

## COME BACK

We hope to see you next week.

Each Sunday we celebrate the Resurrection of Christ with our morning Matins service at 8:45am followed by the main Sunday service, Divine Liturgy at 10am. Sunday School for the Children follows Communion.

Fr. Elia would love to speak with you and answer any questions you may have.

Please fill out our Guest Form.

There's also a place where you can let us know any specific needs or concerns and we will lift them up in prayer.

We welcome everyone who would like to learn more about the Orthodox Christian Faith.



## ABOUT COMMUNION

*We are happy that you have joined us today. Indeed, we pray for the "unity of the Faith" for the day when all of Christianity are united as ONE and can share a common Chalice. However, this is not the case as yet. Please note that Holy Communion, the actual Body & Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, is only for Members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting, and confession, & arrived before the Gospel reading. However, everyone is welcome to partake of the blessed bread and receive a blessing from the pastor at the dismissal. If you are interested, you may inquire with the pastor how you can become a member.*

*If you are a guest or otherwise not a regular communicant, please give your baptismal name when receiving.*



## Welcome to St. Anthony The Great Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church

MARCH 8, 2026

SUNDAY OF GREGORY PALAMAS, ARCHBISHOP OF THESSALONICA



**4031 Aurora Rd., Melbourne, Florida 32934**  
**Very Rev. Fr. Elia Shalhoub, Pastor & Dean of South Florida Deanery**  
**Phone: (305) 812-4940 , E-Mail: [elia\\_shalhoub@yahoo.com](mailto:elia_shalhoub@yahoo.com)**

## WELCOME TO ST. ANTHONY'S

Where people from around the world come together to serve God and our community. We are glad you are worshipping with us today! This Church is one community of many in the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. The Church of Antioch belongs to two thousand years of evangelization, teaching, history, and tradition which expresses the continued commitment of its members to the Orthodox Christian faith in the Lord Jesus Christ! St. Anthony Church is a Pan-Orthodox community, under the omophorion of His Eminence Metropolitan SABA within Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. If you are a first time visitor, please fill out the guest form located on the literature table. We want you to feel at home in prayer and worship. Please submit your names to the ushers and introduce yourself to Fr. Elia at the end of the service so he may welcome you personally. Following services, please join us for sharing of fellowship, coffee, and food.

## DIVINE LITURGY VARIABLES ON SUNDAY, MARCH 08, 2026 TONE 6 / EOTHINON 6

### SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

COMMEMORATION OF GREGORY PALAMAS, ARCHBISHOP OF THESSALONICA

THEOPHYLACT THE CONFESSOR, BISHOP OF NICOMEDIA; APOSTLE HERMAS OF THE SEVENTY

**\*\*DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL THE GREAT\*\***

~ During the Little Entrance, chant the Resurrectional Apolytikion. The Eisodikon (Entrance Hymn) is "O come, let us worship... save us, O Son of God, Who art risen from the dead..." After the Little Entrance, chant these hymns in the following order:

#### RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE SIX

When Mary stood at Thy grave, looking for Thy sacred body, angelic powers shone above Thy revered tomb; and the soldiers who were to keep guard became as dead men. Thou led Hades captive and wast not tempted thereby. Thou didst meet the Virgin and didst give life to the world, O Thou, Who art risen from the dead, O Lord, glory to Thee.

#### APOLYTIKION FOR ST. GREGORY PALAMAS IN TONE EIGHT

O Star of Orthodoxy, support of the Church and its teacher, O comeliness of ascetics, and incontestable champion of those who speak in theology, Gregory the wonder-worker, the pride of Thessalonica and preacher of grace, implore thou constantly for the salvation of our souls.

#### APOLYTIKION OF ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT

Thou didst become like the zealous Elijah in his condition, and followed John the Baptist in his upright ways. Becoming a dweller in the wilderness, and an establisher of the universe by thy prayer O Father Anthony. Wherefore intercede thou with Christ our God to save our souls.

#### KONTAKION FOR SUNDAYS IN GREAT LENT (AND AKATHIST SATURDAY) IN TONE EIGHT

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.

