

SECOND SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST
SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS



Icon of Healing the Paralytic



February 25, 2018

**SECOND SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST – ST. GREGORY PALAMAS
OUR HOLY FATHER TARASIIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE**

TONE 5

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY 26 – MARCH 4

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

6:30 PM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

FRIDAY, MARCH 2

9:30 AM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

**SATURDAY, MARCH 3 – 3RD ALL SOULS SATURDAY; THE HOLY MARTYR EUTROPIUS AND HIS COMPANIONS,
CLEONICUS AND BASILISCUS**

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy followed by Panakhyda

6:30 PM – Great Vespers for Sunday (satisfies Sunday obligation)

**SUNDAY, MARCH 4 – THIRD SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST (VENERATION OF THE CROSS)
OUR VENERABLE FATHER GERASIMUS OF THE JORDAN**

8:45 AM – Divine Praises

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

On the occasion of obtaining property for a new church, Fathers Richard Janowicz, Yaroslav Mendyuk, and Mykola Buryadnyk will be visiting our parish from March 9-11. Although Father Richard will only be here one day, Father Buryadnyk (Syncellus for the Office of Development and Planning) and Father Mendyuk (Syncellus for the Office of Legal Affairs and Finances) will be staying on through Sunday Liturgy on the 11th. They are looking forward to meeting and praying with all of us.

St. Gregory Palamas wrote this prayer for priests and I would ask that you make this part of your daily prayer. Pray for priests that you know as they minister daily to God's people.

O Lord Jesus Christ, enkindle the hearts of all Your priests with the fire of zealous love for You, that they may ever seek Your glory; Give them strength that they may labor unceasingly in Your earthly vineyard for the salvation of our souls and the glory of Your All-Honorable and Majestic Name: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Source: Fr. Peter Preble

FLOWER COLLECTION

Special envelopes are available in the back of the church do help with the purchase of flowers for the Feast of Pascha.

Looking Ahead:

- ❖ March 3rd – 3rd All Souls Saturday
- ❖ March 4th – Sunday of the Holy Cross
- ❖ March 10th – 4th All Souls Saturday
- ❖ March 17th – Akathist Saturday
- ❖ March 24th – Lazarus Saturday
- ❖ March 25th – Annunciation & Flowery Sunday

- ❖ March 28th – Holy Wednesday
- ❖ March 29th – Holy Thursday
- ❖ March 30th – Great and Holy Friday
- ❖ March 31st – Great and Holy Saturday
- ❖ April 1st – Pascha

COMMEMORATION OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

Bishop Basil Losten, *Our Paschal Pilgrimage*

The second Sunday of Lent is kept as a feast of St. Gregory Palamas, the Archbishop of Thessalonika in the fourteenth century. Like the restoration of the Holy Icons, this memorial of St. Gregory has to do with historical events, but also relates to our understanding of the Christian vocation, and the possibility of every Christian to achieve genuine holiness. St. Gregory taught that all Christians are called to union with God, which is the object of the Christian life.

St. Gregory was a great ascetic, and a great master of the monastic life, but he teaches that this invitation to union with God is open to every Christian. This is the challenge of Lent, but that challenge faces us all year round. Likewise this is a challenge of monasticism but not just for the monks and nuns. The Holy Father has expressed it very well: "... in the East, monasticism was not seen merely as a separate condition, proper to a precise

category of Christians, but rather a reference point for all the baptized, according to the gifts offered to each by the Lord; it was presented as a symbolic synthesis of Christianity."

St. Gregory Palamas himself has enjoyed an increasing popularity in the past fifty years or so. His spiritual theology is not absolutely binding, but he is an important and influential figure in patristic spirituality. At one time, St. Gregory's ideas were highly controversial, and his memorial was removed from our liturgical books after the Synod of Zamost'. But with the recent profound studies of St.



Gregory, and the deeper appreciation of the Christian East, the Holy See has restored St. Gregory's memorial on the Second Sunday of Great Lent. Our own Patriarch Joseph Slipyj made a strong and positive contribution to this restoration of St. Gregory Palamas to Catholic liturgical practice.

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GET REAL FOR LENT

February 24, 2018 · Fr. Stephen Freeman

According to St. Basil, God is the “only truly Existing.” Our own existence is a gift from God who is our Creator. None of us has “self-existing” life. We exist because God sustains us in existence – in Him we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28).

Sin is the rejection of this gift of God – a movement away from true existence.

