



Words of Wisdom

From the Saints & Teachers

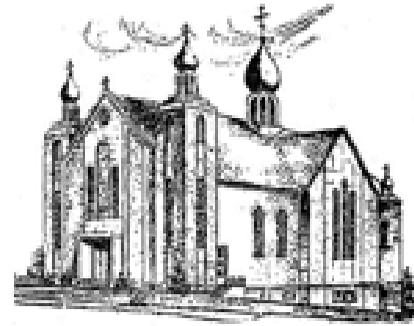
Today Readings

Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3

Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

A Just Reward. St John Chrysostom: “And every transgression or disobedience,” he says. Not this one or that one, but “every” one. Nothing, he says, remained unavenged but “received a just recompense of reward” instead of punishment. Why does he speak like this? Such is the manner of Paul, not to make much account of his phrases but indifferently to put down words of evil sound, even in matters of good meaning. As also in another place he says, “Bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” And again he has put “recompense” for punishment, as here he calls punishment “reward.” **On the Epistle to the Hebrews 3.6.**

Mark 2:7b (ACCS Mk (Rev)): The Ministry of Forgiveness. St Ambrose: In their ministry of the forgiveness of sin, pastors do not exercise the right of some independent power. For not in their own name but in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit do they forgive sins. They ask, the Godhead forgives. The service is enabled by humans, but the gift comes from the Power on high. **The Holy Spirit 3.18.137.**



From The Ambvon

ST MICHAEL ORTHODOX CHURCH,
OLD FORGE, PA

Priest Michael Shepherd (frmichael@stmichaelof.org)

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Sunday, March 12th, 2023

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 6. St. Gregory Palamas.

Birthdays & Anniversaries for March

Birthdays: Matushka Emilia Shepherd (3/3); Marie Pasternek (3/7);

Nameday: Diane Buranich (3/19);

Anniversary:

Baptism:

Travelers:

Prospora Schedule: Please sign up to bake prospora.

February. Thank you to Matushka Emilia for this week's Prospora!

Visitors: PLEASE JOIN US FOR COFFEE HOUR DOWNSTAIRS

Agape Meal: A Light Agape Meal. Thank you to everyone who donated.

All are encouraged to sing the “Lord Have Mercy” & “Amen” responses. And please sing along if you know the other verse, troparions, and kontakions as well.

Service Attendance: 42 Last weekend Divine Liturgy:

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive themselves by fasting and a recent (monthly) confession..If you have questions please ask Fr Michael!*



Service Schedule
WEEK of 13Mar-19Mar

WED, Mar 15th 5:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy

SAT, Mar 18th: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers

SUN, Mar 19th: Hours @ 9:20 Hours, St Gregory Palamas -
Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM

SUN, Mar 19th: @ 5:00 PM Sunday of the Cross Lenten Mission Vespers

UP COMING

WED, Mar 22nd 5:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy

SAT, Mar 25th: @ 5:00 PM Great Vespers

SUN, Mar 19th: Hours @ 9:20 Hours, St John Climacus -
Divine Liturgy @ 9:30 AM

Announcements

& Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events



Silent Prayers: Every Wednesday 11:00AM - 1:30PM

Church Work Day: Every Friday is Church Maintenance day. Come help!

Catechumen Class: Every Saturday 3:30 PM Catechumen Class - All are invited

Lenten Mission Vespers Choir Concert - Starting Tuesday we will be working in the hall to prepare for the Mission Vespers. Please come and help.

Tuesday & Wednesday - clean, Set up e.g. put out chairs and tables

Wednesday & Friday - Food Prep and Cooking

Saturday - Any Last Minute touchups

Sunday - Bring in desserts - See sign up Sheet

Proshora Baking Class - 23Mar 10AM

During Lent we will have a light Coffee hour for fellowship. Please remember all dishes should be lenten.

Kontakion, Synaxis of Archangel Michael & all the Bodiless Hosts

Commanders of God's armies and ministers of the divine glory, princes of the bodiless angels and guides of mankind, ask for what is good for us, and for great mercy, supreme commanders of the Bodiless Hosts.

Holy Archangel Michael Pray unto God for us!