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*Food for Hungry People 2026*  
*52<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary Lenten Calendar*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	FEBRUARY 23 How many clocks do you have in your home? Deposit .25 for each in your Food for Hungry People Box because "time" is running out for those who are hungry!	24 "Put a little love in your heart," get FFHP off to a good start. Put in a nickel for all the "loves" in your life.	25 Count the number of Bibles in your home and deposit .50 for each, because Jesus said, "I was hungry and you gave me food."	26 Count the number of soda cans, juice boxes and water bottles in your home. Put in .15 each, because Jesus said, "I was thirsty and you gave me a drink."	27 How many tablets do you own? Deposit .25 each. Tablets can be a means of communication. Let's communicate our love for the hungry.	28 Count the number of steps (inside and outside) of your home. Pay .10 for each step. Help the hungry "step" into a new future.
MARCH 1 How many mirrors are in your home? Pay .15 for each. Let your "mirror" reflect the image of one who cares.	2 Count the locks in your home. Pay .20 for each lock. Let's "unlock" the door that gives hope to the hungry.	3 How many rings do you have? Deposit .15 per ring. This will help us b"ring" food to the hungry!	4 Count your number of sports balls, (basketballs, soccer balls, tennis balls, etc.) Pay .15 for each. Let's help the hungry "score" a meal!	5 How many doors does your home have? Pay .20 for each. Help open a "door" to a better future for those who are hungry.	6 Have everyone in the family deposit all the loose change they have in their pockets or purses. It just makes "cents" to help the hungry.	7 How many electrical outlets and phone chargers are in your home? Pay .15 each. You'll get a "charge" out of feeding the hungry.
8 "Button up your overcoat" - so simple to do. They are not only hungry but very cold too. Deposit .50 for each coat in your home.	9 For every cellphone in your home, pay .30. It is "long distance" to hungry areas in most parts of the world. Let's make it a toll free number.	10 How many extension cords do you have in your home? Pay .25 for each. Let's "extend" a helping hand to those who need it.	11 For each pie or cake in your home, deposit .40 for each. We should never "dessert" the hungry.	12 How many Apple products do you own? For every one deposit .35. Let's never "tune out" the hungry.	13 For every salt and pepper shaker, pay .25. Let's all "sprinkle" their lives with a little seasoning.	14 For every TV show that was watched today pay .35. TV helps us see around the world, this money will help us feed the hungry around the world.
15 How many computers do you own? Pay .30 for each. Let's take a "byte" out of hunger!	16 How many pictures do you have on your walls? Just "picture" yourself without food & deposit .15 for each picture.	17 Pay .30 for each pair of contacts or eyeglasses you have. This will help us "see" clearly the need of caring for the hungry.	18 Do you have musical instruments in your home? Pay .75 for each. This is a "key" to sharing and caring.	19 How many loaves of bread do you have in your home? Pay .25 for each. Give them this day their daily bread!	20 Count your tea or coffee cups and deposit .10 each. Our "cup" runneth over, so let's fill theirs.	21 "I've got my love to keep me warm," that's true, but the hungry have only you. Pay .25 for each blanket in your home.

**THE EPISTLE**

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance. Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord my God.

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews. (1:10-2:3)

Thou, "O Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands; they will perish; but Thou remainest; and they will all grow old like a garment, and like a mantle Thou wilt roll them up, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years will not fail." But to which of the angels did He say at any time, "Sit on My right hand, until I make thine enemies a footstool for thy feet?" Are they not all spirits for liturgical ministry, sent forth to minister for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard, lest at any time we drift away from them. For if the word spoken through angels was confirmed, and every transgression and disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation, which having at first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard?

**THE GOSPEL**

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark. (2:1-12)

At that time, when Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that He was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and He was preaching the Word to them. And they came, bringing to Jesus a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now, some of the scribes were sitting there, reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And immediately Jesus, perceiving in His spirit that they thus reasoned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you reason thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" - He said to the paralytic - "I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all. So that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

~ The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great continues as usual.

**ST. BASIL LITURGY MEGALYNARION**

All creation rejoiceth in thee, O thou who art full of grace: the angelic hosts and the race of men. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virgins, of whom God was incarnate and became a little child, even our God who is before all the ages; for he made thy womb a throne, and thy body more spacious than the heavens. All creation rejoiceth in thee, O thou who art full of grace. Glory to thee.

