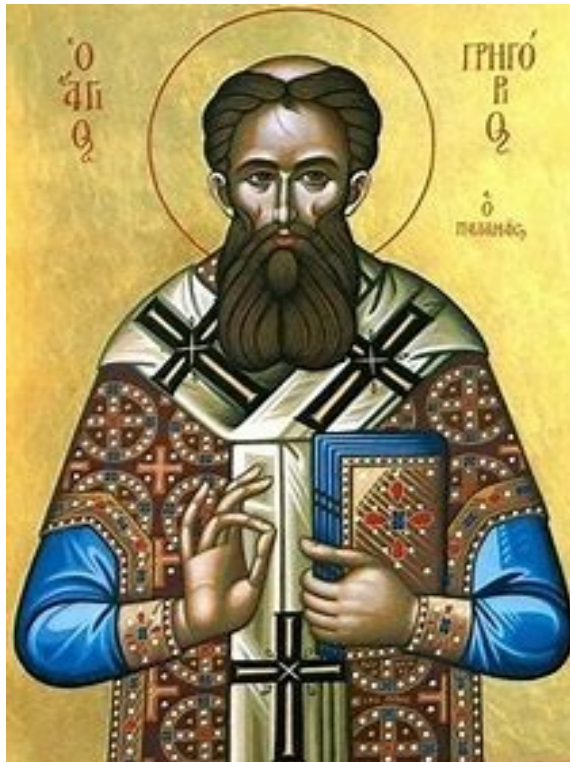


Hymns for the Second Sunday of Great Lent

We who believe in You know the wealth of Your great and measureless compassion, O Master. With the Prodigal Son, in deep sincerity we all bow down before You. Accept us, sinners that flee to You for refuge, for there is no sin, O compassionate Lord, that can overcome Your love for mankind.

O blessed and holy Gregory, you planted the dogmas of Orthodoxy and cut down the thorns of heresy. With your words you watered the seed of the Faith, making it grow, and as a diligent farmer you brought to God wheat which had increased a hundredfold.

In this season of abstinence, O Christ, You have shone as a light on those that walk in the darkness of sin. Bring us to the holy day of Your Passion, that we may cry to You: "Arise, O God, and have mercy on us!"



St. Gregory Palamas

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church
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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM
March 8, 2020



Healing of the Paralytic

Second Sunday of Great Lent
Sunday of the Relics
Commemoration of St Gregory Palamas

Antiphon (2nd)

1: Be gracious to us, O God, and bless us; let Your face shine upon us, and have mercy on us.

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

2: That Your name may be known upon the earth, among all the nations Your salvation.

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

3: Let all the peoples praise You, O God, let all the peoples praise You.

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

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 6 , Pg. 41)

The angelic Powers were around Your tomb, and the guards became as dead; and Mary stood at the tomb seeking Your spotless body; then You despoiled Hades without being tried by it, and You met the Virgin, O Bestower of Life. O Lord, who rose from the dead, Glory to You.

Troparion for the Second Sunday of Great Lent (Tone 2)

O 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 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 Thessalonica and preacher of grace: pray without ceasing for the salvation of 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)

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 every kind of danger so that we may cry out to you: Hail, O Bride ever-Virgin!

Forgiveness in the Body of Christ

When the disciples marveled at the healings and miracles wrought by Christ during His earthly ministry, He promised them, “*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to my Father*” (Jn 14:12). Among other things, Christ has empowered the Church as His Body to continue proclaiming the remission of sins in His name. This ministry is executed in a number of expressions by which we can experience God’s forgiveness in our life. To the degree that we enter into them, we will find our lives centering on God to a greater degree. In our Tradition the following are emphasized:

Daily Prayer for Repentance, particularly the Jesus Prayer – The morning and evening prayers prescribed by the Church includes prayers of repentance. The most basic of these is the Jesus Prayer: “*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.*” God surely hears these prayers when offered from a contrite heart.

