

"The Fruit of the Spirit..." Galatians 5:22

# The Fruit Basket

Love • Joy • Peace • Goodness • Kindness • Faith • Patience • Temperance • Gentleness

Volume II, Number 2

A friendly Orthodox Christian 'Zine

March 2007

## The Old Rugged Cross

Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross....

—Hebrews 12:2

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross,  
The emblem of suffering and shame;  
And I love that old cross where the dearest and best  
For a world of lost sinners was slain.

*So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, 'Til my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross, And exchange it some day for a crown.*

O that old Rugged Cross so despised by the world,  
Has a wondrous attraction for me;  
For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above  
To bear it to dark Calvary.

In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine,  
A wondrous beauty I see;  
For 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died  
To pardon and sanctify me.

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true,  
Its shame and reproach gladly bear;  
The He'll call me some day to my home far away,  
Where His glory forever I'll share.

*So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, 'Til my trophies at last I lay down;  
I will cling to the old rugged cross, And exchange it some day for a crown.*

by George Bennard

## THE FRUIT BASKET

Published monthly or so  
by An Orthodox Christian

The goal of this publication is to provide a friendly, light, Orthodox Christian 'Zine (a mini-magazine) that contains a blend of "something to exercise our minds, something to make us laugh, and something to make us meditate on spiritual matters." It is also a venue for sharing our insights and interests.

Articles or comments from our readers are welcome. We reserve the right to edit for suitability, clarity and space. Printing of items does not imply endorsement by the church or the priest or even the editor of this publication. Send comments or articles by email to **fruit36basket@yahoo.com**

or by snail mail to  
**The FRUIT BASKET 18893 Howe Road  
Strongsville, OH 44136**

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## Dear Folks,

We would love to hear from you. **1.** Please **send in** (a) short items of interest, inspirational or otherwise; jokes, puzzles, other.

(b) **Original writing** that could be an encouragement to the rest of us in our Orthodox Christian walk—gleaned from reflection, or experience during your life as a practicing Orthodox Christian. It could be a passage from the Bible or from a sermon, and tell why it is meaningful to you.

**Parish news** is great or share a traditional **holiday custom** or favorite **recipe**, or what have you!

**2.** **Send by** email or regular mail—typed or hand-written is fine.

Don't worry about spelling, grammar or punctuation—all material is proofed before printing.

**3.** If your submission has already been printed someplace, please include the **source of your material**, so credit can be given.

**4.** The whole name of the person submitting material will be printed unless you state some other preference.

We can, of course, find many items to print from the many sources available, but a publication like this needs the heartbeat of the people—your wisdom, insight, humor, etc.—to make it come alive. Together we can make this truly a "Fruit Basket" of goodies to send to others. I am looking forward to hearing from you and serving you.

*The Editor*

## Minute Meditation

by Bev Geary

**"...If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?"**

Jeremiah 12:5

If your commitment level to the Lord is shallow in good times, how will you be able to stand when times get tough? Strengthen your faith today.



## CHURCH SIGNS

"Come work for the Lord. The work is hard, the hours are long and the pay is low. But the retirement benefits are out of this world."



## Hymns of the Weeks of Lent WEEK 3.

Let us purify ourselves by prayer and fasting and let us serve God by caring for the poor. Let us sweep and lament, for behold this is the time to repent, so that we might escape the eternal sorrow in the fires of Gehenna. May glory be rendered to Christ who offers repentance to all mortals who are converted in the purity of their heart.


### Week 4

With souls purified by fasting, let us bow before the Cross on which Christ our Savior was nailed, and let us cry out : Rejoice, O delight of those who fast and their firm support. Rejoice, O destroyer of passions and terror of demons. Rejoice, O new tree of life.

### Week 5

Behold, this is the time of grace and beauty; this glorious day is brilliant with fasting. Let us hasten, O faithful, to purify ourselves, that we may appear without stain before the Creator and share in his incomparable spender, through the prayers of the all-holy Mother of God.

