

# Ss. Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

March 12, 2023

Tone 6



## Second Sunday Of Lent

*St. Gregory Palamas*

*St. Gregory Dialogus,  
Pope of Rome (604)*

### Divine Liturgy

#### Readings

*(Readings on Back)*

- ◆ Hebrews 1:10-2:3
- ◆ Mark 2:1-12

## Announcements:

### Book Discussion

We will have a discussion on *The Mountain Of Silence* by Kyriacos Markides on Tuesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at the home of Louise Moysaenko: 3834 Swinton Circle, Avon. She can be reached at 937-216-4065 or by email at [louisemoysaenko@gmail.com](mailto:louisemoysaenko@gmail.com) if anyone has any questions. A Lenten supper will be served.

### Lenten Pierogi Dinners Help Needed

Our first Lenten Pierogi Dinner was a huge success. We sold as many dinners on Friday as we did for both weeks in 2022! Thank you to everyone who helped make it a huge success!



### Panikhida

Today's panikhida was requested by Matushka Maura and is being said for the departed members of her family:

Ionne (grandmother)

Lester (grandfather)

Gwen (mother)

Clyde (father)

May their memory be eternal!

### ThisWeek

Tuesday, March 14

6:00pm - Book Discussion

Wednesday, March 15

6:00pm - Liturgy of the  
Presanctified Gifts

Saturday, March 18

6:00pm - Great Vespers  
Opportunity for Confessions

Sunday, March 19

9:00am - The Hours

9:30am - Divine Liturgy

5:00pm - Cleveland Deanery  
Akathist to the Cross

### Deanery Akathist

Akathist to the Precious Cross

Sunday, March 19

5:00pm

Archangel Michael Church

5025 E Mill Road

Broadview Hts, OH

*Light Meal to Follow*

## *Gospel Meditation*

If we were not aware already that we have much in common with the paralyzed man in today's gospel reading, the first two weeks of Lent have surely opened our eyes a bit to that truth. The struggle to embrace spiritual disciplines quickly shows us that we typically do not control ourselves very well at all. We find it so hard to turn away from our usual self-centered habits when we seek to give more attention to prayer, fasting, and generosity. We are so weak in our ability to stay focused in opening our hearts to the Lord and guarding them from evil thoughts. We have so little strength to resist our addiction to our stomachs and taste buds, and basically to indulging our desires for pleasure in whatever form we want it. We often feel powerless in our struggle to forgive others and mend broken relationships. Taking even small steps to reorient our lives to God through spiritual disciplines should open our eyes to the paralysis of our souls.

If that is the case for you today, then give thanks that the Lord has shown you a truth that is necessary for your healing. Jesus Christ said "It is not the healthy who need a physician, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mark 2:17) We must know our own disease in order to receive His healing. We must know our own weakness in order to find His strength. The disciplines of Lent are tools for helping us see that we do not simply need a new set of rules or a list of things to do or believe. No, we need to be restored, to be transformed, to be enabled to rise up from our slavery to decay in order to walk, to move forward in a blessed life of holiness from the depths of our souls.

The salvation to which Christ calls us is not simply a matter of having ideas or feelings about Him, but of participating personally in the divine nature by grace. Today we commemorate St. Gregory Palamas, a great bishop, monastic, and theologian of the 14th century. He is known especially for defending the experience



of hesychast monks who, through deep prayer of the heart and asceticism, were enabled to see the Uncreated Light of God that the Apostles beheld at the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor. Against those who denied that human beings could ever experience and know God in such ways, St. Gregory taught that we may truly participate in the divine energies as whole persons. He proclaimed that knowing God means being united personally with Him by grace. It is to become radiant with the divine glory like an iron left in the fire in ways that permeate a person's body, soul, and spirit.

That is precisely what we see in the healing of the paralyzed man. Christ raised him up from weakness and misery, enabling Him to move forward in a life of holiness, a life in which he had the strength to live as one created in God's image and likeness. Today we celebrate that the Savior does precisely the same thing for each of us. Through His glorious resurrection, He raises us all from slavery to sin and death. Left to our own devices, we would always be servants of our own corruption. But when we confess from our hearts our own brokenness and take the steps necessary to open ourselves to His healing, He mercifully raises us up to participate personally in the blessed life that He came to bring to sinners like you and me.

