

*"I can do all things through Christ
who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13*

St. Raphael School Journal

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Newsletter
April 2024



Kontakion of St. Raphael the Bishop of Brooklyn

You were a guardian and a defender of the Church's teaching: you protected your flock from false doctrines and confirmed them in the true faith. O holy father Raphael, son of Syria and glory of North America, always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved.

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Welcome to the April edition of the newsletter! Enjoy a amusing alternate ending of Don Quixote, more lovely poetry, an insight on the colors of Lent and much more! **The Newsletter is open and ready for submissions!** Do you have questions for a spiritual father, a piece of artwork for the Fine Arts page, or an assignment you are proud of? Send it on in! We'd love to see what you've got.

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St. Raphael School Journal

Praying List

Living

Fr. Peter

Eleousa

Phyllis

Lynn

Joseph

Linda

Andrew

Zane

Departed

Barbara Joy

Suzan

Elliot

Timothy

Fr. Porphyrios

Fr. Abraham

Anna

“Joy is thankfulness, and when we are joyful, that is the best expression of thanks we can offer the Lord, Who delivers us from sorrow and sin.”

-ELDER THADDEUS OF VITOVNICA

PALM SUNDAY



Kontakion

Sitting on Your throne in heaven, / carried on a foal on earth,
O Christ God! / Accept the praise of angels and the songs of
children who sing: / Blessed is He that comes to recall Adam!

Feasts of the Month

April 1

Mary of Egypt

April 5

Theodora the
Righteous of
Thessaloniki

April 17

Symeon The Holy
Martyr

April 19

George the
Confessor

April 24

Nicholas the New-
Martyr of
Magnesia

April 28

Palm Sunday

Note from the Editor

Dear St. Raphael Journal readers, thank you for checking out our newsletter! It wouldn't be possible without all the amazing support from SRS teachers and staff. If you would like to see more student submissions, please explore the St. Raphael School Journal Website. *To submit names for the prayer list or a student submission, email the Newsletter team here.*

Gen Bell
Managing Editor & Website Coordinator

Featured Essay

How Great Can We Make Great Lent?

By Anastasia Fahey

Once again the season of Great Lent is upon us. Some approach with dread as they ponder the outlawed foods, prostrations, and the many long services. Others anticipate the fast, knowing the joy on Pascha will outweigh the hard effort it took to get there. Every one of us has some faults so the next 47 days can be a chance for us to improve ourselves. Someone once told me that how you start is how you finish. Let's embrace this fast with vigor so that we may have a most joyous Pascha.

If we want to get the most out of Great Lent, then we need to remind ourselves it is not about us. With sacrifice and denial, we empty ourselves so as to be filled with Christ. By following the church's structure of the fast we can begin this process. Abstaining from meat and dairy products is just the beginning though. If we really want to cleanse ourselves then getting rid of our passions is critical. We can work on those nagging sins that don't seem to go away. If we are always irritated and impatient then we should try a little harder to instill a peaceful spirit.

Throughout this fast, we need to add more spiritual actions to our lives as well. Reading an akathist once a week, making a couple of prostrations, and using our prayer ropes are just a few ways to do so. One tradition we have in my home is to read a spiritual book every Great Lent. Everyday Saints, The Guru the Young Man and Elder Piasios, Our Thoughts Determine Our Lives, and

"Someone once told me that how you start is how you finish."

The Sunflower are all wonderful books, and there are countless more to choose from. We can even add the Prologue or scripture reading to our daily life. There are a multitude of services during this period so we should try our very best to attend as many as possible.

Volunteering to clean or help prepare meals is a great way to offer sacrifices to the Lord. Great Lent is an opportunity for us to come closer to Christ. We can either stumble through the fast or embark on this great journey

with excitement. We will strive to follow the fast, rid ourselves of passions, increase our prayer life, and so much more! "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans 8:18

Once Upon A Time

An Ending to Don Quixote

By Mary Kjendal

Sancho groaned and rolled onto his back. "Your Grace?" he ventured. When he was met with silence, he tried opening his eyes. When he squinted and turned his head just so, he could make out Don Quixote's silhouette a few paces to Sancho's right. "What are you doing?" Sancho inquired. It appeared as though his master was standing on one leg, his arms outstretched. Sancho shook his head. He sat up slowly then proceeded to rub the back of his head. He winced. "I won't be having any of your miracle healer this time, thank you very much," he muttered in the general direction of Don Quixote.