### Week 6

As we wnter the sixth week of this holy Fast, let us sing a hymn in preparation for the feast of Palms to Christ who comes for our sake seated upon the colt of a donkey. He comes forth as a king to subject the nations to his Father. Let us prepare the branches of our virtues so that, in joy, we may see his glorious Resurrection. 

Abbreviated exts from *Lenten Triodion* (1995), Sisters of the Order of St. Basil the Great, Uniontown, Pa., (USA)

Some Meditation Material for Great Lent taken from **Selected Directives on the Spiritual Life** compiled by Fr. George Timko, 1994

The beginning of the path of the spiritual life is always to be instructing one's mind in the Word of God and to be withdrawing the mind from worldly distractions in order to recollect the mind into meditation on God. **No one can approach God without withdrawing from the world.** By withdrawal I do not mean changing one's physical dwelling place, but withdrawing the mind from all worldly affairs. The meaning and virtue of withdrawing from the world consists in not occupying your mind with things of the world but with the Kingdom of God.

**Our mind is very volatile.** If it is not secured by some meditation, it never stops wandering around. The mind cannot be kept from wondering without the practice of psalmody and prayer and reading the Divine Scriptures. The activities strengthen the mind and keep the thoughts from roaming about and constantly implant in the soul the mindfulness of God. All this recollects the mind into singleness, and keeps it from whirling about until true contemplation comes

—**Issac of Syria**—

A mind not dispersed among external objects, and not carried about through the world by the senses, recollects itself and awakens to God. Such activity is true prayer. For such prayer implants the mindfulness of God within the soul. Having God dwell within the inner being means having God actually present in oneself by being mindful of Him.

—**Basil the Great**—

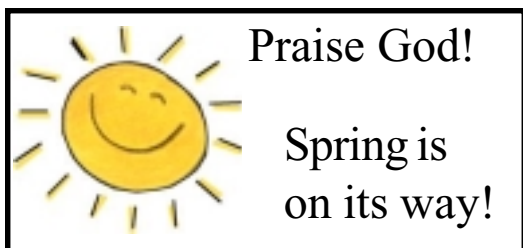


## Top Ten Signs That Indicate You Might Be An Orthodox Christian

*You might be Orthodox if .*

10. You are still in church more than ten minutes after the priest says, "Let us depart in peace."
9. You forget to change your clock in the spring at Daylight Savings Time, show up an hour late, but the service is still going on....
8. ...but there are people in your community who still can't get to church on time when the clock gets set back an hour in the fall.
7. You consider an hour long church service to be "short."
6. You buy chocolate bunnies on sale (after Western Easter).
5. When someone says, "Let us pray..." you reflexively stand up.
4. You went to church four or more times in a week.
3. Your priest is married...
2. ...and your vocabulary includes at least three words that describe the wife of a priest.

*And the number one sign you might be Orthodox is... 1. You say a prayer before you pray. 🐟*



## PUZZLE

CAN YOU FIND THE C?

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**Once you've found the C.....  
Find the 6!**

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**Once you've found the 6...  
Find the N! (it's hard!!)**

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**Once you've found the N...Take a bow!**



## Memories of Easter Lent

Taken from *Slovakia*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 1999 by M. G. R.

The following memories are of the early days (about 1940) of a **Rusyn/Slovak** family at a farm in Western Pennsylvania, near DuBois. Our parents came to the mining towns around 1910 from Slovinky, **SPIS**, Slovakia. Our father worked in the coal mines at Sagamore, Chambersville, Marion Center and other towns while saving money. Not for Papa was the easy life of a towny, exchanging slavery to the rich landowners in the old country for slavery to the mining company and the company store. He pursued the Great Peasant Dream of owning many acres of land. In the old country families had been allotted small “osminy” (eighth of a hectare?) strips of land outside the village to raise produce for their own use as well as to give as tribute to the rich landowner, the Grof. Land just was not available for the peasants to purchase. To Papa America was the land of Golden Opportunity and he was driven to achieve his dream. Life was tough, and the “generous” Krajan who held the mortgage on the farm held him to a 30 day mortgage where if he didn’t make just one payment it foreclosed. The farm provided plenty of food but not much money so Papa had to go back to work in the hated mines for several years to pay off the farm, taking along the oldest boy who was 14 to qualify for another car to up the quota of coal he was allowed to load for the day. Mama and the younger kids took up the slack and carried on with the farm work. Life was hard but the dream of freedom was sweet and they persisted and won.

