

2/29/2020

GREAT LENT

Journey to Pascha



ALEXANDER
SCHMEMANN

The Transformation Of Saturday

Part 3, in a series inspired by Lenten worship
and this book

March 2020 Lectionary of Daily Readings

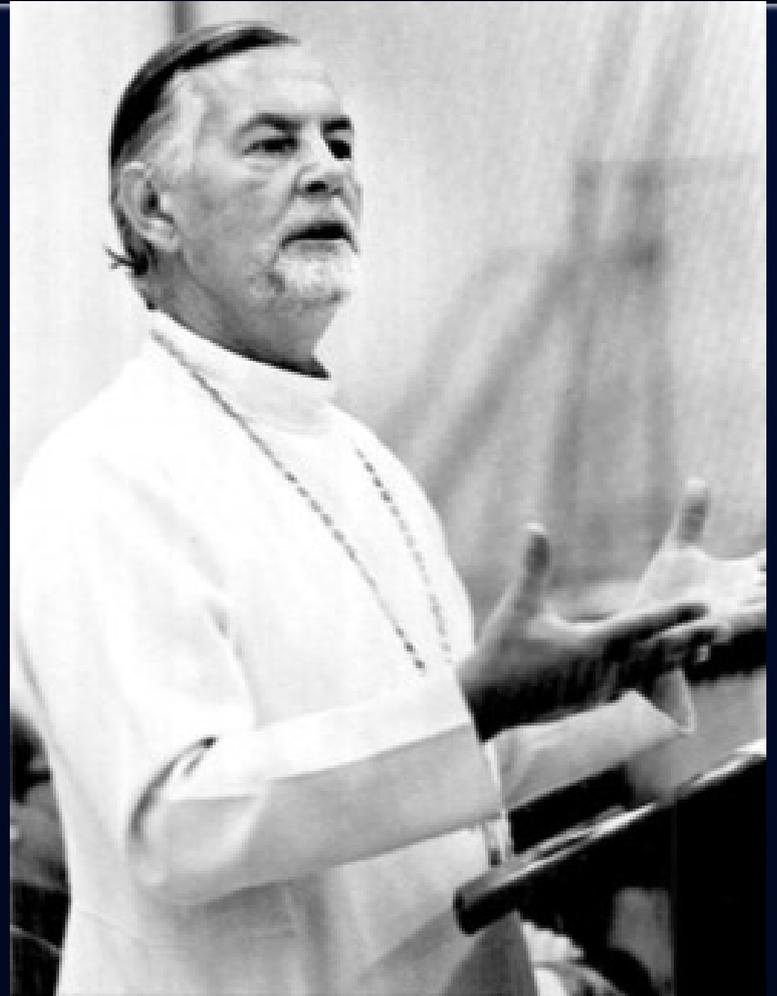
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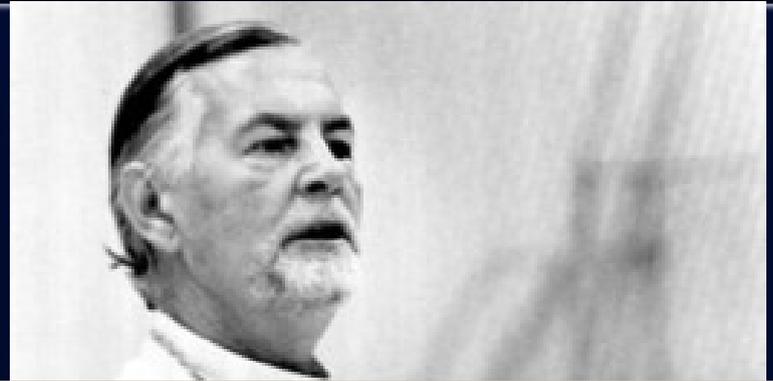
Journey to Pascha



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GREAT LENT



Thus with Lent. Above all, Lent is a spiritual journey and its destination is Easter, "the Feast of Feasts."



