



# St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church

5107 Darrow Road  
Hudson, OH 44236  
330 608-8896

*"An Orthodox Presence in Northeastern Summit County"*  
[www.sainthermanchurch.org](http://www.sainthermanchurch.org)



## Important This Week—Great Fast Continues!!!

Monday, 24Mar, 6PM, Vespertal Liturgy—Annunciation  
(25Mar) Wed, Presanct Liturgy, 6PM

Sunday, 30Mar, 10AM, Divine Liturgy; Vespers, 5PM @ St. George/Fairlawn

23Mar25

Sunday of the Cross—Tone 6

## Why Do I Wear a Cross?

It's a question that I doubt seriously that many of us ever ask ourselves. And yet, the answer to the question is central to who we are as a people!

It is uncommon for me to write in the first person, but today we'll violate our aversion to this, because I'll speak for myself, and allow others to decide based on my offering how to compare and contrast their own practice.

I have a quite beautiful gold cross—small, on a short gold chain. I wear it about my neck and against my skin 24/7. It is on me when I bathe, when I sleep, when I wake, when I drive, when I walk. The only time I've taken it off is when required to do so for medical testing. No one (except for me) sees this cross. It is there to remind me that I have been purchased at great price by my Master, who loves me. It is for me alone. Showing it to others has no purpose, since I am called by my Master to reflect His love to all who I encounter. They are to see Him when they see me. When I am conformed to His will properly, seeing His cross adds very little to an image of the One they should see when they look at me.

On other days, when I am doing my clerical duties as a priest, I DO wear a visible cross. It serves several purposes. It does make a statement to those who will notice it that I am a priest, one who is called to be a servant of the Lord. It can be used as a "blessing

Cross" similar to the one that lay upon our Altar to give a blessing to those who approach in faith looking for a blessing. It is a message to the one wearing it that the first thing he needs to show to those seeing him is humility. It is NOT an 'emblem' saying to others, "Look up to me!" God forbid!

In the Bulgarian Patriarchate (and in many other Orthodox jurisdictions—but not all), the cross is given to a man at his ordination to the Holy Priesthood for these purposes. Such a priest is called by his office to present himself at all times publicly in cassock wearing the cross. An Orthodox priest must get a blessing from his bishop to be seen in public NOT wearing "clerics" as described. I have such a blessing from His Eminence to dress in secular clothes for my secular job.

If I'm out in public and I am wearing clerics, often the things said to me by people are surprising. The most repeated one? "Are you some kind of priest?" Less often people will smile and simply offer, "Hello, father." Too often, the response is, "I like your cross." To such people, it isn't a symbol of our Lord and His call to be a servant, it's a piece of jewelry.

So you have been given a number of reasons why your priest wears a cross. But let's return to the original question—Why do YOU wear a cross? Why SHOULD you wear a cross?

It's this later question that's most

important. First, we should wear a cross to remind us of our Lord's commandment to followers, "he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." Second, if I am following, I must be reminded to always look for the One Who is leading, and not to stray from Him.

But least of all, I should NOT wear a cross as a 'show piece', an ornament.

There's a story of a nun who was taken prisoner (I forget if in WWII or in Soviet Russia—the time/place is unimportant) and was stripped of everything that could remind her of her former life in Christ. That included the cross she wore from her youth until then. When she was permitted time to walk outdoors, she picked some longer blades of grass. Alone in her captivity, she wove those blades of grass into the shape of a cross, which she clandestinely kept in her pocket. So as she would walk, her hand held what was precious to her—her grass cross.

I submit to you that God's creation was never more beautifully used by mankind than it was in those simple blades of His grass which connected her with Him in loving prayer, sustaining her through her captivity.

May the crosses we bear upon ourselves, regardless of what they are made of, be that precious to our daily existence.