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Much of our attention in the modern world is engaged seemingly with things that have no “true existence.” We engage with illusions, with digital constructs. Our economy allows us to escape the normal necessities such as seasonal scarcity or other mundane concerns. We are increasingly removed from the very environment in which we naturally live.

It is said that astronauts, after spending a prolonged time in space, have lingering effects of zero-gravity. Our bodies are made for gravity and require its constant pull for everything from muscle tone to bone density. But we now live in situations in which many forms of natural “gravity” have been reduced or removed. What effect does the long-term ability to have almost any food at any time of year have on the human body? As someone who has spent the better part of my life at a desk, I can attest to the effect of a sedentary existence. My lower back, my range of motion, the flexibility of my joints are all consistent with the modern white-collar worker.

What effect do such things have on the soul? For the soul requires “gravity” as well. Plato stated in his Republic, that all children should learn to play a musical instrument because music was required for the right development of the soul. We give far too little thought to such things, assuming that no matter what environment we live in, our inherent freedom of choice remains unscathed and we can always decide to do something different, or be something different.

I could decide to run a marathon tomorrow, but I know that the first quarter-mile would leave me gasping for breath and exhausted. You cannot go from 40 years at a desk to the demands of a marathon – *just because you choose to do so.*

And so we come to Great Lent.

Some see this season of the year as a spiritual marathon. They rise from their sedentary spiritual lives, set off in a sprint and fail before the first week is out. The failure comes in anger, self-recrimination, even despondency.

The first year that I “chose” to fast in the Orthodox manner (it was 4 years before I was received into the Church), the priest I discussed the fast with said, “You can’t keep the fast.” I argued with him until I realized his wisdom.

“Do something easier,” he told me. “Just give up red meat.”

“What about chicken?” I asked.

“Nope. Eat chicken. Eat everything except beef and pork. And pray a little more.”

And so I returned to my Anglican life, a little disappointed that my zeal had made such a poor impression. But my family accepted the proposal and we ate no red meat for Lent. It was, in hindsight, the best Lent my family had ever had. No longer were we musing over “what to give up for Lent,” and instead accepted a discipline that was given to us.

In subsequent years that same priest (who is now my godfather) increased the discipline. And we were ready for it. It is interesting to me, however, that my first experience of an Orthodox fast was being told not to be so strict. The “strict” part was learning to do what I was told. That is sometimes the most difficult fast of all.

Lent is a time to “get real.” Not eating some things is actually normal. In our modern world we have to embrace a natural “gravity” that we could easily leave behind – at least, we have to do this if we want to avoid an atrophy of the soul.

In 2000, the average American ate 180 pounds of meat a year (and 15 pounds of

fish and shellfish). That was roughly a third more than in 1959. Scarcity is not an issue in our diet. Our abundance is simply “not real,” and the environment frequently shows the marks of the artificial nature of our food supply. But we have no way of studying what is going on with our souls. What I know to be true is that – as goes the body – so goes the soul. Those who engage the world as consumer are being consumed by the world to an equal measure.

And so we get real.

Getting real means accepting limits and boundaries. Our culture is a bubble of make-believe. It rests on an economy of over-consumption. The crash of 2008 came close to a much greater disaster and could have easily gone into free-fall. Many fail to understand just how fragile our lives truly are. In the season of Lent (and on all the fasting days of the year) we embrace the fragility of our lives. We allow the world to say “no” and take on extra burdens and duties. It is worth keeping in mind that such things do not make us spiritual heroes, first they have to make us human.

Sunday offering for February 11		Sunday offering for February 18	
Amount	Number	Amount	Number
\$5.00	1	\$20.00	5
\$15.00	1	\$25.00	2
\$20.00	7	\$30.00	1
\$30.00	1	\$40.00	2
\$40.00	2	\$75.00	1
\$50.00	3	\$100.00	2
\$75.00	1	\$105.00	1
\$100.00	1	<hr/>	
105.00	1	\$680.00	
\$150.00	1		
<hr/> \$300.00	1		
\$1150.00			
Parishioner Total:	\$1130.00	Parishioner Total:	\$640.00
Visitor Total:	\$20.00	Visitor Total:	40.00
Average / parish household (43):	\$17.12	Average / parish household (43):	\$9.70
Weekly Stewardship Goal:	\$2200.00	Weekly Stewardship Goal:	\$2200.00
Deficit:	<\$1070.00>	Deficit:	<\$1560.00>

Проповідь на Другу Неділю Великого Посту

Друга неділя Великого Посту має окрему назву «Неділя Розслабленого». Євангельське читання цієї неділі є надзвичайно повчальне і по-своєму колоритне. Кожен, хто слухає і читає уривок Євангелія Марка, дуже легко може уявити все, що відбувалося в Капернаумі, домі, у якому замішав Ісус Христос після того, як був охрищений у Йордані від Івана.