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January 2020



	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5				1
2		6	7	8
9		13	14	15
16		20	21	22
23		27	28	29



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"Repent

Jeremiah 2

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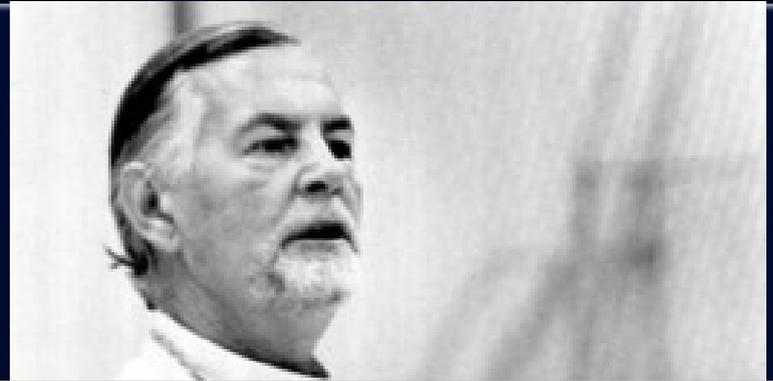
a change of mind

metanoia / repentance

Mark 1:14-15, Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the **gospel of God**, and saying,

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; **repent and believe** in the gospel.”

GREAT LENT



Thus with Lent. Above all, Lent is a spiritual journey and its destination is Easter, "the Feast of Feasts."



The Fathers often compared Lent to the forty years journey of the chosen people through the desert.

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Although its final destination is Pascha, the promised land of God's Kingdom, Lent has at the end of each week a special "stopover"—an anticipation of that goal. It is two "Eucharistic" days—Saturday and Sunday—which in the spiritual journey of Lent have a special significance.

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2020 APRIL

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

Palm Sunday

**LAZARUS
SATURDAY**

PASCHA



Lazarus Saturday is a paschal celebration. It is the only time in the entire Church Year that the resurrectional service of Sunday is celebrated on another day. At the liturgy of Lazarus Saturday

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Exodus 20:8-10

⁸ "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; *in it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who ^[a]stays with you.

Let us begin with Saturday. Its special liturgical status in our tradition and its exclusion from the lenten type of worship need some explanation. From the point of view of “rubrics,” which we explained earlier, Saturday is a day not of *fast* but of *feast* for God Himself instituted it as feast: “and God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it:

Genesis 2:2-3

² By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

Genesis 1:31

³¹ God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.

Genesis 2:2-3

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Sabbath, the day of Creation, the day of "this world,"

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1 John 5:19

We know that we are of God,
and that the whole world lies
in *the power of* the evil one.

Sabbath, the day of Creation, the day of "this world,"

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³¹ God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.

No one can undo or abolish that which God has ordered. It is true that many Christians think that the divine institution of sabbath has simply been transferred to Sunday which thus became the Christian day of rest or sabbath. Nothing in the Scriptures or Tradition can substantiate this belief.

Matthew 5:17

“Do not think that I came to **abolish** the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to **abolish** but to **fulfill**.

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The transformation of the sabbath

All Saturdays of the liturgical year receive their meaning from two decisive Saturdays: that of Lazarus' Resurrection, which took place in this world and is the announcement and the assurance of the common resurrection; and that of the Great and Holy Sabbath of Pascha when death itself was transformed and became the "passover" into the new life of the New Creation.

Not Abolished, Transformed

Sabbath, the day of Creation, the day of "this world," became—in Christ—the day of expectation, the day *before* the Lord's Day. The transformation of the sabbath took place on that Great and Holy Sabbath on which Christ, having "accomplished all His works," rested in the grave.

-the day of expectation

the day of expectation

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restoration of all things

the day of expectation

restoration of all things

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Acts 3:19-21

¹⁹ Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; ²⁰ and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until *the* [b]period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

During Lent this meaning of Saturdays acquires a special intensity, for the purpose of Lent is precisely to recover the Christian meaning of time as preparation and pilgrimage and of the status of the Christian as "alien" and "exile" in this world (I Peter 2:11).

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Homework

This is especially evident in the sequence of the Epistle lessons for Lenten Saturdays selected from the *Epistle to the Hebrews* in which the typology of the history of salvation, of pilgrimage, promise, and faith in the things to come are central.

Homework

Gospel lessons for the Saturdays in Lent are selected from the *Gospel of St. Mark* and also constitute a sequence.

The key to its meaning is given on the *first* Saturday: Christ overrules the hypocritical taboos of the Jewish sabbath proclaiming:

... the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. Therefore the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath

(Mark 2:23-3:5)

A new age is coming, the re-creation of man has begun.