**This Week's Prayer Requests**

**For Health—St. Herman's:** Met. Joseph, Pat, Sandra, Richard, Sam, Judy, Mitchell, Joe, Christian, Al, Sam, Fr.Dn.Basil, Nikandra, Don, Nora & Bob  
**For the Departed:** Patriarchs Maxim and Neofit, Metropolitans Theodosius and Maximos, Archpriest Stephan, Popadia Marika, Matushka Illaria, Nun Theophania, Matushka Theodora, Stephen, Reader Charles, Betty Lou, Lainey Kay, Katherine, Jeanne, Margaret, Lenni

**Weekly Statistics**

Saturday	Soul Sat Liturgy	15Mar	7 faithful	not recorded
	Vespers	15Mar	9 faithful	4 views
Sunday	Divine Liturgy	16Mar	43 faithful	14 views
Wednesday	Presanctified Lit	19Mar	13 faithful	15 views
Friday	Presanctified Lit	21Mar	15 faithful	6 views
Saturday	Divine Liturgy	22Mar	7 faithful	not recorded
	Vespers		9 faithful	

**In the News**

Videos of services can be found at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfAOKICLMmH\\_FIDe8SoWOW](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfAOKICLMmH_FIDe8SoWOW)

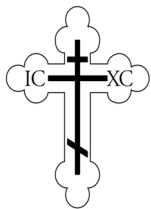
***This is our FIRST Announcement of our plan to hold our 2025 Annual Meeting after Divine Liturgy on Sunday, 06April.***

***Please remember that Fr. Basil and Subdeacon David will be leaving for Holy Transfiguration in East Syracuse on Thursday 27Mar. There will be no services Fri/Sat of this week!!***

**Lenten Message #3**

*When pride comes, then comes shame;  
 But with the humble is wisdom.  
 The integrity of the upright will guide them,  
 But the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.  
 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath,  
 But righteousness delivers from death.  
 The righteousness of the blameless will direct his way aright,  
 But the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.*

*(Prov 11:2-5)*



*“The name of the Savior, called upon with faith, works wonders. It drives away the demons, quenches the fire of the passions, heals sicknesses. .”*

***(St. John of Kronstadt)***

**Third Friday of the Great Fast [Fr. Stephen Kopestonsky]**

Can we escape judgment? Some believe that they can escape the judgment of God because they deny God.

We who are Christians believe in the judgment of God. He will come to judge the earth! He judged the earth once and found it wanting except for Noah, but promised not to destroy His creation again (Gen 8:21). Still, destruction or not, we are called to follow the path of worship with thanksgiving (Gen 8:20), especially now during this period of time when we are re-

minded to reassess constantly our relationship with God. Even in the Old Testament we find the reminder about the judgment of God—that the day of the Lord will come (Isa 13:6-13).

Those who deny God cannot escape judgment. Perverseness brings destruction, either physical, mental, or spiritual. Falsehood causes anger in others. Pride holds us captives of our own imagination, changing reality into falsehood. Crookedness leads to nothing but further twisting,

turning and trouble. Treacherousness is bound to cause our own fall. Wickedness in all forms only leads to death of all that makes our lives worthwhile.

We see, therefore, that it is senseless to mock righteousness and goodness, for this brings its own judgment down on us, let alone the judgment of God. We are reasonable creatures and function best if we act like such. To remain silent, not judging or belittling others, is a sign of one who fears the judgment of God.

## On the Feast of Annunciation [[oca.org](http://oca.org)]

The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the earliest Christian feasts, and was already being celebrated in the fourth century. There is a painting of the Annunciation in the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome dating from the second century. The Council of Toledo in 656 mentions the Feast, and the Council in Trullo in 692 says that the Annunciation was celebrated during Great Lent.

The Greek and Slavonic names for the Feast may be translated as “good tidings.” This, of course, refers to the Incarnation of the Son of God and the salvation He brings. The background of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of Saint Luke (1:26-38). The troparion describes this as the “beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the eternal mystery,” for on this day the Son of God became the Son of Man.

There are two main components to the Annunciation: the message itself, and the response of the Virgin. The message fulfills God’s promise to send a Redeemer (Genesis 3:15): “I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for his heel.” The Fathers of the Church understand “her seed” to refer to Christ. The prophets hinted at His coming, which they saw dimly, but the Archangel Gabriel now proclaims that the promise is about to be fulfilled.

We see this echoed in the Liturgy of Saint Basil, as well: “When man disobeyed You, the only true God who had created him, and was deceived by the guile of the serpent, becoming subject to death by his own transgressions, You, O God, in Your righteous judgment, sent him forth from Paradise into this world, returning him to the earth from which he was taken, yet providing for him the salvation of regeneration in Your Christ Himself.”