The more that we truly humble ourselves before the Lord this Lent, the more open our hearts will be to the infinite healing power of His grace. He does not rest content with forgiving us in a legal sense, but calls us to be permeated by His divine energies, to radiate His holiness as we live and breathe in this world. He strengthens and commands us to manifest His victory over sin and death in our own lives. Perhaps that is just another way of saying that He calls us to "rise, take up your pallet and go home." There is no way to receive His merciful healing without true humility. And there is no way to acquire true humility other than to learn to see ourselves in that paralyzed man whose only hope is in Jesus Christ. Let us use the remaining weeks of Lent to embrace this deep truth through prayer, fasting, generosity, and repentance. That is how we will unite ourselves more fully with the Lord Who came to raise us up with Him into eternal life. That is how we too will be healed.

## *Sunday of St Gregory Palamas*

Our father among the saints Gregory Palamas (1296-1359), Archbishop of Thessalonica, was a monk of Mount Athos in Greece, and later became Archbishop of Thessalonica. He was a preeminent theologian and a proponent of hesychastic theology. His feast days in the Church are November 14 and the second Sunday of Great Lent.

Best known for his involvement in a controversy with Barlaam, a Greek monk from Calabria, Italy. He was initially asked by his fellow monks on Mount Athos to defend them from the charges of Barlaam. Barlaam believed that philosophers had better knowledge of God than did the prophets, and he valued education and learning more than contemplative prayer. 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. As such, he believed the monks on Mount Athos were wasting their time in contemplative prayer when they should instead be studying to gain intellectual knowledge.

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, 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.

Contrary to Barlaam, Gregory asserted that the prophets in fact had greater knowledge of God, because they had actually seen or heard God

### Prayers Appreciated for:

#### Living:

Katherine, Alex, Sam,  
Lisa, Paula, Marianne,  
Brianna & Infant Jack  
Natalie & Infant Caleb  
Steve

#### Departed:

Ionne, Lester, Gwen, Clyde

### Tall Candles

*Are sponsored by  
Sam & Kathy Jacob  
For the health & well-being:*

**Sam Babic**  
*and in memory of:*  
**Wasil Livchak**  
**Michelle Dudukovich**  
**Millie Halamay**

### WEEKLY READINGS

#### **Monday, March 13**

*Martyr Christina*  
Genesis 6:9-22  
Proverbs 8:1-21

#### **Tuesday, March 14**

*St. Benedict of Nursia*  
Gen. 7:1-15  
Prov. 8:32-9:11

#### **Wed, March 15**

*St. Nicander of Egypt*  
Gen. 7:6-9  
Prov. 9:12-18

#### **Thurs, March 16**

*Apostle Aristobulus of the 70*  
Gen 7:11-8:3  
Prov. 10:1-22

#### **Friday, March 17**

*St. Patrick of Ireland*  
Gen. 8:4-21  
Prov. 10:31-11:12

#### **Saturday, March 18**

*St. Nikolai of Zhicha*  
Heb. 10:32-38  
Mark 2:14-17

himself. Addressing the question of how it is possible for humans to have knowledge of a transcendent and unknowable God, he drew a distinction between knowing God in his essence (in Greek, οὐσία) and knowing God in his energies (in Greek, ἐνέργεια). He maintained the Orthodox doctrine that it remains impossible to know God in his essence (God in himself), but possible to know God in his energies (to know what God does, and who he is in relation to the creation and to man), as God reveals himself to humanity. In doing so, he made reference to the Cappadocian Fathers and other early Christian writers.

Gregory further asserted that when the Apostles Peter, James and John witnessed the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ on Mount Tabor, that they were in fact seeing the uncreated light of God; and that it is possible for others to be granted to see that same uncreated light of God with the help of repentance, spiritual discipline and contemplative prayer, although not in any automatic or mechanistic fashion. He stressed that the physical side of hesychastic prayer was an integral part of the contemplative monastic way, and that the claim by some of the monks of seeing the uncreated light was indeed legitimate.

## *Today's Scripture Readings*

### **Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3**

And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail." But to which of the angels has He ever said: "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool"? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him.

### **Gospel: Mark 2:1-12**

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

*Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee!*

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