**Blessing of Homes 2026**

**Most of us are familiar with the Orthodox Christian tradition of having our homes blessed following the celebration of the Feast of Theophany. The tradition of blessing our homes is not simply a sentimental custom without meaning. Houses are traditionally blessed with Holy Water each year bringing the blessings of the Waters sanctified on the Feast of Theophany, the celebration of our Lord Jesus Christ's baptism. The priest brings this Water into the home to personally bless each family member by renewing the awareness of God's presence in our homes. March is dedicated to House Blessing, if you wish to have your house blessed, please fill the Form and give it to Fr. Elia ASAP.**

# Upcoming Events

<p><b>This Week</b></p> <p><b>Sunday 3/8</b> 2nd Sunday of Lent (Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas)  <b>8:45 am:</b> Matins Service,  <b>10:00 am:</b> Divine Liturgy  <i>Sunday School Creative Arts Festival Lesson Followed by Fellowship Hour, Parish Council Meeting</i></p> <p><b>Monday 3/9</b> Great Compline 5:30 PM</p> <p><b>Wednesday 3/11</b> Daily Lenten Service at <b>5:30 PM</b></p> <p><b>Friday 3/13</b> Presanctified Liturgy at <b>5:30 PM</b> followed by a Lenten Potluck Supper</p> <p><b>Saturday 03/14</b> Catechism Class <b>4:00PM</b>; Great Vespers <b>5:30 PM</b> , Confessions.</p> <p><b>Sunday 03/15</b> (Veneration of the Holy Cross) Matins at <b>8:45 AM</b> ; Divine Liturgay at <b>10:00AM</b> followed by the procession of the Holy Cross, and Fellowship Hour. <b>NO SUNDAY SCHOOL</b></p>	<p><b>March Birthdays and Anniversaries</b></p> <p>02: James (Alan) Zolo          03: Abby Zabrodsky          04: Noah Bellingner          08: Bryce Shonka          12: Enrique (Henry) Soto          17: Stella White          19: Evan Singleton          20: Rayne Zims          21: Faris Adili, Jeffrey Dick          27: Micah Riter          29: Michael Lieberman B-day          30: Steven Singleton          Adrian and Carrie Matos Wedding Anniversary          May God Grant You Many Years!          Happy Heavenly Birthday to Ann Shark (March 17) and Luke Delida ( March 30)  <b>May their Memory be Eternal!</b></p>
<p><b>Fasting Calendar</b></p> <p><b>Wine &amp; Oil: March 8,9, March 14, 15</b> Wine and oil are allowed. Refrain from meat, fish, dairy, and eggs.  <b>Strict Fast:</b> Refrain from meat, fish, oil, wine, dairy, and eggs  <b>March 10-13, March 16-20</b></p>	<p> Donations are happily accepted until March 18th. Text Yuliya at (321)960-9564 to arrange a pick up if needed. All proceeds from the Garage Sale will go to our Sunday School Fund.</p>



If you don't see your Birthday and/or Anniversary, please let Yuliya know so she can update our list.

## Making It Easier To Give

By using the QR Code, it is easier to make a donation or fulfill your annual pledge through Zelle to Saint Anthony. You may also access it through your online banking; Should you have any questions, or need further information about giving opportunities at Saint Anthony, please speak to our Parish Council Treasurer Ethan Packey.