The customs described below are basically Rusyn/Slovak and the church liturgy Greek Catholic.

Easter and Lent were a very special time in our family and every child who had taken first communion was expected to abide by the practices.

Time was spent at prayer in family devotions. On Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings we all sat round the kitchen table and Papa would lead us in

prayer followed by singing about Jesus and his crucifixion. The *pisny* were more like ballads and were very sad, often bringing tears to our eyes. The story was told in many verses. We sang a number of different ballads, but all were about the crucifixion.

For the six weeks before Easter we did not eat meat on Wednesdays or meat and milk products on Fridays. Strangely enough, though, we did eat eggs. During the seventh week, Holy Week, no meat was eaten at all, and no milk products from Good Friday until midnight on Holy Saturday. The milkless days were worse than the meatless days because to drink black tea for breakfast instead of rich, sweet coffee was a real sacrifice. During Lent we had some



special foods. There was always a small wooden barrel of salted herrings, and a smaller wooden bucket of pickled “Russy” which were smaller fish that had a milder flavor. The “harengy” and “Russy” were eaten only on fast days and, honestly, were more of a treat and a novelty than a sacrifice. I remember especially the herrings. Someone would bring a barrel home from the store and we kids

would dance around in great anticipation as Papa opened it. The top of the barrel, which was fitted in tightly, was made of thin boards that had to be cracked and taken out in pieces. After working patiently for a while with little success, Papa would give it a good whack with the hammer. This cracked the boards but occasionally splattered droplets of herring brine all around—to Mama’s consternation because the brine had a decidedly strong fishy smell! Once the lid was off we could see the silvery, brownish herrings packed tightly together. The herrings were gently heated in a gray enameled pie pan on top of the coal stove until the flesh was very tender. We’d each get a piece of fish and then came the project of picking off the meat while avoiding the hair-like rib bones and gross looking innards. The meat was exquisitely salty so we had to eat lots of bread with it and drink lots of water in the hours afterward. Papa really enjoyed the “harengy” and ate them with gusto. (*continued next month*)

## A KEEPER

I grew up in the 50's/60's with practical parents. A mother, God love her, who washed aluminum foil after she cooked in it, then reused it. She was the original recycle queen, before they had a name for it... A father who was happier getting old shoes fixed than buying new ones.

Their marriage was good, their dreams focused. Their best friends lived barely a wave away. I can see them now, Dad in trousers, tee shirt and a hat and Mom in a house dress, lawn mower in one hand, and dish-towel in the other. It was the time for fixing things: a curtain rod, the kitchen radio, screen door, the oven door, the hem in a dress, things we keep. It was a way of life, and sometimes it made me crazy.

All that re-fixing, eating, renewing, I wanted just once to be wasteful. Waste meant affluence.

Throwing things away meant you knew there'd always be more.

But then my mother died, and on that clear summer's night, in the warmth of the hospital room, I was struck with the pain of learning that sometimes there isn't any more. Sometimes, what we care about most gets all used up and goes away...never to return.

So... While we have it... it's best we love it... And care for it.... And fix it when it's broken..... And heal it when it's sick.

This is true...For marriage.... And old cars.... And children with bad report cards..... Dogs and cats with bad hips.... And aging parents.... And grandparents.

We keep them because they are worth it. Some things we keep. Like a best friend that moved away or a classmate we grew up with.

There are just some things that make life important, like people we know who are special.... And so, we keep them close!

