

Pearls from The Lenten Triodion: Cheese Week

Monday of Cheese Week:

"The gateway to divine repentance has been opened: let us enter eagerly, purified in our bodies and observing abstinence from food and passions, as obedient servants of Christ who has called the world into the heavenly Kingdom. Let us offer to the King of all a tenth part of the whole year, that we may look with love upon His Resurrection."

"Today is the joyful forefeast of the time of abstinence, the bright threshold of the Fast. Therefore, brethren, together let us run the race with confident hope and with great eagerness."

"Behold, all who love God, the door of repentance is already opened: come, let us make haste to enter in, before Christ closes it and we are shut out in our unworthiness."

"Announcing the spring, the week of cleansing that prepares us for the holy Fast is now at hand, illuminating the bodies and the souls of all."

Tuesday of Cheese Week:

"O peoples, let us greet the Fast with joy, for the beginning of the spiritual contest is at hand. Let us lay aside the comforts of the flesh; let us make God's gifts of grace increase within our soul; let us suffer with Christ as His servants, that we may be also glorified with Him as children of God. And may the Holy Spirit, dwelling in us all, give light to our souls."

"The season of repentance is at hand; in our love for Christ let us hasten to be cleansed of all transgressions, that when we appear before the Master we may be numbered with the blessed."

"This should be the manner of our fasting: not in hatred and contention, not in envy and strife, not in self-glory and with hidden deceit, but like Christ in humblemindedness."

Wednesday of Cheese Week:

"If thou dost fast from food, my soul, yet dost not cleanse thyself from passions, thou dost rejoice in vain over thine abstinence. For if thy purpose is not turned towards amendment of life, as a liar thou art hateful in God's sight, and thou dost resemble the evil demons who never eat at all. Do not by sinning make the fast worthless, but firmly resist all wicked impulses. Picture to thyself that thou art standing beside the crucified Savior, or rather, that thou art thyself crucified with Him who was crucified for thee; and cry out to Him: Remember me, O Lord, when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom."

"The springtime of the Fast has dawned, the flower of repentance has begun to open. O brethren, let us cleanse ourselves from all impurity and sing to the Giver of Light: Glory to Thee who alone lovest mankind."

Thursday of Cheese Week:

"Today all the apostles bless the forty days and the week of cleansing that precedes them, and they sanctify this season of fasting which they received from Christ the Redeemer. They proclaim His Resurrection unto all and intercede with The Lord for mercy on our souls."

"The gateway to the Fast is crowned with the fruits of the saints' ascetic labors, and it welcomes those who in vigilance draw near with hymns and mystical songs. Come, all ye faithful, let us make haste to enter."

"The glory of the Fast has shone upon us, putting to flight the darkness of the demons. The solemn time of abstinence has come, bringing with it healing for the passions of our soul. Protected by it, Daniel shut the mouths of lions, and the Children in Babylon quenched the flame of the furnace. Through fasting save us also with them, Christ our God, in Thy love for mankind."

Friday of Cheese Week:

"See how the beauty of repentance forms the soul anew at the approach of Lent! With faith and vigilance let us enter on the Fast, and receive remission of our sins."

"Today the grace of the Fast shines upon all of us with the light of the sun, cleansing us from the gloom of sin. Though held fast by many passions, let us now approach in joy and thankfully accept this gift, crying aloud: Praise ye The Lord and exalt Him above all forever."

"The bright and joyful day of abstinence is at hand. Come, my soul, with joyful face let us go to meet the Master, asking Him to send down grace upon us from on high, giving us the strength to correct our many faults, that we may escape the terrors of Gehenna in the life to come."