SAINT ANTHONY THE GREAT ORTHODOX CHURCH 321-428-4819 --->



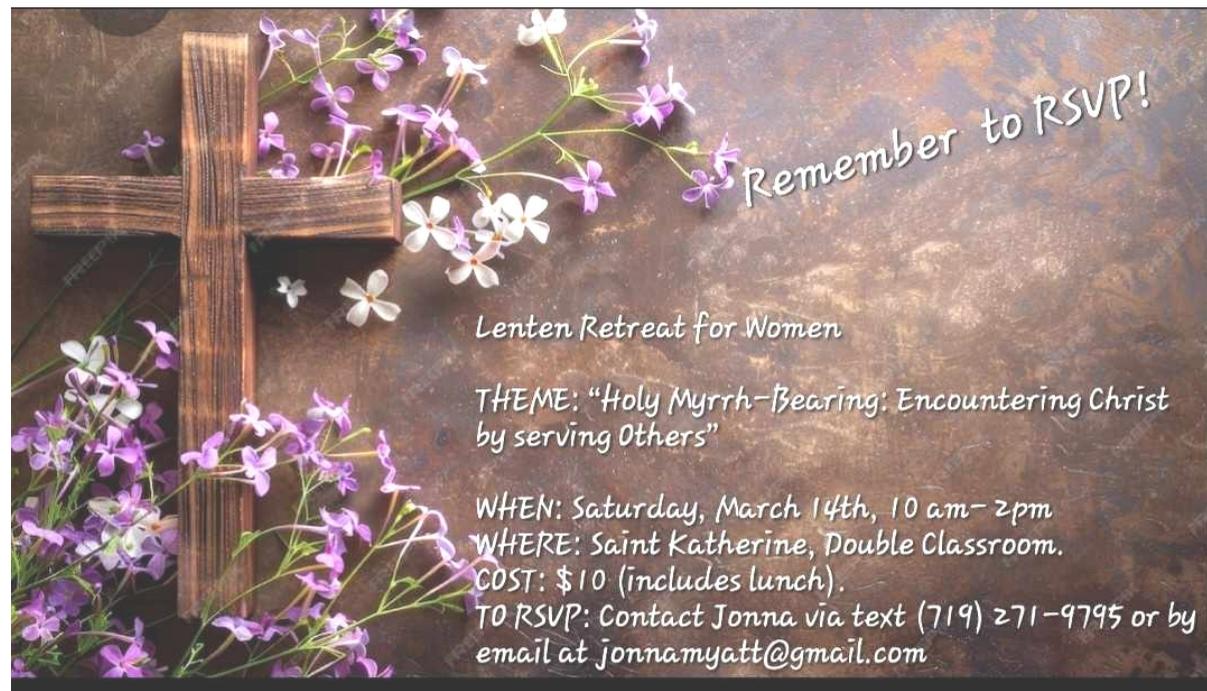
## Blessing of Homes 2026

*Fr. Elia is doing House Blessings by request, only if you fill the Request Form on the info table Please keep in mind that Fr. Elia is available only on the weekend.*



**Please pray for the healing of** Gregory Warner, Joni DeBaldo, Georgia Davis, Laney Ricketts, Michealle Carey, Debbie Thieme, Adriana Theodoropoulos, Beverly Delida, Alix Hall, Nina and Diogo Penas, Beth Manzini, John Archambeau, Alex & Soula, Susan Moran, Susan Perers, Ceara Jacobs, William Snell, Vasilika Yardines, Faouzi Najjar, Marie Williams, and His Grace Bishop Nicholas

# Lenten Retreat at Saint Katherine's



Lenten Retreat for Women

THEME: "Holy Myrrh-Bearing: Encountering Christ by serving Others"

WHEN: Saturday, March 14th, 10 am- 2pm

WHERE: Saint Katherine, Double Classroom.

COST: \$10 (includes lunch).

TO RSVP: Contact Jonna via text (719) 271-9795 or by email at [jonnamyatt@gmail.com](mailto:jonnamyatt@gmail.com)



FAITH TREE RESOURCES

Dear Father,  
 We're grateful to share that Season 2 of the "Orthodox Christian Parenting" podcast is now live.

In the first episode, we open with a conversation on raising resilient children. Michelle speaks with Fr. Nick and Dr.

Roxanne Louh about how resilience is formed in children—not by removing hardship, but by walking through it with steady boundaries, emotional presence and a life rooted in Christ.

Our hope is this season serves as a practical resource for the families you shepherd. If helpful, we warmly invite you to:

Listen as a resource in your own pastoral ministry.

Share it with parents and grandparents in your parish. (We've prepared a simple swipe file with a flyer and ready-to-use bulletin copy, email text and social captions to make it easy.)

Use our free weekly Discussion Guides to support Sunday school, parenting gatherings or parish conversations. You can listen now on Apple, Spotify or YouTube, or wherever you enjoy podcasts. And you can access our free Discussion Guides here.

We're grateful for your partnership.

In Christ,

The Faithtree Team

**ST. ANTHONY THE GREAT  
ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX  
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# Announcements

MARCH IS ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN'S MONTH

THE LADIES WILL BE READING THE EPISTLE, GIVING SERMONS, USHERING AND DOING EXTRA ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT THE NAB PROJECT.



March 1  
March 8  
March 15  
March 22  
March 29

Epistle  
Sydney  
Amanda  
Erin  
Stephanie

Sermon  
Patricia S.  
  
Sophia  
Susan M.