Regular Self-Reflection – Periodic, even daily, self-examination helps us to see the direction of our lives. Our entire existence should be lived in the light of the Holy Spirit. Honest self-examination helps us see the degree in which our lives are conformed to Christ’s.

A Relationship with a Confessor/Spiritual Father – Each person is in a different place in his or her journey. We may on occasion find thoughts in the Scriptures or Fathers that touch our hearts, but finding someone who knows you and knows the ways of Holy Tradition is like taking a giant step in the Christian life. The fullest dimension of spiritual guidance involves sharing our thoughts and yearnings, not just our sins, with this spiritual guide.

The Eucharist and the Remission of Sins – Several times during the Divine Liturgy we are reminded that the Eucharist is given to us “for the remission of sins.” To receive this gift we must approach “*discerning the body,*” as St Paul says: sensing the depths of this mystery and our unworthiness to take part in it. And so before receiving we say the prayer “I believe, Lord and profess,” specifically asking for the pardon of our offences, the deliberate and the indeliberate, whether committed knowingly or inadvertently – so that we may receive the remission of sins and eternal life in this mystery.

Observing the Church’s Fasts – The Fasts are another liturgical expression of repentance. Rearranging our lives in obedience to the Church’s weekly and seasonal Fasts is a most practical way of affirming our commitment to life in Christ, a daily reminder that “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*” (Mt 4:4).

Confession: The Mystery of Repentance – This is the sacramental expression of repentance. This mystery appeared in Christian history when people first realized that they had reneged on their baptismal commitment in a serious way. Confession was this considered a “second baptism,” a starting over in the Christian life. Over the centuries, it became more widely used and is considered appropriate today whenever a person feels the need of it, particularly:

When serious sin has been committed;

When a habitual sin has overwhelmed the Christian;

When a Christian has stopped growing spiritually and needs a reorientation of priorities.

Forgive Others to be Forgiven

Perhaps the most difficult part of seeking forgiveness is the one mandated by the Lord: “*And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses*” (Mk 11:25). God’s forgiveness is for all; but it is only possible to those who forgive others in turn.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today

+Agnes Esper, Evgenia Georges. Requested by Lauri Moosa & Michael Georges. Coffee Hour sponsored by Lauri & Michael

March 15

+Charles Welsh. Requested by Antoinette Arraj

March 22

+Charles Welsh (40 Day memorial). Requested by his family. Coffee Hour sponsored by the family

LENTEN MISSION

We will have a Lenten Mission on Saturday **March 14** from **10:00AM to 3:00PM**. The day will begin by praying the Third Hour and end with the Ninth Hour. Rt. Rev. Philip Razcka will be our speaker. Fr. Philip is currently the rector of the Annunciation Cathedral and proto-synchellos of the Melkite Eparchy of Newton.

Lenten lunch will be served.

Please join us for this time of prayer, learning, and fellowship!



Welcome to those who are visiting today. We are happy to have you worship with us. If this is your first time here, please come downstairs to the Hall, introduce yourself, have some refreshments, and get to know the Community. If you have any questions about the Melkite Church and its traditions, please don't hesitate to ask Fr. Bryan.

Weddings — One year notice. Contact Fr. Bryan for Sacramental Preparation.

Baptisms — One month notice. Contact Fr. Bryan for Sacramental Preparation.

Please let Fr. Bryan know about anyone who is sick, in the hospital, or homebound so that he can visit and bring them the Eucharist on a regular basis.

On the Second Sunday of Great Lent, we remember the martyrs, those “victorious witnesses of the Lord” who gave their lives for the Faith. If we have relics of the martyrs, we make a procession with them on this Sunday. Learning about the martyrs would have been part of the catechumens’ education as they prepared to enter the Church. Some martyrs were bishops, priests, or deacons. Others were monks. Many were lay men and women who refused to deny their faith no matter what trials and tortures they endured.

There have been martyrs in every generation. There are martyrs today; men and women who confess Christ at the risk of their lives. This morning, let us remember these faithful men and women who risked all for “crowns of victory.”