The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth in Galilee. There he spoke to the undefiled Virgin who was betrothed to Saint Joseph: “Hail, you that is highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

In contrast to Eve, who was readily deceived by the serpent, the Virgin did not immediately accept the Angel’s message. In her humility, she did not think she was deserving of such words, but was actually troubled by them. The fact that she asked for an explanation reveals her sobriety and prudence. She did not disbelieve the words of the angel, but could not understand how they would be fulfilled, for they spoke of something which was beyond nature.

Then said Mary unto the angel, “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” (Luke 1:34).

“And the angel answered and said unto her, ‘The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you: therefore also that which shall be born of you shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, your cousin Elisabeth has also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.’ And Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word.’ And the angel departed from her.” (Luke 1: 35-38)

In his Sermon 23 on the day of the Annunciation, Saint Philaret of Moscow boldly stated that “the word of the creature brought the Creator down into the world.” He explains that salvation is not merely an act of God’s will, but also involves the Virgin’s free will. She could have refused, but she accepted God’s will and chose to cooperate without complaint or further questions.

The icon of the Feast shows the Archangel with a staff in his left hand, indicating his role as a messenger. Sometimes one wing is upraised, as if to show his swift descent from heaven. His right hand is stretched toward the holy Virgin as he delivers his message.

The Virgin is depicted either standing or sitting, usually holding yarn in her left hand. Sometimes she is shown holding a scroll. Her right hand may be raised to indicate her surprise at the message she is hearing. Her head is bowed, showing her consent and obedience. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon her is depicted by a ray of light issuing from a small sphere at the top of the icon, which symbolizes heaven. In a famous icon from Sinai, a white dove is shown in the ray of light.

There are several famous icons of the Annunciation. One is in the Moscow Kremlin in the church of the Annunciation. This icon appeared in connection with the rescue of a prisoner by the Mother of God during the reign of Ivan the Terrible. Another is to be found in the Dormition Cathedral in Moscow (July 8). It was originally located in Ustiug, and was the icon before which Saint Procopius the fool (July 8) prayed to save the city from destruction in 1290. One of the most highly revered icons in Greece is the Tinos icon of the Annunciation (January 30).

The Annunciation falls during Lent, but it is always celebrated with great joy. The Liturgy of Saint Basil or Saint John Chrysostom is served, even on the weekdays of Lent. It is one of the two days of Great Lent on which the fast is relaxed and fish is permitted (Palm Sunday is the other).

We welcome you to our humble church, and we pray that your experience here will be spiritually rewarding, calling you back to pray with us at our next scheduled service.

St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church is established with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH of New York, and is one of approximately 30 parishes or missions that are all part of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the USA, Canada and Australia, Bulgarian Patriarchate.

Our worship is exclusively in English, and we use “contemporary” English translations of liturgical texts wherever possible. Singing is congregational. The Divine Liturgy is literally “the work of the people”, and as such your presence and participation in the service are essential parts of our worship. The worship of others here present is diminished when you are absent or unable to participate.

Participation in the Eucharist is important to us, and as such we ask you to recognize that it is limited to Orthodox Christians who have prepared for receiving the very Body and Blood of our Lord. Preparation includes fasting from the previous evening and recent confession. If you are not known to our priest, please let him know as you approach that you are Orthodox and prepared to receive! Please do not be offended if the priest so questions your approach—this is important, truly “our Life”!

**Troparion for the Day:** (Tone 6) *The Angelic Powers were at Your tomb, the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Your grave, seeking Your most pure Body. You have captured hell, not being tempted by it. You have come to the Virgin granting life. O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You!*

**Troparion of the Feast:** (Tone 1) *O Lord, save Your people, and bless Your inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries. And by the virtue of Your Cross, preserve Your habitation.*

Glory to the Father....

**Troparion to Saint Herman:** *O blessed Father Herman of Alaska,/ north-star of Christ's holy Church,/ the light of your holy life and great deeds/ guides those who follow the Orthodox way./ Together we lift high the Holy Cross/ you planted firmly in America./ Let all behold and glorify Jesus Christ,/ singing His holy Resurrection.*

Now and ever....