**NEXT WEEK—SUNDAY OF THE CROSS**

**WEAR YOUR CROSSES TO CHURCH**

**WE WILL HAVE A PROCESSION WITH THE CROSS, ADORNED WITH FLOWERS AND BASIL. FORM FOR THE FLOWER DONATIONS IS IN THE BACK OF THIS BULLETIN, PLEASE FILL IT OUT TODAY, SO WE CAN ORDER FLOWERS.**



Happy  
Women's Day

*No relation is complete without a woman in this world. She plays a role of "loving Mom"..a "Caring sister"...an "Understanding wife" & a "Lovable daughter"...*

*You have everything in you & that's the reason why the world is celebrating you..*

*You Are Amazing Ps. 139:14*

*You Are Beautiful Eccl. 3:11*

*You Are Always Loved Rom. 8:38*

*You Are Enough 2 Cor. 12:9*

*You Are Never Alone Matt. 28:20*

**VIRTUAL LENTEN RETREATS (WE USUALLY MEET AT THE CHURCH)**

**MARCH 21 AMEN LENTEN RETREAT AT 9AM-12PM ASK STEVEN**

**MARCH 21 YOUNG ADULTS MINISTRY (YAM) LENTEN RETREAT AT 2PM-4PM**

**MARCH 28 ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN LENTEN RETREAT AT 12PM-2PM**

(LADIES MEET AT 11 AM, BRING LIGHT LENTEN FOOD)

**MARCH 28 TEEN SOYO LENTEN RETREAT AT 8PM-9PM ASK HOLLY**

**NAB Project Fundariser**

Dear Ladies,

This year we will make raffle baskets to raise money for our project. The sign up list is available on the bulletin board. Please sign your name by the basket that you are interested in providing, baskets are due at the Church

March 15th. Thank you so much <3



**THANK YOU TO TODAY'S COFFEE HOUR SPONSORS**

PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE CALENDAR IN THE NARTHEX TO PREPARE AND SERVE FOOD FOR OUR COFFEE HOUR.  
MARCH 29 FISH LUNCHEON FUNDRAISER



**Mark Your Calendars!!!**

**St. Anthony Family Night and Bible Bowl,  
Saturday, June 6th!**

**We will have Vespers, eat a potluck then do our Bible Bowl!!**

**All are welcome, so gather a team of 3 to include your family or friends to have a friendly competition.**

**We will be answering questions over the Book of Exodus (chapters 1-20, 32-34, 38-40).**

**Team Sign Ups in April.**

**Questions? Ask Holly**

On Saturday, March 28th, from 8:30am to 1pm, we will be cleaning, painting, repairing, and beautifying the church, trailer, and property in preparation for Pascha. Fasting breakfast options will be provided. Looking forward to seeing you!  
Michealle, 301 787 1174



**FOOD FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE COIN BOX PROGRAM**

**Please make sure to pick up your coin BOX to take home.**

**You can use a calendar in the back of this bulletin to make collecting coins fun with kids.**

**Boxes will be due back on Sunday after Pascha (April 19).**

**UPCOMING SUNDAY CALENDAR**

Below lists the upcoming Sundays from February 1st until Holy Pascha, which falls on April 12th this year. We invite you to join us each week for Sunday Liturgy to celebrate this special commemoration of Jesus' life, death, and Resurrection. Please mark these special dates on your calendar.

- March 15 3rd Sunday of Lent (Sunday of the Cross)
- March 22 4th Sunday of Lent
- March 25 Feast of the Annunciation (Wednesday)
- March 29 5th Sunday of Lent & Celebration of the Feast of the Annunciation
- April 5 PALM SUNDAY, April 10 GOOD FRIDAY, April 12 HOLY PASCHA
- April 19 THOMAS SUNDAY (reading a Gospel in different languages)

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The liturgical texts also emphasize the theology of each event and the doctrine connected to it. They never neglect Christ's divinity at His Crucifixion, nor His resurrected, transfigured humanity at His Resurrection and Ascension. They stress His divine and human natures in every feast. In the Nativity services, we speak of God's condescension, His ancient promise, the union of the two natures, and the virginity of His Mother. In the Paschal services, we proclaim Christ's descent into Hades, His destruction of the kingdom of Satan, His trampling down death, the liberation of humanity from the powers of evil, and His bodily, real and glorified Resurrection.

The Orthodox Liturgy is deeply doctrinal in character. It is profoundly Trinitarian. In the liturgy of Theophany, the Holy Trinity is clearly revealed. In the liturgy of Pentecost, we find a precise description of the third Person—the Holy Spirit—without neglecting the Father and the Son or Their relationship.