The Fifteenth Instruction. Abba Doretheos
On the holy forty days of Lent (excerpt)

So blessed, O brethren, is he who preserves himself well in these holy days as he should. For though it might happen that being human we sin out of infirmity or negligence, still God has given these holy days in order that, striving with heedfulness and humility of wisdom, we take care for ourselves and repent for all of our sins, and we will be cleansed of the sins we committed during the whole year. Then our souls will be delivered from their weight, and we will arrive at the Holy Day of the Resurrection cleansed, receive Communion of the Holy Mysteries uncondemned, having become new through the repentance of the Holy Fast. In spiritual rejoicing, with God's help, we will celebrate the entire Holy Pentecost season—for the Pentecost season, as the Holy Fathers say, is the repose and resurrection of the soul. This is signified by our not kneeling during whole Holy Pentecost season.

Thus he who desires during these days of Lent to be cleansed of the sins he has committed over the course of the whole year should first of all refrain from eating much food, for the lack of limitation in food, as the Fathers say, gives birth to every evil in man. Then he should also take care not to violate the fast without great need, not to seek tasty foods, nor weigh himself down with excess food or drink. For there are two kinds of gluttony. The first kind is when a man seeks pleasant foods, and does not always wish to eat much, but desires something tasty. It happens that when this type tastes a dish he likes, he is so won over by its pleasant taste that he holds the food in his mouth, chews it for a long time, and regretting to part with its pleasant taste, he delays swallowing it. This is called in Greek "lemargia,"—the demon of the throat. The other type is assailed by the desire to eat a large quantity—he does not desire good food and is not concerned about its taste, but only wants to eat, whether the dishes are tasty or not, and he makes no distinction. His is only concerned with filling his belly. This is called "gastrimargia," that is, the demon of the belly.

SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT. ST. GREGORY PALAMAS.

Our Holy Father, St. Gregory Palamas

Commemorated November 14, and on the Second Sunday of Great Lent

St. Gregory Palamas, one of the pillars of Orthodoxy, was born in 1296, probably to a noble Anatolian family in Constantinople. He and his brother went to Mount Athos in around 1318, and lived in Vatopedi and Esphigmenou Monasteries. Gregory also successfully persuaded his widowed mother, brothers and sisters to become take up the monastic life. With the encroachment of the Turks, he was forced to flee to Thessalonica, being ordained a priest there in 1326. Afterward, he took up the eremitic life at a mountain near Beroea, and eventually returned to Athos in 1331.

The Council decided on a doctrine by which icons should be venerated but not worshipped. In answering the Empress' invitation to the Council, Pope Hadrian replied with a letter in which he also held the position of extending veneration to icons but not worship, the last befitting only God.

St. Gregory lived in very difficult times, for many heresies were creeping into the Church, and the Ottoman Empire was ever expanding, taking over Byzantine lands. In the early 1300's he wrote on the nature of the Holy Spirit, showing the errors of the Latin view while living at the hermitage of Saint Savvas on Mount Athos. He became known as a preeminent theologian early in life, due to his many writings and for his beliefs on hesychasm.

St. Gregory is known as one of the great defenders of Orthodoxy and is most well known for his defense against the heresies of Barlaam. Gregory was asked to defend the monastic ways of the Holy Mountain from the charges of Barlaam, a monk of Calabria. Barlaam, influenced by the Latin church, believed that philosophy and human thought were the way to know God. He stated the unknowability of God in an extreme form, having been influenced by a reductionist interpretation of the writings of St. Dionysius the Areopagite. Orthodoxy had always known, through the wisdom of the Holy Fathers, that prayer and fasting are the key to knowing God. Barlaam believed that the monks of Mount Athos were wasting their time in their prayers and fasting when they should be studying the great philosophers of mankind.

St. Gregory said that the Holy Fathers and the prophets had a greater knowledge of God, because they had actually seen or heard God Himself. He taught that modern ideas about human thought and reason had no place in the Church. When asked how it is possible to have knowledge of the unknowable God, he showed the difference between knowing God in His essence or person and knowing God in his energies or being. It became clear that one could not find God in the logic of this world. He taught the Orthodox knowledge that it remains impossible to know God in His essence or person. However, with sufficient prayer and fasting and turning oneself over to God, through purification of one's soul, anyone can come to know Him in His energies and being.

The Barlaam heresies spanned many years and two phases. Due to acts of political power struggles in Constantinople, Gregory was imprisoned to prevent him from speaking the Truth. As the political struggle increased, his accusers multiplied because he would not yield to their heresies, and he opposed the new emperor due to the emperor's acceptance of the heresies.