The knight swiveled around to meet Sancho's glare but lost his balance and clattered to the ground. Sancho didn't bother offering him a hand. When Don Quixote had righted himself, he stood on both feet and said to his squire, "Oh, Sancho of little faith and weak constitution. The mother who bore you should have christened you Bajo, for you lie forever low, close to the ground from whence you were created. You strive for nothing, and you are content to stay where you lie – prostrate, with your cheek upon the clay. Your heart is weak, and it fails you. You have no mind for glory, nay, not for servitude either. You have your heart set on earthly and material things. Lay them aside! You may be troubled at being made prostrate by mortals, or you may choose to be prostrate before the Almighty. You may be glad in the face of persecution, for though your body groans, you may not also. Such is our fate as knight-errants! Is a blow from a man to be likened to the fires of hell? My squire, rise up from your groveling and straighten your neck. Rise, Sancho, rise!" Don Quixote ended his speech with a shout.

Sancho sighed and rolled his eyes. "Sir, in good faith, you practically poisoned me. I still can't feel my left foot!"

Don Quixote gave a suffering shake of his head. "Enough. Sancho, fetch me my alas de angel. It is time for chivalry to soar, justice to take flight, and righteousness to ascend! Now, strap them to my back. Ow! Looser you fool, looser! Ow! Ow! Ow!" Don Quixote hopped about, clutching his foot. Sancho stepped back and rubbed his eyes.

"Sir, I didn't touch your foot. I was putting the wings where you instructed— on your back! But enough is enough. I was foolish to do even that. What insane endeavor have you designed in that upper story of yours?" Don Quixote had ceased his prancing and was standing at the edge of the precipice. "Sancho," he began. "This time I ask you to behold not my madness, but my reason. Watch what I do and exult in that I, Don Quixote of La Mancha, am your master, the knight-errant whom you serve! But before I go, prove your madness as I once proved mine to you."

Sancho rolled his eyes. "Good sir, I have no madness in my mind, nor in my body or soul. I am sane while you are distraught. I am the pinnacle of reason, the heights of intellect! You know not what summits I can ascend with my wit. You shun my words, you forsake my advice, but look where you are now! You poor child, to be fraught with your imagination and to have no bearings in reality. When I am lord of my island, I will care for you as only a dedicated companion could. One last time, I offer my advice. To jump now is to jump to your death. Keep your feet where they belong— on the ground."

Don Quixote turned away from Sancho and sighed. "You have done more than prove your madness, my good squire. You have attested to your derangement, lunacy, and hysteria. Would that your mind could carry you farther than a furlong. You have followed me, Sancho, and you have failed my tests. You have condescended me, fought me, attempted to dissuade me, told others of my thoughts, and otherwise betrayed me in the fullest sense of the word. Your one redeemable quality is your faithfulness. You have never turned away from me in body. Go in peace, Sancho!" With that, he leapt off the escarpment and beat his wings. The sun was going down in a blazing red fire, and Sancho covered his eyes. When he opened them, Don Quixote was not seen or heard. Sancho Panza sat down and wept.

Student Submissions

Advertisement



The Saint Raphael Newsletter Is Calling For:

Student Submissions

Send your Poetry, Photography, Artwork,
and Writing to be published in the
Newsletter!