One of the great gifts of the Liturgy is that it preserves the faith and doctrine within the heart of worshippers—even if they have never taken a formal theology course. An Orthodox Christian who prays cannot reduce Christianity to mere human sentimentality, because the Liturgy constantly draws him (her) upward. Among Orthodox Christians there is a spiritual saying: The theologian is the one who prays.

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Since all that happened occurred "for our salvation," returning us to the Kingdom for which we were created, and restoring us to our original image so that we may be united with Him, the communion of saints becomes an active force in this journey. For this reason, the Orthodox Liturgy gives great attention to the saints—the models of authentic Christian life. Their commemorations fill the calendar. The faithful remember them by name. Those who bear the saint's name celebrate his or her feast day. Their lives are read and contemplated in the daily services.

In the Orthodox Church, there are large volumes called the Menaion arranged day by day throughout the months of the year. These books contain hymns and prayers to reflect on the lives of the saints commemorated daily, highlighting their love for Christ, their faithfulness, and their repentance. There are special hymns for martyrs, hierarchs, righteous ones, teachers, and archangels. Many faithful learn and chant the hymn of their patron saint regularly.

Through the Liturgy, the saint becomes a friend to the believer—familiar, close, encouraging him to walk in the way of Christ and imitate Him. This closeness creates a deep sense of communion that is not hindered by death or geography. The saint becomes truly present. The believer asks for his prayers and turns to him, just as he asks for the prayers of his brothers and sisters standing beside him in the Church.

(To be continued)

**ABOUT THE DIVINE LITURGY**

The Divine Liturgy expresses the entire Christian faith in a continuous song of praise and prayer addressed to God. It is focused on God, not on us. There is nothing just for amusement or entertainment. Since much of the service is the same every week, worshippers know it and can participate personally, either by singing along or just by prayerful attention. Worshippers are surrounded by icons (pictures of Christ and the saints), which remind us that we are participating, while on earth, in the worship of all the angels and saints in heaven. The entire service (except for the sermon) is sung. The words are all from Scripture or ancient Christian texts. Please follow the service in the books available in the pews. Weekly changes will appear below and marked with a corresponding letter in the service book.

## The Orthodox Liturgy: Its Theology and Spirituality, Part Two

*His Eminence Metropolitan Saba (Isper)*

In the Liturgy, the Church ascends to heaven. Therefore, when she returns to the world after this ascent, she returns reflecting the light, joy, and peace of the Kingdom. She becomes a witness to the Kingdom in the midst of an anxious and troubled world.

For this reason, Orthodox liturgical texts address God first. They recall and make present the saving work (economy) that God accomplished for humanity and for our salvation. For example, Orthodox services conclude in a similar form: "O Christ our true God, who... for our salvation..."

During the Paschal season we say: "who rose from the dead for our salvation." At Christmas: "who was born of the Virgin in a cave for our salvation." At Theophany: "who was baptized by John in the Jordan for our salvation." At the Transfiguration: "who was transfigured on Mount Tabor before His holy disciples for our salvation." At Pentecost: "who sent down the All-Holy Spirit upon His holy disciples for our salvation." And so on throughout the year.

Salvation—accomplished by Christ in His incarnation, death, and resurrection—is central to the Liturgy. It is the foundation and purpose of Christian life. The goal of the Christian is salvation. He or she is a Christian who seeks salvation first, and then is a physician, an engineer, a merchant or an employee.

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Because salvation was accomplished through Christ's incarnation and His saving acts, the Liturgy distributes across the year all the events of His work for us—from the Annunciation to the Theotokos, to the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Thus the feasts unfold: Annunciation, Nativity, Circumcision, Baptism, Entrance into the Temple, Transfiguration, Crucifixion and Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost. The Church does not forget the events related to the Mother of God—her Nativity, Entrance into the Temple, and Dormition. This liturgical rhythm lifts Christians out of the routine of daily life and reorients them toward their essential goal: salvation. Moving from feast to feast, they live in constant anticipation of the Kingdom, until they arrive at the Feast of Feasts and Season of Seasons—Holy Pascha.

At every feast, in Vespers, Orthros, and the Divine Liturgy, we read and chant the meaning of the feast—its theology, its narrative, and the scriptural passages related to it from both Old and New Testaments. All of this unfolds through chanting, processions, the elevation and veneration of the icon of the feast, the breaking of blessed bread, and ultimately participation in the Cup of Christ's Body and Blood. In this way, the faithful do not merely remember the event; they live it. They participate in it and allow it to become active in their personal lives and in the life of their community. The Liturgy becomes synergy—a shared work, a continual cooperation between Christ and us. We live within a rhythm that holds two measures: the measure of our awakened faith, and the measure of the event of faith itself.