I received this from someone who thinks I am a 'keeper'. Now it's your turn to send this to those people that are "keepers" in your life. Good friends are like stars.... You don't always see them, but you know they are always there....Keep them close....

submitted by Augie Q. of Strongsville



*Thanks much, Augie!*

## AMAZING MATH TRICK

Here is a math trick that will stump you.

1. Grab a calculator. (you won't be able to do this one in your head)
2. Key in the first three digits of your phone number (NOT the area code)
3. Multiply by 80
4. Add 1
5. Multiply by 250
6. Add the last 4 digits of your phone number  
(Suppose they are 2165, add that as a whole number, not individual digits.)
7. Add the last 4 digits of your phone number again.
8. Subtract 250
9. Divide number by 2

*Do you recognize the answer?*

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## ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

A little girl, dressed in her Sunday best, was running as fast as she could, trying not to be late for Sunday School class. As she ran she prayed, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late! Dear Lord, please don't let me be late!" While she was running and praying, she tripped on a curb and fell, getting her clothes dirty and tearing her dress. She got up, brushed herself off, and started running again. As she ran she once again began to pray, "Dear Lord, please don't let me be late... but please don't shove me either!"

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Two boys were walking home from Sunday school after hearing a strong sermon on the devil. One said to the other, "What do you think about all this Satan stuff?"

The other boy replied, "Well, you know how Santa Claus turned out. It's probably just your dad."

## Everything I need to know about life, I learned from Noah's Ark

1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on high ground.
7. For safety's sake, travel in pairs.
8. Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
9. When you're stressed, float a while.
10. Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.
11. No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.



Submitted by Betty Scherry

*Thanks much, Betty!*

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## DEAR FATHER. . .

> "...I know God loves everybody but He never met my sister. Yours sincerely, Arnold. *Age 8, Nashville.*

> "... I'm sorry I can't leave more money in the plate, but my father didn't give me a raise in my allowance. Could you have a sermon about a raise in my allowance?

Love, Patty. *Age 10, New Haven*

> "... My mother is very religious. She goes to play bingo at church every week even if she has a cold. Yours truly, Annette. *Age 9, Albany*

> "...I think a lot more people would come to your church if you moved it to Disneyland. Loreen. *Age 9, Tacoma*

> "... I liked your sermon on Sunday. Especially when it was finished. Ralph, *Age 11, Akron*



## THE JOURNEY OF FAITH:

In *The Screwtape Letters*, C. S. Lewis' senior demon, Screwtape, explains to a junior demon, Wormwood, why God sends us "dry times:" God always begins the journey of faith with communications of His presence which, though faint, seem great, with emotional sweetness and easy conquest over temptation. But, it seems that God never allows this state of affairs to last long. Sooner or later He withdraws if not in fact, at least from one's conscious experience all those supports and incentives. He leaves the creature to stand up on its own legs to carry out from the will alone duties which have lost all relish. It is during such periods, much more than during the peak periods, that it is growing into the sort of creature that God wants it to be. Hence the prayers offered in the state of dryness are those which please God the most. We can drag our patients along by continual temptation, because we design them for the table, and the more their will is interfered with the better. God cannot "tempt" them to virtue as we do to vice. God wants them to learn to walk, and He must therefore take away His hand. And if only the will to walk is really there, is God pleased even with their stumbles. Do not be deceived, Wormwood. Our cause is never more in danger than when a human, no longer desiring, but still intending to do our Enemy's will, looks round upon a universe from which every trace of Him seems to have vanished, and asks why he has been forsaken, and still obeys.

Submitted by M.K.

*Thanks much, M.K.*

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## FOX AND GEESE

When the snow has fallen softly all the night, and has made a carpet, fluffy soft and white, now's the time for playing, all the children know, Fox and Geese, the finest game out in the snow.

First you make a circle, round and round you tread. Then across and over, this an that way, led. Now a fox is chosen, and away we go, Fox and Geese the finest game out in the snow!