We also commemorate St. Gregory Palamas, a fourteenth century monk and Archbishop of Thessalonica. The Church’s acceptance of his teachings on hesychasm, the “prayer of the heart”, is considered a second “Triumph of Orthodoxy”. As we commemorated the restoration of the icons last Sunday as the first Triumph of Orthodoxy, let us today remember St. Gregory Palamas and his teaching as the second. St. Gregory’s teaching says that God, “unapproachable in His Essence reveals Himself through His energies, which are directed towards the world and are able to be perceived, like the light of Tabor, but which are neither material nor created.”

Holy Father Gregory Palamas, intercede for us!

Taking Away the Sins of the World

THERE ARE MANY DESCRIPTIVE TITLES ascribed to Christ in Scripture and in the Tradition of the ancient Churches. He is portrayed as the Prince of Peace, the Good Shepherd, the Great High Priest, the Bread of life and so much more. Perhaps the most frequently heard of these depictions is the one which ends most of our liturgical services: “He is gracious and the Lover of mankind.”

Possibly the most important characteristic in Christ’s love for mankind is portrayed in St Mark’s description of the healing of the paralytic (Mk 2:1-12). He assures the sick man, “*Son, your sins are forgiven you*” (v. 5). The reaction of the scribes was unspoken but clear: “*Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?*” (v.7)

Feeding the hungry or helping the downtrodden are acts of love which anyone can perform, believer or unbeliever. God, however, has the monopoly on forgiving sins! That Christ proclaims the forgiveness of sins seems to equate Him with God, which the Jewish leaders saw as blasphemy.

Not only does Christ proclaim the forgiveness of sin: He does so by His word alone! In Jewish practice, one had to submit to some sort of ritual in order to convey the need to be cleansed of sin. Before the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70, the Jews had a complex system of sacrifices expressing repentance and atonement for anything which they saw as rendering them unfit to stand in worship before the Lord. Depending on their status or ability, people would offer unblemished animals or birds to be killed and burned upon the altar, at least in part, their blood sprinkled before the holy place as a plea for mercy. On the annual Day of Atonement, a bull and a goat would be sacrificed by the High Priest for his sins and the offences of the entire nation.

John the Forerunner also practiced a rite to express repentance. As he described it, “*I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance*” (Mt 3:11). Christ stands in stark contrast to the priests and prophets of Israel: by His word alone He forgives sin. Nothing is needed other than faith in Him!

With His Own Blood

The forgiveness which Christ accorded to the paralytic, to the sinful woman who wept at His feet (see Lk 7:36-50) and to others during His earthly ministry is made available to the whole world by His death and resurrection. Throughout the New Testament we see the imagery of the temple sacrifices used to explain Christ as the One who forgives. St John the Forerunner proclaims Him to his own followers as “*the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*” (Jn 1:29). St Paul calls Christ’s death “*propitiation by His blood*” (Rom 3:25). “*We were reconciled to God through the death of His Son,*” Paul teaches (Rom 5:10). God, Paul tells us, “*...made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him*” (2 Cor 5:21).

The most developed expression of Christ as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins is found in the Epistle to the Hebrews. There, after a lengthy description of the temple and its priesthood, we read, “*Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood, He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having attained eternal redemption*” (Heb 9:11-12). He is both the High Priest and the sacrifice who, once for all, restores mankind as fitting priests of God on earth.

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.

Reader: 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; 2:1-4

Alleluia Verses

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

Verse: For You have said: “My kindness is established forever.” In Heaven You have confirmed Your faithfulness.

Gospel: Mk 2:1-12

Hirmos: In you, O full of grace...

LENTEN SERVICE SCHEDULE FOR THIRD WEEK OF LENT

Wed. 3/11 - Presanctified Liturgy - 7:00PM

Fri. 3/13 - Compline & Akathist - 7:00PM

Sun. 3/15 - Third Sunday of Great Lent, The Sunday of the Cross. Procession at the end of the Divine Liturgy.