When St. Gregory criticized Barlaam's rationalism, Barlaam replied with a vicious attack on the hesychastic life of the Athonite monks. Gregory's rebuttal was the Triads in defense of the Holy Hesychasts (c. 1338), a brilliant work whose teaching was affirmed by his fellow Hagiorites, who met together in a council during 1340-1341, issuing a statement known as the Hagioritic Tome, which supported Gregory's theology.

A synod held in Constantinople in 1341 also supported St. Gregory's views, condemning Barlaam. Later, in 1344, the opponents of hesychasm secured a condemnation for heresy and excommunication for Gregory, but the saint's theology was reaffirmed at two further synods held in Constantinople in 1347 and 1351. Collectively, these three synods in Constantinople are held by many Orthodox Christians and several prominent theologians to constitute the Ninth Ecumenical Council. Between the latter two synods, Gregory composed the One Hundred and Fifty Chapters, a concise exposition of his theology.

In 1347, he was consecrated Archbishop of Thessalonica, but the political climate made it impossible for him to take up his see until 1350. During a voyage to the Imperial capital, he was captured by the Turks and held in captivity for over a year. He reposed in 1359, and was glorified by the Orthodox Church in 1368.

The second Sunday of the Great Fast is called the Sunday of Gregory Palamas in all Orthodox Churches. A full service was composed for his feast day, November 14/27, by the Patriarch Philotheus in 1368. St. Gregory's holy relics are kept in the Cathedral of Thessalonica.

God is Light—*Archpriest Alexander Shargunov*

On the Second Sunday of Great Lent, we celebrate the memory of St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica. On this day, the Holy Church speaks to us about the mystery of light, which we must come to know, if we want to behold the Resurrection of Christ. St. Gregory of Thessalonica and the theological arguments of the fourteenth century connected with his name taught that the light of the Transfiguration is uncreated light. Refuting the heresies of the western theologians, this teaching reminded Christians of the words of the Scripture stating that God is light. By confessing God the Father and God the Son, Light from Light, true God of true God, we believe that God the Light created another light—the one described in the book of Genesis: “God said, let there be light.”

These dogmatic questions were not abstract or removed from the life of the Church. They should not be removed from us, either. It is wrong to look at them as simple theological or scholarly discussions that have no relation to our life. That would mean only one thing: that the light about which God speaks to us—the light in which there is no darkness—will remain unseen to us, and we do not regret or repent that we remain in darkness. All the problems in the Church are, in the final analysis, bound up with the fact that certain mysteries of faith become abstract. They cease to be living, essential questions that decide our fate; and we lose the depth of faith, and the fullness of our Christian calling, which we should be realizing in the Church.

Parish Prayer List

Please remember in your prayers LIVING

Ill-afflicted Archpriests John Nightingale & Fr Theodore Orzolek

All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends: Mike Jadick, Bernie Elko, Margaret Pregmon, Marie Buranich, Helen Wytovich, Tammy Wytovich, Rosemary Kuzmich, Sandra Pritchuk, Marie Pasternak, Sandy Batton, Paula Stavisky, Al Pritchuk, Eli Stavisky, Evelyn Bunevitch, Nadia Macheska, John Pritchuk, Paulette Ezbiansky, Andrew Lutzick, Daniel Jones, Charissa Voroziichak, Matushka Paula Soucek; Al Horek

Servants of God Fr Nathan, Mat. Katherine, Micaiah, Evangeline, Gideon, Zacharias, Ignatius, Basil (Clausson), Mat. Emilia, Blaise, Maximus, Rodion, Savina (Shepherd), Barbara Sevensky, Bev Elko, Sandra Condon, Ann Tyrpak, Sandy & Danny Pregmann, Walter Pritchuk, Michael & Euphemia (Mia) (Keklak); Amaya Jackson; Robert Kane; Maria & Vitaliy Rakovsky; Ekaterina & Anna; Kelly Cigna; Natasha & Rosa Coyoy

Catechumens: Jason, Emily, Judah, Nadia, & Silas

DEPARTED

Newly Departed: Martha Matechak 2/21/2023

Departed: Stephen Polanchik (3/3); Joseph Kuzmich (3/8); Diane Yacopchak (03/11); Michael Buday (3/18);