Remember playing Fox and Geese? Red Light, Green Light? Overball, Backball? Mother, make the Apple butter? Lucy Locket Lost her Pocket? And Jacks. Oh, how much fun we had with Jacks. Jacks tournament, anyone? Heavy, Heavy what hangs over head? Hopscotch? Hide and seek on a summer night! *Share your memories of these great games or many others before there was TV!*

*The Editor*

## The Dumbest Woman on Earth

If you really want to know the truth of it, the dumbest woman to ever walk the face of earth most likely had dark hair. She was, without a doubt, the dumbest woman to ever live. Her name? Eve. You see, she and Adam were originally created equal— otherwise, as I see it, God would have taken a bone out of Adams foot to create Eve. He didn't. (Now, wait, all you Bible believers— you have to read the rest of this before you'll understand just when Eve lost her "equal" status.) The bone came from his side, his rib. To me, this signifies equality. Well, then what does this dark-haired woman do but sashay up to a serpent and strike up a conversation with him. Didn't she think it unusual that a serpent could talk? Guess not. That was Dumb act #1.

**Now for dumb act #2:** After a little chit chat, (Gen. 3:1..."Really?" he asked the woman. "Did God really say you must not eat any of the fruit in the garden?" Gen.

3:2"Of course we may eat it," the woman told him. 3:3 "It's only the fruit from the tree at the center of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God says we must not eat it or even touch it, or we will die." She believes this creature (remember, a serpent that can talk) when he calls God a liar, basically (3:4 "You won't die!" the serpent hissed. 3:5 "God knows that your eyes will be opened when you eat it. You will become just like God, knowing everything, both good and evil." 3:6 The woman was convinced.) Now, it doesn't look like it took much convincing, does it? How dumb is that, after the head honcho of the place, the owner, the boss (the best boss ever, one who actually loves his workers) says don't eat fruit from that tree, and a snake or serpent (that's not supposed to be able to talk) can 'talk you into it'?

**Dumb act #3:** The dark-haired woman proceeds to eat the fruit (Adam, by the way, was right there with her- why didn't he pipe up and say "uh, hon, I don't think this is a good idea...I don't trust that serpent (that can talk, remember?). He was most likely dark-haired as well, remember.

**Dumb act #4:** She turns and offers it to her husband. All the while the serpent is watching. I never saw a serpent grin, but I'll bet he did.

**Dumb act #5:** They hid from God. Whose idea was that, I wonder?

**Dumb act #6:** They look for someone to blame it on (3:12 "Yes," Adam admitted, "but it was the woman you gave me who brought me the fruit, and I ate it." 3:13 Then the LORD God asked the woman, "How could you do such a thing?" "The serpent tricked me,"



she replied. "That's why I ate it." Now I don't know about you, but that conversation was a blatant manipulation, i.e. a lie, by the serpent, but not a trick. Eve believed a lie, just believed what the serpent said. (Remember this the next time a snake or lizard comes up to you and strikes up a conversation). Genesis Chapter 3:16 is where Eve, (a dark-haired woman? Again, we'll never know for sure), sold out her equality, not only for herself, but for all women from

then on (3:16 Then he said to the woman, "You will bear children with intense pain and suffering. And though your desire will be for your husband, he will be your master.")

They were both dumb, at that time. God didn't make them stupid, but they sure had an Adam and Eve moment. I don't think you have to have any particular hair color to be dumb. You could even be bald. So dumb-blonde-joke-tellers, get over it already.

Interesting, that when I used to work for a company which employed mostly Hispanic people (including the boss), they could make blonde jokes all day, which is a reference to my racial heritage, but if I said just one slanderous joke referring to their race (which I wouldn't have, even if it was legal), then that would be considered by the law to be a form of assault, among other things.)

Maybe blonde jokes should be outlawed. You think?