*Please Send It To Our Team's Email:
raphaelschooljournal@gmail.com*

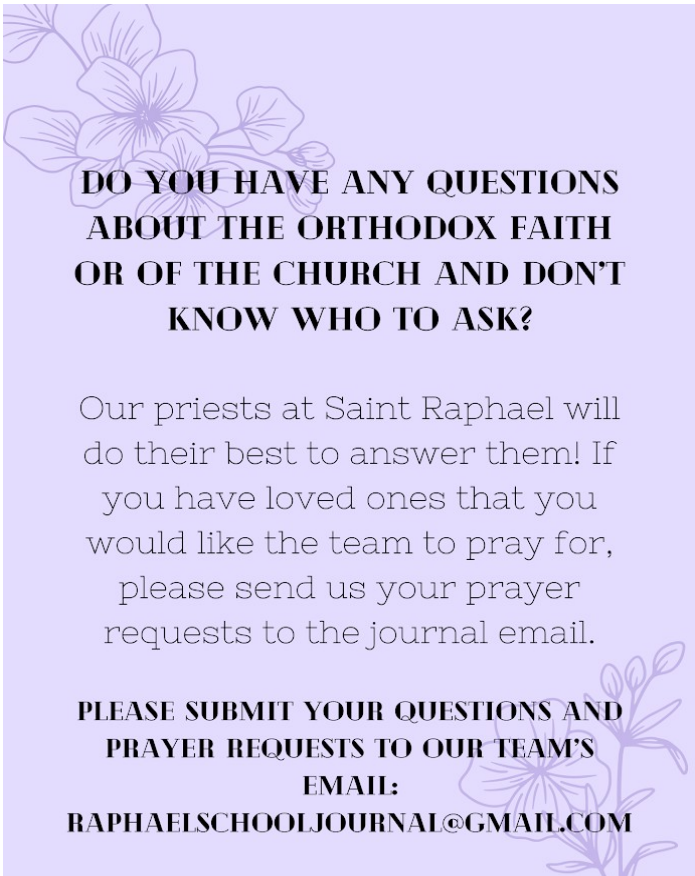
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Mary
Kjendal,

Sevastiane
Archer

&

Theodora
Ciuca



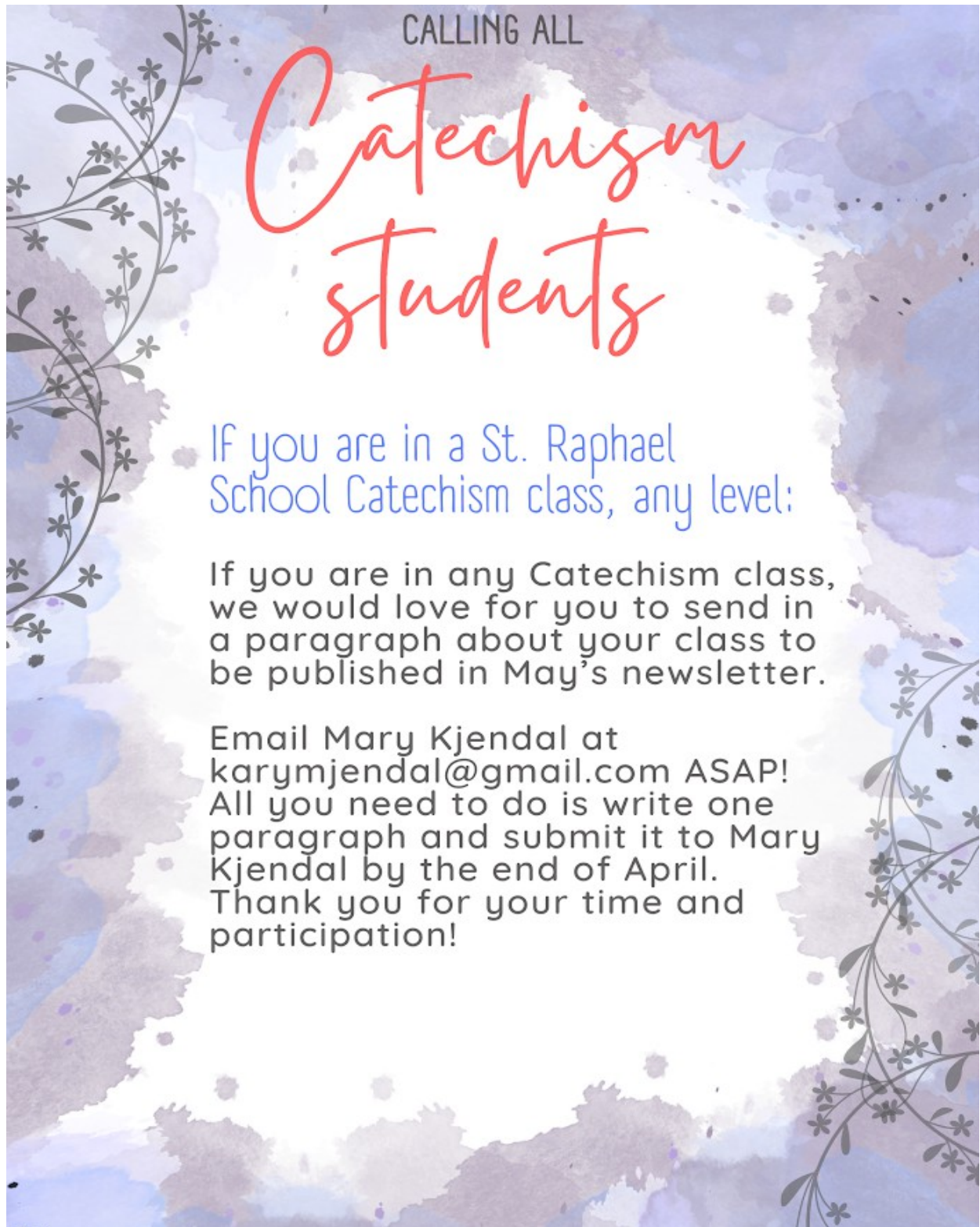
**DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS
ABOUT THE ORTHODOX FAITH
OR OF THE CHURCH AND DON'T
KNOW WHO TO ASK?**

