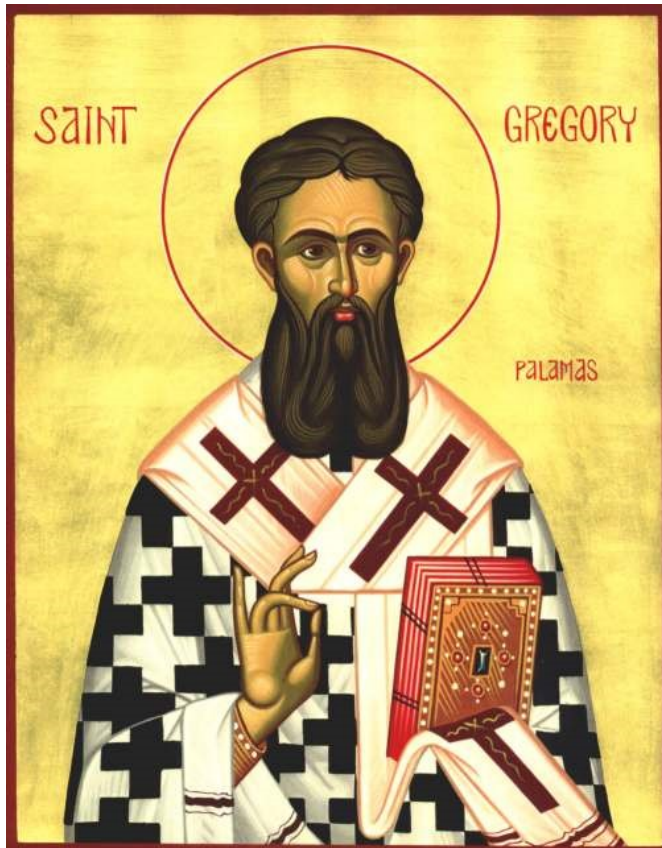


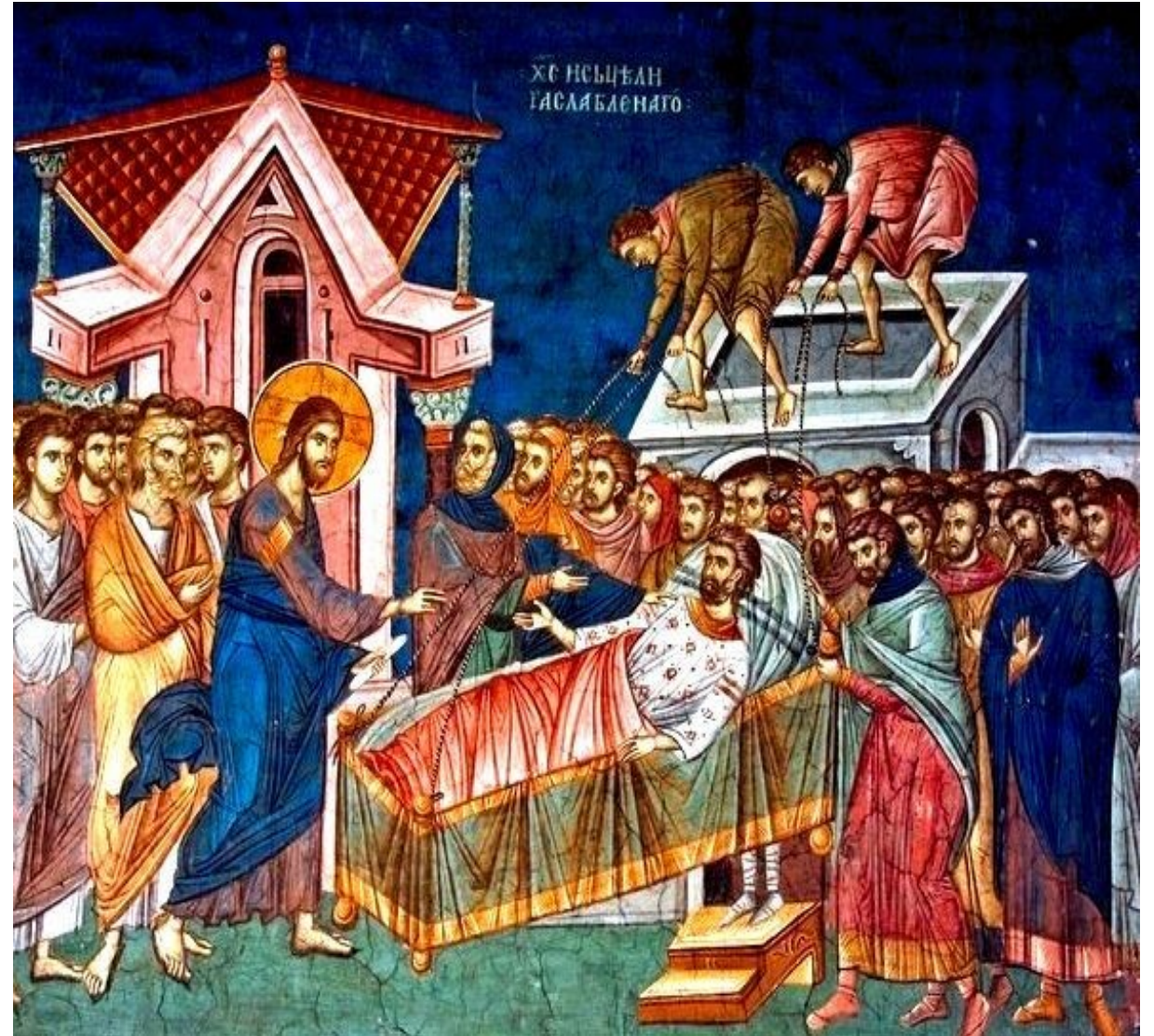
From the Divine Office for the Second Sunday of Great Lent