**Kontakion of the Day:** (Tone 7) *Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of Paradise; it has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross. The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished; for You, O my Savior, have come and cried to those in hell: “Enter again into Paradise!”*

**Epistle:** Heb 4:14-5:6

**Gospel:** Mark 8:34-9:1

**Monthly Financial Tracker**

February Total Income	\$3944
February Total Expenses	\$1523
February Net Income (Loss)	\$2421

**Web Tracker**

StHerman Google Bus Site	487	interacts/28 days
Blog Site Views	53590	Total Views
Web Site Views	17620	Total Views
Facebook Followers	5419	Total

**St. Herman of Alaska  
Eastern Orthodox Church  
VRevFrBasil Rusen, Pastor**

Phone: 330-608-8896  
5107 Darrow Road  
Hudson, OH 44236  
Email: frbasilr@gmail.com  
Website: www.sainthermanchurch.org  
Facebook: factbook.com/  
StHermanHudson

**CURRENT WEEK  
HIGHLIGHTED**

March 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Meatfare</b> 23 Last Judgment T2 Divine Liturgy 10AM 1Cor 8:8-9:2 Mat 25:31-46	24	25	26	27	28	1
<b>Cheesefare</b> 2 Sunday T3 Divine Liturgy 10AM Rom 13:11-14:4 Mat 6:14-21	<b>Great Fast</b> 3 Begins Canon St Andrew 6PM Isa 1:1-20; Gen 1:1-13; Prov 1:1-20	4 Canon St Andrew 6PM Isa 1:19-24; Gn 1:14-23; Prov 1:20-33	5 PresanctLiturgy 6PM Isa 2:3-11; Gn 1:24-2:3; Prov 2:1-22	6 Canon St Andrew 6PM Isa 2:11-21; Gn2:4-19 Prov 3:1-18	7 PresanctLiturgy 6PM Isa 3:1-14; Gn 2:20-3:20; Prov 3:19-34	8 Vespers/Conf 6PM 2Tim 3:1-9 Luke 20:46-21:4
<b>OrthodoxySunday</b> 9 Presentation 5P T4 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 11:24-26,32-12:2 John 1:43-51	10 Isa 4:2-5:7; Gen 3:21-4:7; Prov 3:34-4:22	11 Isa 5:7-16; Gn 4:8-15 Prov 5:1-15	12 PresanctLiturgy 6PM Isa 5:16-35; Gn 4:16-26; Prov 5:15-6:3	13 Isa 6:1-12; Gn 5:1-24 Prov 6:3-20	14 PresanctLiturgy 6PM Isa 7:1-15; Gn 5:32-6:8; Prov 6:20-7:1	15 Soul Saturday DivineLiturgy 10AM Vespers/Conf 6PM Heb 3:12-16 Mark 1:35-44
<b>St Gregory</b> 16 St Thomas 5P T5 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 1:10-2:3 Mark 2:1-12	17 Isa 8:13-9:7; Gn 6:9-22 Prov 8:1-21	18 Isa 9:9-10:4 Gn 7:1-5 Prov 8:32-9:11	19 PresanctLiturgy 6PM Isa 10:12-20; Gn7:6-9 Prov 9:12-18	20 Isa 11:10-12:2; Gn7:11-8:3; Prov 10:1-22	21 PresanctLiturgy 6PM Isa 13:2-13; Gn8:4-22; Prov10:31-11:12	22 Soul Saturday DivineLiturgy 10AM Vespers/Conf 6PM Heb 10:32-38 Mark 2:14-17
<b>Cross Veneration</b> 23 St. Elia 5P T6 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 4:14-5:6 Mark 8:34-9:1	<b>Forefeast</b> 24 Annunciation Vespersal Liturgy 6PM Isa14:24-32; Gn 8:21-9:7; Prov11:19-12:6	<b>Feast of</b> 25 Annunciation Heb 2:11-18 Luke 1:24-38	26 PresanctLiturgy 6PM Isa26:21-27:9; Gn 9:18-10:1; Prov12:23-13:9	27 DIOCESAN CLERGY RETREAT - NO SERVICES!!! Isa28:14-22; Gn10:32-11:9; Prov13:19-14:6	28 Isa29:13-23; Gn10:32-11:9; Prov13:19-14:6	29 Heb 6:9-12 Mark 7:31-37
<b>St. John Climacus</b> 30 St. George 5P T7 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 6:13-20 Mark 9:17-31	31 Isa 37:33-38; Gn13:12-18; Pr 14:27-15:4					