Our priests at Saint Raphael will do their best to answer them! If you have loved ones that you would like the team to pray for, please send us your prayer requests to the journal email.

**PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS AND
PRAYER REQUESTS TO OUR TEAM'S
EMAIL:
RAPHAELSCHOOLJOURNAL@GMAIL.COM**

Student Submissions

Advertisement



CALLING ALL

Catechism students

If you are in a St. Raphael
School Catechism class, any level:

If you are in any Catechism class,
we would love for you to send in
a paragraph about your class to
be published in May's newsletter.

Email Mary Kjendal at
karymjendal@gmail.com ASAP!
All you need to do is write one
paragraph and submit it to Mary
Kjendal by the end of April.
Thank you for your time and
participation!

Student Submissions

Poetry Page

Written By: Genevieve Bell

My Love

This flower doesn't have much
time left.

This world, this place, this time,
No longer has room for it.
It had its chance to bloom,
To feel the warmth of the sun,
To touch the earth,
To taste the seasons,
And to love, to love, to love.

My love,
This flower must say goodbyes,
To this world, this place, this
time.
Something far greater is making
room,
Darling, it's had its chance to
bloom.
To feel the rain,
To touch the beauty,
To taste the world.
And to love, to love, to love.

My love,
This little flower will see
you again,
In another world, another
place, another time.
Don't forget me-
And to love, to love, to love.

