methodius Russian Greek Catholic Community

Meets at Holy Protection of the Mother of God



Announcements:

- SCM's Divine Liturgy will be held at Holy Protection of the Mother of God starting on January 29 and will be at 12:30 pm from then on.
- During the month of February, we will be organizing our Regis basement storage room and moving the contents to a storage unit. Stay tuned for ways you can help.
- Reminder: Children's first confessions will be held on Feb 4 at 10:00 am at Holy Protection.

Vespers and book club: Join us each Monday at 7:30 pm on Zoom to pray vespers and learn about faith and spirituality. We are currently reading *The Art of Prayer: An Orthodox Anthology*. Contact Deacon Basil for a copy of the book. [Join Zoom Meeting](#)