ADULTERY  
(Matthew 5:27-32)  
ANGER (Matt. 5:22-24)  
ANXIETY (Matt. 6:19-34)  
CONCEIT (Luke 18:9-14)  
COVETOUSNESS  
(Mark 7:21-23)  
CRIME (Matt. 15:17-20)  
DECEIT (Matt. 23:27-28)  
DEPRAVITY (John 3:19-21)  
DIVORCE (Mark 10:2-12)  
DRUNKENNESS (Galatians 5:21)

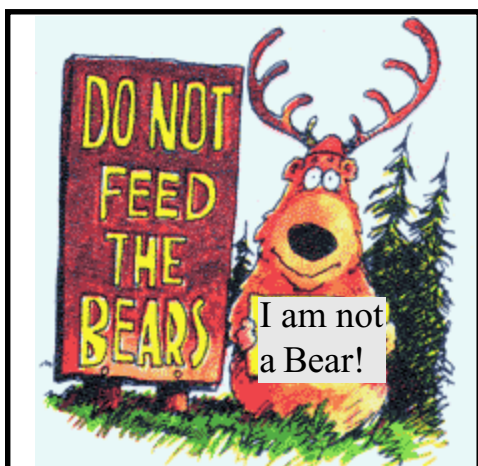
INTEMPERANCE  
(Proverbs 20:1)  
JUDGING (Matthew 7:1)  
LIPSERVICE  
(Matthew 7:21-23)  
LUST (Matthew 5:28,  
Romans 1:27)  
PRIDE (Mark 7:22)  
REVENGE (Matthew 5:43-48)  
SELF-EXALTATION  
(Luke 14:11)  
SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS  
(Luke 18:11-14)  
SWEARING  
(Leviticus 19:12)  
Colossians 3:8)  
WORLDLINESS  
(1 John 2:15-17)

ENVY (Proverbs 14:30)  
EXCUSES (Luke 14:15-24)  
EXTRAVAGANCE  
(1 Timothy 6:7-12)  
FALSE CONFIDENCE  
(Matt. 7:24-27)  
FALSEHOOD  
(Ephesians 4:25)  
FAULTFINDING  
(Matt. 7:1-5)  
GOSSIP  
(Leviticus 19:16)  
GREED (Luke 12:15-31)  
HATRED (1 John 3:14-15)

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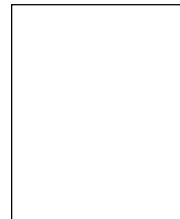
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# THE FRUIT BASKET

18893 Howe Road  
Strongsville, OH 44136



Sunshine Greetings from  
St. Theodosius Orthodox Cathedral

## CALENDAR for March 2007

Wednesday and Fridays: Presanctified  
Liturgy

Sat. 3, 10, 17: Memorial Saturdays

Sat. 24: Akathist to Theotokos

March 25: Annunciation

March 31: Lazarus Saturday



Addressee

## Psalm 137 A Song of Exile

By the rivers of Babylon,  
There we sat down, yea, we wept when  
we remembered Zion.  
We hung our harps Upon the willows in  
the midst of it.  
For there those who carried us away  
captive asked of us a song,  
And those who plundered us requested  
mirth,  
Saying, "Sing us one of the songs of  
Zion!"

How shall we sing the Lord's song In a  
foreign land?  
If I forget you, O Jerusalem,  
Let my right hand forget its skill!  
If I do not remember you,  
Let my tongue cling to the roof of my  
mouth—

If I do not exalt Jerusalem Above my chief  
joy.  
Remember, O Lord, against the sons of Edom  
The day of Jerusalem.  
Who said, "Raze it, raze it,  
To its very foundation!"  
O daughter of Babylon, who are to be de-  
stroyed,  
Happy the one who repays you as you have  
served us!  
Happy the one who takes and dashes  
Your little ones against the rock. NKJV

*This Psalm was sung in exile in the OT, while Israel was in  
captivity in Babylon. In Orthodox usage, it is prayed by the  
Christian community as being in exile in this world. In this  
context, it is used in the Matins service beginning just  
before Lent on the Sunday of the Prodigal Son (the exile  
returning home) and is used throughout Lent itself in the  
matins services.*