Written By: Ioan Garrett

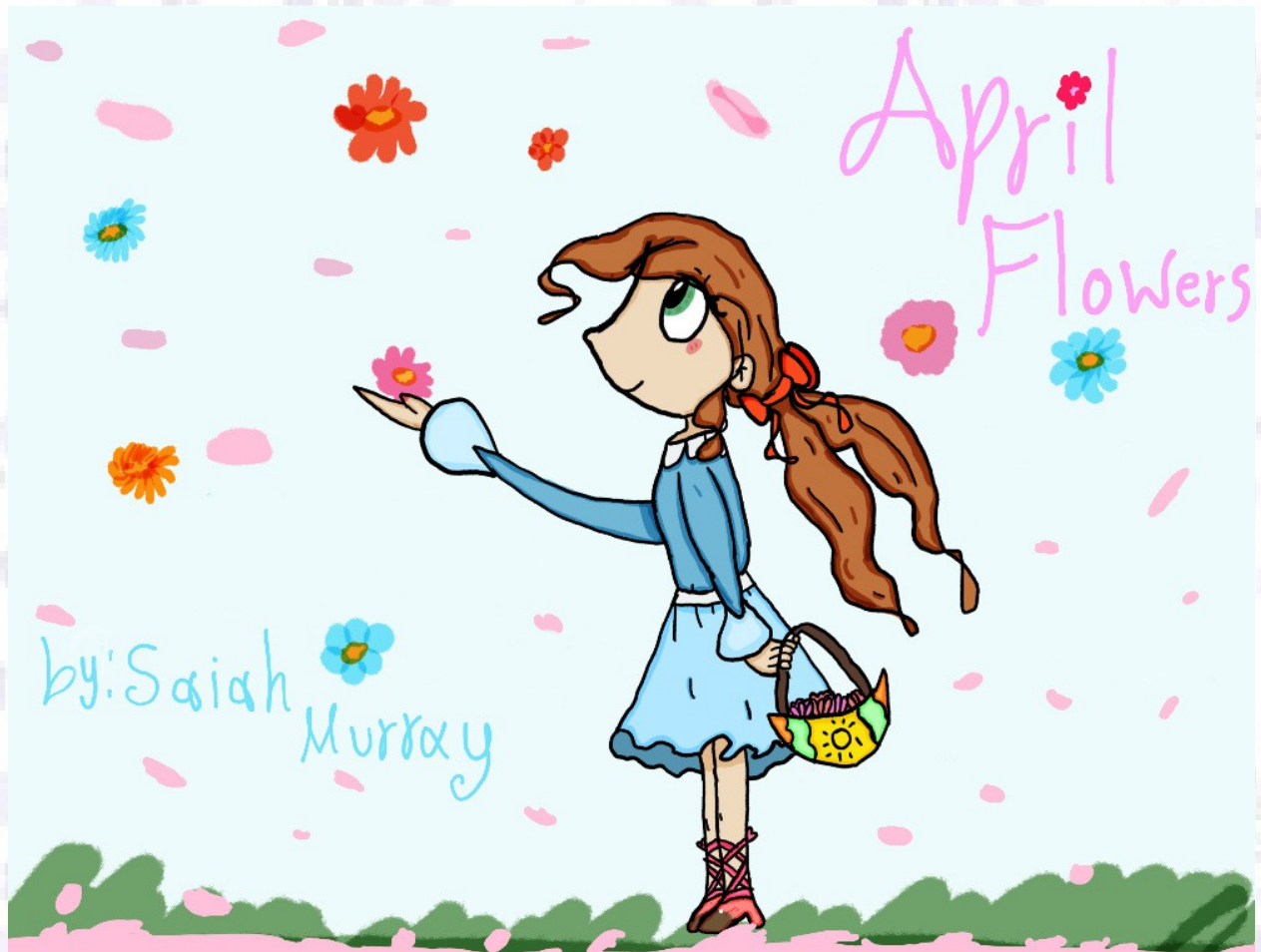
Faith's Eternal Embrace

The love of the Lord is
great,
The faith of the saints is
great,
And we to can show this
love,
And we to have this faith,
So follow the sign of the
dove,
Follow the cross,
And have faith.

Student Submissions

Art Page

Drawn By: Saiah Murray



The Magnificent Marquee

By Natasha Richart

Amidst the sun and daffodils,
there blooms a little tree.
Sitting halfway down the hill;
waving wild and free.

The branches slightly stir
A wind is rustling past,
No sound can occur.
A magical spell is cast.