What words of song shall we weave as a garland, to crown the holy bishop, Gregory Palamas? He is the champion of true devotion and the adversary of godlessness, the fervent protector of the Faith, the great guide and teacher, the well-tuned harp of the Spirit, the golden tongue, the fountain that flows with waters of healing for the faithful: Gregory the great and marvelous. (Vespers)

Hail, glory of the fathers, voice of the theologians, tabernacle of inward silence, dwelling-place of wisdom, greatest of teachers, deep ocean of the word. Hail, O you who practiced the virtues of the active life and ascended to the height of contemplation! Hail, healer of man's sickness. Hail, shrine of the Spirit; hail, father who though dead are still alive. (Orthros)



**SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
MARCH 13, 2022**



JESUS HEALING THE PARALYTIC

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church
256 Hamilton St.
Worcester, MA 01604
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Email: olphmelkite@gmail.com
Rev. Bryan McNeil, Pastor
Email: Brymc56@comcast.net Cell: (978) 314-1962
Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL

Antiphon (1st)

1: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth, and sing praise to His name.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

2: Say to God: How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies cringe before You.

Be shafa'ati Walidatil Eelah, ya Mukhallisu, khallisna.

3: Let all the earth worship You and sing praises to You; let it sing praises to Your name, O Most High!

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

Entrance Hymn

Priest: Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ.

People: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 1) pg. 38

After the stone was sealed by the Jews and the while the soldiers were watching Your spotless body, You rose, O Savior, on the third day, bestowing life to the world. Wherefore, the heavenly powers cried out to You, O Giver of life: “Glory to Your resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Your kingdom! Glory to Your economy, O You who alone are the lover of mankind!”

Troparion of the Holy Relics (Tone 2)

Victorious witnesses of the Lord blessed is the earth that received your blood, and holy are the heavenly places that opened to your souls. You have vanquished the enemy in battle and proclaimed Christ with courage. We beg you to intercede with Him who is all good, that He may save our souls.

Troparion of our Holy Father Gregory Palamas (Tone 8)

O Gregory the Wonderworker, light of orthodoxy, support and teacher of the Church, glory of monks and invincible protector of theologians, pride of Thessaloniki and preacher of grace: Pray without ceasing for the salvation of us all.

Patronal Troparion (Tone 1) Pg. 15

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity and in falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, save our souls from death.

Kondakion of The Annunciation (Tone 8-Arabic this week)

We your servants ascribe to you O Mother of God: thank offerings of victory, O Champion Leader; for we have been liberated from terror; but as you have that invincible power; do you free us from danger; so that we may cry out to you: Hail, O Virgin and Bride ever pure.

God’s Presence in “Mere Bones”

A second observance today points to the presence of the divine energies of God experienced in the very remains of the saints. In the Melkite Church, holy relics are solemnly venerated today as “the pledge of the glorious resurrection of sanctified bodies” (exapostilarion at orthros). Thus we venerate the relics of saints in anticipation of their future incorruptibility and their complete transformation after the resurrection.

The Second Council of Nicaea which affirmed the veneration of icons also spoke about the remains of the saints: “Our Lord Jesus Christ granted to us the relics of Saints as a salvation-bearing source which pours forth varied benefits on the infirm.”