For this reason, liturgical texts insist that what happened did not simply happen in the past—it happens today, because we live it "here and now." We ceaselessly chant: "Today He is hung upon the Tree..." and "Today is the day of Resurrection..." and "Today He is born of the Virgin..." What took place is no longer merely past, because it is present. As Saint John of Damascus says, "There is nothing new after the Incarnation." In liturgical celebration, the Church remembers the saving acts God accomplished in history, fulfilled in the Cross and Resurrection. That Paschal event, which occurred once in history, has now become contemporary to every moment of our lives. Because Christ rose from the dead, He shattered the mortal wall of time. This remembrance is entirely new in nature. We are the ones who remember—but the reality we remember is no longer past. It is present. Thus, the Church's memory becomes a living presence of the saving event. This is the reality of the Liturgy.



**SUNDAY OF GREGORY PALAMAS**

**2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT**

**(MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup>)**

**PREPARING FOR GREAT LENT**

**Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
Keeping the Faith In the Holy Days**

**Guarding the Heart against the Subtle Enemies of Fasting: PRIDE**

Fasting is difficult. And pride is the most obvious means of making fasting easier. If I make my success in fasting a matter of pride, then I can surely improve in abstention from bodily pleasures. But I will have cast out one demon only to be beset by seven more deadly ones. For the delight in my illusory power to prevail on my own in the spiritual warfare is a far worse evil than the base addiction to physical pleasure that it conquers. Since this pride in our success in fasting can mask itself as a legitimate delight in accomplishment, it proves to be a formidable foe. Let us therefore distinguish three different bases for delight in spiritual success, only some of which are godly. The first basis for delight is pleasing God. If we reasonably believe that what we are doing is pleasing to God, then we may delight in this greatest of all approvals: Well done, good and faithful servant. A second basis for delight is impressing our fellows. If impressing our fellows gives us pleasure because we reasonably esteem their ability to evaluate us - as we should esteem our confessors - then this pleasure is perhaps at least innocuous. But if we define ourselves by this esteem, and not by our relation to God, and if we seek this esteem so as to carve out for ourselves seats of honor within the world or the Church, then our delight in success has become prideful. A final basis for delight in success in fasting despises all other human opinion and basks alone, not in the approval of God, but in self-congratulation, as if the demonically proud self were God. Since this sort of pride does not make a display for other people, and may even hide its feats, it can easily be mistaken for humility, both by others and by the self-deceived faster himself. One remedy to this self-deception is to remember that we fast precisely because of our weakness, because we cannot make ourselves happy by our own efforts. We have no sure hold on the goods of the world, and so look elsewhere, to God, for succor. Hence, to turn success in fasting into a reason for boasting is comically to misread the sign of our utter weakness. One must laugh at this absurdity in oneself, for such laughter is a strong aid in putting down the stealthy insurrection of pride.

(Taken from an excerpt by Richard McCombs, *AGAIN* Vol. 28 No.1, Spring 2006.)

In Christ,

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## PREPARATION FOR GREAT LENT *FASTING DURING THE GREAT LENT*

The Great Lent is the longest fasting season of the year for the Orthodox. We all know about the importance of prayer, almsgiving and fasting - the three pillars of Lent. But what are the rules of fasting and are there some things we should not do during this season? Read this article and find out. Rather than provide us with laws of fasting, the Orthodox Church provides us with guidelines or what could be called as rules. The Lenten fasting rules are very strict and are mostly followed by monastics. Laity usually keeps the first and the last week of the Great Lent super strictly. However, this depends on the person and their parish.

The rules of Lenten fast are written down in the liturgical book called the Typikon.

The Orthodox Church rules for fasting:

- Weekdays: No meat or any animal products, like dairy. No fish (however, invertebrates - seafood with no backbone - are permitted), no wine, no olive oil.
- Weekends: Same rules, but oil and wine are permitted.
- There are two feasts that take place during Great Lent - Annunciation on March 25th (April 7th) and Palm Sunday (the last Sunday before Easter). On those feasts the rules are a bit different: fish, wine and oil are all permitted, regardless of the day of the week.