Початок проповіді Ісуса Христа мав великий успіх. Свої слова про Царство Боже він підсилював знаками цього Царства, тобто чудами та зціленнями. Уривок Євангелія Марка про оздоровлення розслабленого переносить нас далеко назад і робить нас свідками незвичної події. Дуже багато людей настільки загорілися словами Ісусової проповіді, що увійшли до Його дому, повністю заповнивши приміщення. Не кожен з присутніх у домі був відкритий на слухання. Багато хто, чийм обов'язком мало б стати слухання, насправді хотіли лише одного – підловити Ісуса на слові чи вчинку. Раптом голос Ісуса перекирав неслухачів шум зверху: на голови присутніх посипалася глина, якою перемашували пшви на дерев'яній стелі єврейських будинків. Далі більше. На очах усіх присутніх на мотузках спускають ложе і чоловіка на ньому. Нечувана наглість! Без жодного запрошення, дозволу, в такий брутальний спосіб вриватися до дому знаменитого проповідника, де було присутньо на слуханні стільки поважних людей: фарисеїв, законовчителів та ін. Можемо собі лише уявити обурення, яке охопило всіх присутніх. Але у домі була одна людина, яка не бачила в цьому наглості, яка не звертала уваги на пилюку, глину, не зважала на обурення присутніх. Ця особа бачила одне: велику віру кількох чоловіків, що скупчилися над отвором у стелі і з цікавістю заглядали зверху. Окрім Ісуса, цього ніхто не міг зауважити. Дивно, але Ісус навіть не вступає в діалог з розслабленим, як зазвичай робив з тими, хто потребував оздоровлення. Йому для чуда вистачило віри тих, кого по праву можна назвати

друзями. «Встань, візьми своє ложе і йди!», каже Ісус розслабленому. Легко сказати, але важко зробити. Це ж треба не просто встати, але кожного зрушити з місця, пропихаючись із ложем до виходу. З розслабленим зарухався весь дім, супроводжуючи його хтось викриками радості і здивування, а від когось, можливо, отримавши і стусана чи дорікання. Дорікання стосувалося не лише того, хто виходив з дому, не знаючи, що з ним відбувається. Дорікання стосувалися також Ісуса. Як посмів він сказати: «Прощаються всі гріхи твої!»? Кого він із себе робить. Для Ісуса людська невдяка і заскоружливість серця не є чимось новим. Як можна було недобачити того зв'язку, що існував між словами Ісуса про прощення гріхів і тим, що чоловік встав, взяв ложе і вийшов. Причини його паралічу крилися у духовній площині. Ісус усунувши причину хвороби, гріх, сказав розслабленому встати і вийти. Для людини, яка слухала Ісуса перед цим з відкритим серцем, не було нічого незрозумілого. Ті ж, що не хотіли чути, не могли і добачити того, ким насправді він є.

У цій всій історії є чимало того, що зробило б наше духовне життя дійсно іншим. Серед нас є багато людей, що потребують сторонньої допомоги, щоб зустрітися з Ісусом. Інколи наша з вами допомога таким людям є просто необхідна. Не потрібно зважати на когось, перейматися другорядними речами, а йти до цілі з вірою, нехай часом комусь це здасться незвичним. Можливо, бачачи нашу віру, тих, хто «розбирають стелю» Господь змінить життя дорогій нам людині. Також і ми можемо бути «розслабленими» духовно. Просімо інших людей молитися за нас. Можливо бачачи чийсь віру, Ісус нам дарує свою благодать.

Не забуваймо і про гріх, що паралізовує нас духовно. Спішімо до Тайни Покаяння, де постаємо перед Богом «лежачими на ложі і в духовному бруді». Той, хто простив гріхи розслабленому, зробить здоровими і нас. Людина, яка отримала від Господа якийсь дарунок, завжди створює

замішання в душах інших людей. Хтось починає більше вірити, а хтось нарікатиме на Ісуса. Наш приклад і доказ зустрічі з Ісусом, наше „ложе”, може зачіпати не одного навколо. Але лише віруюча людина за цей „дотик” дякуватиме Ісусу.