What are the “varied benefits” which come from the relics of the saints? Firstly, miracles – particularly healings – have taken place at the tombs or reliquaries of the saints. As St Ephrem the Syrian observed in the fourth century, “Even after death they act as if alive, healing the sick, expelling demons, and by the power of the Lord rejecting every evil influence of the demons. This is because the miraculous grace of the Holy Spirit is always present in the holy relics.”

In some cases, the bodies of the saints have been preserved incorrupt (without decay). In other cases, relics have emitted a pleasing fragrance or exuded ointment. Believers see these occasions as evidence that deification is something that involves the body. The physical can be touched by the energies of God and participate in holiness. In the words of the kondakion, “It is a great marvel indeed that healing should come forth from mere bones. Glory to the Creator, to God alone!”

Fragmentary relics are placed in the holy table when a church is consecrated. They are also found in every antimension used for the Divine Liturgy. Some icons have similar fragments in a small case embedded in them. Largely intact relics (skulls, limbs or even entire bodies) are generally preserved at the place where the saint lived. Thus the reputedly incorrupt relics of St. Gregory Palamas are kept in Thessalonika where he was bishop. Every year on this day they are brought forth in procession and placed before the bishop’s throne in the cathedral for veneration.

A Feast of the Holy Relics was formerly celebrated in the Roman Catholic Church on November 5 (or the Sunday after All Saints). It is still observed in the older rite but not in the ordinary (modern) form.

It has been said that “the work of the Church is to ‘produce relics,’” because the primary work of the Church is to lead us to theosis, to communion and union with God. By venerating the relics of the saints the Churches of East and West proclaim its commitment to that work and to the presence of the Holy Spirit in it enabling it

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today **People of Ukraine**
 +**Richard Nejaimy (40 day)**. Requested by the family
 +**Kasper Kfoury (1 yr.)**. Requested by Fr. Bryan, Kh. June and family

March 27 +**Wayne Kallio (2yr.)**. Requested by Susan Aboody-Kallio and family

Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by the family of Richard Nejaimy

Next week's Coffe Hr. is hosted by Andy & Jocelyn Aulo

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$ 1,481
Candles	\$ 31
Coffee Hr.	\$ 25
Easter Flowers	\$ 125
Memorials	\$ 500
Other	\$ 20
TOTAL	\$ 2,182

God bless you for your generosity!



FINANCIALS

<u>Feb 2022</u>	<u>YTD (10.2021-2.2022)</u>
Income \$8,917	Income \$35,855
Expense (\$5,723)	Expense (\$28,508)
Net \$3,194	Net \$ 7,347

Shepherd's Care Associated Charities 2022.

To help those in need, the Shepherd's Care Associated Charities of the Eparchy of Newton is sponsoring this 40-day Lenten giving program to provide for the less fortunate. Local parish charities, as well as eparchial charities, international charities, and our seminarians, will benefit from your generous almsgiving during Great Lent. Program brochures and Giving (Mite) Boxes are available at the rear of the church. The idea is to take the money you save by fasting and put it in the box. This is a great thing to do as a family during Great Lent!

Thank you for all you do to help the needy among us.

COFFEE HOUR

Please join us after the Divine Liturgy this morning for the Coffee Hour. It is a chance for us to catch up with each other and share Christian fellowship. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Hall. Please sign up to take a turn hosting. We are now in Great Lent, so there should be no meat or eggs. It will be nice to share food and fellowship once again. I have missed it! I hope you have as well!

Thanks be to God that Archie Opatka is now **cancer free!!** Joe and Christie send their heartfelt love and thanks for all your prayers and support during this difficult time. We look forward to seeing the family at Divine Liturgy again soon!

Please Remember in your prayers: Susan Arraje, George Arraj, Jr., Robert Ghiz, Archie Opatka, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, and Ruth Welsh.

If there are people for whom you would like me to pray, please reach out and give me their names. Part of our vocation as Christians is to pray for each other, especially when someone is sick or suffering in any way.

PICNIC MEETING

Our re-scheduled initial meeting for the 2022 picnic will be **Monday, March 14** after Great Compline. The meeting should start around **7pm** in the Hall. We are looking for your input as to how we can make the picnic even better! This will be the first of a number of meetings, so if you can't make it, you can always get to the next one.

All are welcome!

The Fathers Reaffirmed (St Gregory Palamas and the Veneration of the Relics)

WHAT DO FASTS, METANIES, PROSTRATIONS, and standing through long church services have to do with prayer? Isn't prayer the conversation with God we have in our hearts? Why is Eastern Christian spirituality so physical?