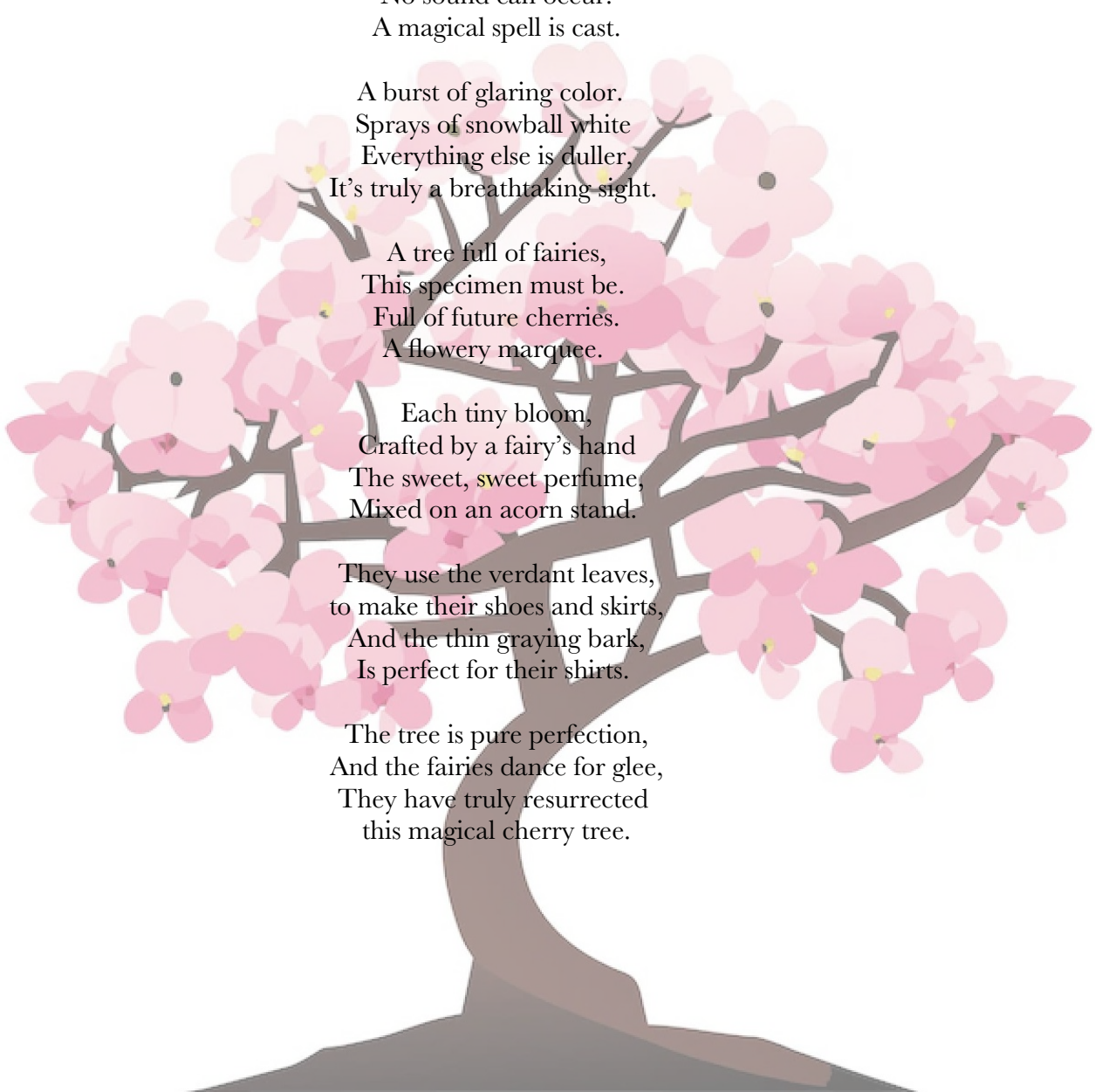
A burst of glaring color.
Sprays of snowball white
Everything else is duller,
It's truly a breathtaking sight.

A tree full of fairies,
This specimen must be.
Full of future cherries.
A flowery marquee.

Each tiny bloom,
Crafted by a fairy's hand
The sweet, sweet perfume,
Mixed on an acorn stand.

They use the verdant leaves,
to make their shoes and skirts,
And the thin graying bark,
Is perfect for their shirts.

The tree is pure perfection,
And the fairies dance for glee,
They have truly resurrected
this magical cherry tree.



Sundays of Great Lent

By Sophia Gheorghe

Christ is in our midst! I hope that you all are having a great Lent! For this month's column, I thought of talking about the Sundays in Great Lent.

The Sunday before Great Lent is called Forgiveness Sunday.

We commemorate the banishment of Adam from Heaven, where Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating from the forbidden fruit. We should also know that on Forgiveness Sunday, we ask for forgiveness from our brothers and sisters in Christ, so that we start Great Lent with a clean and clear conscience.

On the Sunday of Orthodoxy, we celebrate the restoration of the holy icons by St. Theodora, after her husband, Theophilus, an iconoclast, died. When Theophilus took over the throne, the emperors before him had already persecuted the icons, and he followed their footsteps. When he was dying from a terrible disease, he repented and confessed that to honor and venerate the holy icons is good. After his death, St. Theodora, the clergy and the people of Constantinople got together and processed with the icons in the city.

We celebrate the memory of St. Gregory Palamas on the second Sunday of Great Lent. He was Archbishop of Thessalonica, a monk of Mount Athos in Greece (at Vatopedi Monastery and Esphigmenou Monastery), and later became Archbishop of Thessalonica. He was a preeminent theologian and a proponent of hesychastic theology, meaning that he fought hard against the heretics and their false teachings.

The third Sunday is the veneration of the precious and life giving Cross. This feast has been placed in the middle of the fast as an "oasis", as it "sweetens" the Fast, which is supposed to be a time of grieving and weeping of our tears. It also reminds us of the Passion of Christ, giving us an example and encouraging us to go on.