У часі Великого посту завдяки розповіді про оздоровлення розслабленого, перед нами стоїть потрійне завдання. Якщо біля нас є хтось, хто є духовно розслаблений, допомогти принаймні своєю молитвою „розібрати стелю божого дому” і поставити потреби нашого ближнього перед Ісусом.

Також добачити своє розслаблення та дозволити комусь, довіритися комусь, хто зможе „спустити нас” до Ісуса. І, наостанок, знайти у собі сили за допомогою посту та молитви покинути „ложе, на якому ми розпластані горілиць,” покаювшись від своєї духовної скверни.

У цю неділю вартує також подякувати тим, хто є нашими друзями. Можливо, завдяки комусь ми стали на шлях спасіння, відбулася наша особиста зустріч із Спасителем. Таким друзям маємо обов’язок бути вдячними протягом усього нашого життя.

SATAN ANNOUNCES A NEW PLAN TO ADVANCE HIS WORK

– *An anonymous source*

Satan called a worldwide convention. In his opening address to his evil angels, he said, "We can't keep Christians from going to church. We can't keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth."

"We can't even keep them from conservative values. But we can do something else. We can keep them from forming an intimate, abiding experience in Christ. If they gain that connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken. So let them go to church. Let them have their conservative lifestyles. But steal their time so they can't gain that experience in Jesus Christ."

"But how shall we do this?" shouted one of his angels.

"Keep them busy in the non-essentials of life and invent numerous schemes to occupy their minds," he answered. "Tempt them to spend, spend, spend, then borrow, borrow, borrow. Convince them to work 6-7 days a week, 10-12 hours a day, so they can afford their lifestyles. Keep them from spending time with their children. As their families fragment, soon their homes will offer no escape from the pressures of work."

"Over-stimulate their minds so they cannot hear that still small voice. Entice them to play the radio or MP3 player whenever they drive, to keep the TV, the DVD, Netflix, their CDs going constantly in their homes. And see to it that every store and restaurant

in the world plays music constantly. This will jam their minds and break that union with Christ."

"Fill their coffee tables with magazines and newspapers. Pound their minds with the news 24 hours a day and invade their driving moments with billboards. Flood their mailboxes with junk mail, sweepstakes, catalogs, and every kind of newsletter and promotional offering free products, services and false hopes. Even in their recreation, let them be excessive. Have them return from it exhausted, disquieted and unprepared for the coming week."

"Don't let them go out in nature. Send them to amusement parks, sporting events, concerts and movies instead. And when they meet for spiritual fellowship, involve them in gossip and small talk so that they leave with troubled consciences and unsettled emotion. Let them be involved in soul-winning. But crowd their lives with so many good causes they have no time to seek power from Christ. Soon they will be working in their own strength, sacrificing their health and family unity for the good of the cause."

Well, in the end it was quite a convention. The evil angels went eagerly to their assignments, causing the Christians everywhere to get busy, busy, busy and rush here and there.

Has the devil been successful in his scheme? You be the judge.



**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква
Святого Йоана Хрестителя
St. John the Baptizer
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

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You are Forgiven and Healed

In Capernaum Jesus is surrounded by great numbers of people. As He preaches to the crowd, four friends of a paralyzed man lower him on his mat through the roof so that he can be close enough for Jesus to see him and cure him. Jesus responds to this act of faith, not by healing the man immediately, but by touching off the first of a series of controversial dialogues with the Scribes and Pharisees. When Jesus says, "Child, your sins are forgiven," He is as much as saying, "It is God whom you approach." In the Old Testament, only God is capable of forgiving sins; and it was expected that He would do so only at the end of time. It becomes clear why the Scribes murmur "he is blaspheming" and why Jesus brings it all out in the open. His claim to be able to forgive sins better reveals His identity as Son of God than do the miracles He performs.

Aware of the silent censure His forgiving word has caused in the crowd, Jesus proceeds to prove that "the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth" by commanding the man to rise and walk in the sight of everyone. In concluding this miracle, Mark asks his readers to praise God for His presence in their midst as the forgiver-healer, just as the crowd did, even in the face of those who did not believe.

It is significant that Mark has chosen to present this miracle and teaching about Jesus' power to forgive sins so early in his Gospel drama. It shows that the need for the experience of God's forgiveness was as important to first-century Christians as it is today. Mark's readers praise God for saying clearly, and even today, "My sons, my daughters, I absolve you from your sins."