On the First Sunday of the Fast we proclaimed the Orthodoxy of incorporating material creation (sacred images) in our worship because the living Word of God assumed matter in becoming fully man. On this Second Sunday of the Fast we affirm our use of the material in worship for a similar reason. We worship using matter because to be fully human is to be physical. The physical, we believe, will not be left behind in eternal life. The resurrection of the body is the transfiguration, not the elimination, of our physical side. Fully human worship, then, must involve the material as we as the non-material.

Two commemorations observed on this Sunday help us reflect on the physical dimension of the life in Christ. The first is the remembrance of St. Gregory Palamas (1296-1359), who championed the Greek Fathers' teaching on the way we have communion with God. Brought up in the Byzantine court, Gregory entered the Vatopedi monastery on Mount Athos when he was 20 years old. A threatened Turkish invasion of the holy mountain in 1325 brought several monks including Gregory to Thessalonika where Gregory was ordained to the priesthood and, in 1347, chosen as Metropolitan of Thessalonika. The icon of his enthronement shows him surrounded by Greek Fathers of the previous millennium whose teachings he affirmed.

Gregory and the Light of God

Gregory became involved in a controversy with another Greek monk, Barlaam of Calabria, over how we can know God. The West was just getting reacquainted with the philosophy of Plato, Aristotle and others of the classical era. Many adopted their view that dialectics and metaphysics were the highest form of knowledge. Some, like Barlaam, taught that the highest possible knowledge of God that anyone could have was through the intellect.

Gregory countered with the teaching of the Fathers that the highest knowledge of God comes, not through reasoning and the application of classical philosophy, but through an experience of God gained through application to a life of prayer. The theologian is the person who knows God through experience, not through intellectual study. Doctrinal statements are fully meaningful only for those who have encountered the living Christ. You can study the makeup of a city all you like, he observed, but you will not know what a city is until you visit one.

Gregory further taught that a life of prayer can bring us to experience the uncreated light of God, as Peter, James and John did on Mount Tabor. God's divine actions or energies, which are to God as the light is to the sun, can touch us physically as well as spiritually. This transformation of the whole person, or theosis, comes about by true participation in the very life of God. The whole of human existence becomes permeated by the Divine Presence.

Barlaam countered that the grace of God we may receive is something created, distinct from Him. In this Gregory was following the Greek Fathers while Barlaam was more in the tradition of Augustine. The issue thus became part of the East/West controversy of the Middle Ages.

In the West theology became increasingly influenced by Aristotelian philosophy and tied to academic study. Piety came to be divorced from theology and even from liturgy, and focused on devotional practices such as the rosary and the Stations of the Cross. In the East theology remained connected to liturgy, prayer and ascetic endeavor: the fruit of a personal experience of God involving the whole person.

Gregory's teaching was upheld by several local councils in Constantinople which were eventually accepted by the other Byzantine Churches. While Gregory himself is remembered on the day of his death, November 14, today's commemoration focuses on the place his holistic teaching has in our understanding of the Christian life. We can directly experience the action of God in us through the Spirit who dwells in us. We can bring our whole being into contact with God through physical prayer (fasts, vigils, prostrations, etc.) as well as interior meditation. And we may, as some have done, experience the uncreated light of God in this life as well as the next.

Prokimenon

Reader: You, O Lord, will keep us and preserve us always from this generation.

People: You, O Lord, will keep us and preserve us always from this generation.

Verses: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any holy man, for truthfulness has vanished from among the children of men.

People: You, O Lord, will keep us and preserve us always from this generation.

Reader: You, O Lord, will keep us

People: And preserve us always from this generation.

Epistle: Heb. 1:10-14; 2:1-3

Alleluia Verses

Your favor, O Lord, I will sing forever; from generation to generation my mouth will proclaim Your faithfulness.

Verses: For You have said, "My kindness is established forever." In heaven You have confirmed Your faithfulness."

Gospel: Mk. 2:1-12

Hirmos of Saint Basil (Tone 3-Arabic this week)

In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of angels and the human race as well: O Sanctified Temple, Spiritual Paradise, and glory of Virgins, from whom our God, who exists before all eternity, took flesh and became a little Child! He has taken your womb as His throne, making it more spacious than the heavens. Therefore, Full of Grace, in you all creation rejoices: glory to you!

THIS WEEK'S LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE

Mon Mar 14, 6PM - Great Compline

Wed Mar 16, 6PM - Presanctified Liturgy

Fri Mar 18, 6PM - Compline & Akathist Hymn (Part 3)

Sun Mar 13, 10AM - Divine Liturgy of St. Basil. Sunday of the Holy Cross followed by procession with the Cross.