The Holy Week: monastics eat no meals at all from the Holy Thursday evening until Pascha. Holy Friday is the day of the strictest fast. On Holy Saturday, a little bit of fruit and wine is permitted for sustenance.

The fast is usually broken after the midnight Divine Liturgy on Pascha day.

What fasting is not

Now that we've talked about the rules of fasting, we must understand that there are some actions we should not do while trying to fast.

First of all, it is very important to note that fasting is a very personal action. We should not boast about it or even mention it at all. Here's what the Gospel tells us:

"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." (Matthew 6:16-18)

Just like with giving alms, when we fast, we must do it in secret. We are not fasting to show others how good we are. We fast because we want to get closer to God by thinking more about Him, not the food.

Which brings us to another point: eating too much "permitted" foods during Lent. Are we really fasting if we eat a huge meal full of rice, seafood and vegetables and go to sleep afterwards, because we are so full? In this case, it would be better to eat a small piece of meat with nothing else on the side, than to feast on "permitted" foods like that.

The point of fasting is to think less about food and more about God; be "hungry" for God and His Word. Feeling slightly physically hungry helps us to get into that headspace. During Lent, our life must become more simple, so the meals we eat must be simple as well. When we fast it is good to cut back on entertainment and take on good things. The point is to try to concentrate on what's more important - God and the people around us.

The third point is that fasting alone doesn't save us or do us any good. Fasting is not a diet; rather, it is a spiritual exercise that we do to open our hearts to God. If we fast but always appear irritated and angry because of it - we are not fasting at all. Fasting always goes together with prayer and giving alms - this is something to always remember.



## TODAY'S FEAST SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT, GREGORY PALAMAS

This divine Father, who was from Asia Minor, was from childhood reared in the royal court of Constantinople, where he was instructed in both religious and secular wisdom. Later, while still a youth, he left the imperial court and struggled in asceticism on Mount Athos, and in the Skete at Beroea. He spent some time in Thessalonica being treated for an illness that came from his harsh manner of life. He was present in Constantinople at the Council that was convened in 1341 against Barlaam of Calabria, and at the Council of 1347 against Acindynus, who was of like mind with Barlaam; Barlaam and Acindynus claimed that the grace of God is created. At both these Councils, the Saint contended courageously for the true dogmas of the Church of Christ, teaching in particular that divine grace is not created, but is the uncreated energies of God which are poured forth throughout creation: otherwise it would be impossible, if grace were created, for man to have genuine communion with the uncreated God. In 1347 he was appointed Metropolitan of Thessalonica. He tended his flock in an apostolic manner for some twelve years, and wrote many books and treatises on the most exalted doctrines of our Faith; and having lived for a total of sixty-three years, he reposed in the Lord in 1359.

His holy relics are kept in the Cathedral of Thessalonica. A full service was composed for his feast day by the Patriarch Philotheus in 1368, when it was established that his feast be celebrated on this day. Since works without right faith avail nothing, we set Orthodoxy of faith as the foundation of all that we accomplish during the Fast, by celebrating the Triumph of Orthodoxy the Sunday before, and the great defender of the teachings of the holy Fathers today.

## THEOPHYLAKTOS, BISHOP OF NICOMEDEA

Theophylact was from the East; his native city is unknown. In Constantinople he became a close friend of Tarsius, who afterwards became Patriarch of Constantinople (see Feb. 25). Theophylact was made Bishop of Nicomedia. After the death of Saint Tarsius, his successor Nicephorus (see June 2) called together a number of Bishops to help him in fighting the iconoclasm of Emperor Leo the Armenian, who reigned from 813-820. Among them was Euthymius, Bishop of Sardis (celebrated Dec. 26), who had attended the holy Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787 - he was exiled three times for the sake of the holy icons, and for defying the Emperor Theophilus' command to renounce the veneration of the icons, was scourged from head to foot until his whole body was one great wound, from which he died eight days later, about the year 830; Joseph of Thessalonica (see July 14); Michael of Synnada (see May 23); Emilian, Bishop of Cyzicus (see Aug. 8); and Saint Theophylact, who boldly rebuked Leo to his face, telling him that because he despised the long-suffering of God, utter destruction was about to overtake him, and there would be none to deliver him. For this, Theophylact was exiled to the fortress of Strobilus in Karia of Asia Minor, where, after 30 years of imprisonment and hardship, he gave up his holy soul about the year 845. Leo the Armenian, according to the Saint's prophecy, was slain in church on the eve of our Lord's Nativity, in 820.