On the fourth Sunday, we commemorate our venerable Father, St. John of the Ladder. He labored most of his life in the wilderness, overcoming the temptations of the evil one. One time, there were some monks that were jealous of his fame and wisdom. St. John then humbly "kept strict silence for over a year, until the same fathers who had complained came, asking him to speak again for the benefit of all."

The memory of St. Mary of Egypt is celebrated on the fifth Sunday of Lent. St. Mary lived as a prostitute in Alexandria. One day, "urged by the lustful fire of the flesh, she boarded a ship sailing for Jerusalem." When she got to the Holy City, she went to venerate the Holy Cross, but an invisible force was not letting her enter. She tearfully turned to an icon of the Theotokos, and prayed that if she was allowed to enter the church, she would go and spend the rest of her life in the desert. Her prayer was answered, and after venerating the Cross, she departed to the desert, where she lived for forty years.

The final Sunday of Great Lent is Palm Sunday! There's only a week left before Pascha! Here is a paragraph from a book about what happened on this day:

"The next day, Jesus sent His Disciples to bring a donkey and a colt. And He, who has heaven as a throne, entered Jerusalem seated on a colt. Meanwhile, the children of the Jews spread their garments and branches of trees on the road before Him. Others cut branches of trees on the road before Him. Others cut branches and held them in their hands, going before Him and shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel!" (John 12:13). This took place because the All-Holy Spirit moved their tongues in praise and exaltation of Christ."

The last Sunday is the Resurrection of Christ! "Christ is risen from the dead trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life." This short hymn tells us everything that happens on Pascha, bringing everyone joy when it is chanted.

I wish you all a very blessed Lent, and much joy and blessings on Pascha!

Course Spotlight On Languages

Collected by Mary Kjendal

Russian Primer: Alphabet and Songs by Sasha Florenz

I am in Russian Primer: Alphabet and Songs with Mrs. Wilkinson, and it is so much fun! We have class once a week, and every week we learn a new Russian letter. Each month we memorize a new Russian song. We are also working on a prayer in Russian. I have a great time each week because Mrs. Wilkinson is so nice and makes our classes fun and easy to understand.



Meet the Newsletter Team!

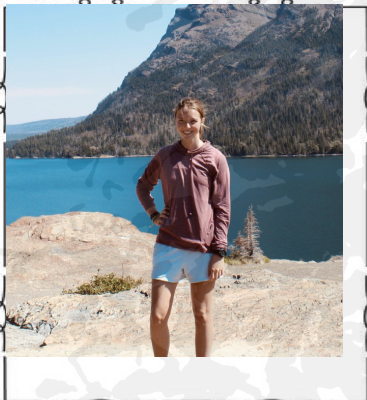
Theodora Ciuca



Assistant Editor

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
- Philippians 4:13*

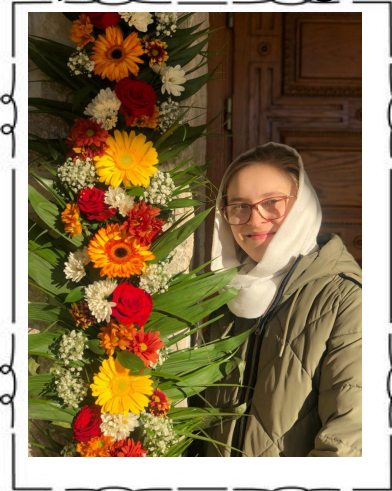
Mary Kjendal



Column Writer

*"Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts."
Winston S. Churchill*

Sophia Gheorghe



"To honor is saint it to imitate a saint." - St. John Chrysostom

Georgia Knowles



Column Writer

*"If you don't come back, sir, then I shan't, that's for certain."
- Samwise Gamgee*

Genevieve Bell



Managing Editor
Website Coordinator

*"To the world you may be one person, but to one person you may be the world."
- Dr. Seuss*

Thomas Bean



Column Writer

*"A generation which ignores history has no past and no future."
Robert A. Heinlein*

Anastasia Fahey



Column Writer

*"God can't give us peace and happiness apart from Himself because there is no such thing."
C.S. Lewis*

Natasha Richart



Column Writer

*"All grown-ups were once children...but only few of them remember it."
- The Little Prince*

Sevastiane Archer



Secretary

*"Prayer is the place of refuge for every worry, a foundation of cheerfulness, a source of constant happiness, a protection against sadness."
- St. John Chrysostom*