

Second Thursday of Lent

Thursday@7 for March 17, 2022

The Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

Prepared by Fr. George Tsahakis

OVERVIEW

St. Gregory Palamas

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Father Nicholas Triantafilou

Before our Lord embarked on His public ministry, following His baptism, He withdrew to the wilderness for 40 days of prayer and fasting. In our modern thinking, it might have made more sense for Jesus to ride the wave of popularity inaugurated at His baptism – when the heavens opened, the Spirit descended upon Him, and the Father’s voice proclaimed, “This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased” – and immediately begin His teaching. But our Lord knew that God’s will could only be fully accomplished after His own silence and preparation.

When we make the time to experience God in a personal way, then we are equipped to present God and His will in the world through our actions.



Great Lent is a journey of preparation for us. Before we can go out and live our Christian faith, we too are called to descend to a place of inner stillness in prayer and fasting. St. Gregory Palamas, whom we commemorate this second Sunday of Great Lent, is a spiritual giant of ascetic discipline and acquiring this “inner stillness” or “silence” called hesychasm.



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

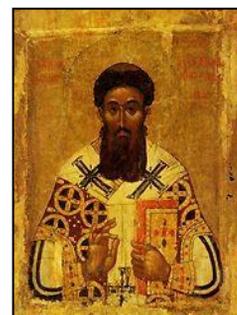
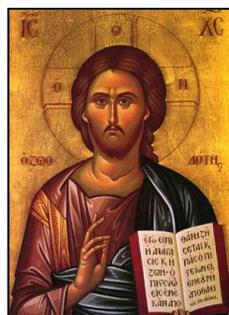
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: www.patriarchate.org

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website: www.goarch.org

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website: www.atlmetropolis.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website: www.saintchristopherhoc.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church



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Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, Chancellor

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, March 20, 2022

ON THIS DAY, THE SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT AND HOLY LENT, WE CALL TO MIND OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS, GREGORY PALAMAS, ARCHBISHOP OF THESSALONIKI (+1360). (*SEE TRIODION INSERT INSIDE.*) WE ALSO COMMEMORATE Righteous Fathers slain at the Monastery of St. Savas; Myron the New Martyr of Crete; Cuthbert the Wonderworker, Bishop of Lindisfarne; and Photini the Samaritan Woman. *Through their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.*

Thank You for Your Understanding

We welcome our parishioners who are attending services in person today and we also welcome those who are viewing our online video streaming at home. According to new CDC guidelines, indoor mask mandates are being relaxed for those areas of the US where hospitals are not greatly impacted by COVID-19 cases. In response, His Eminence

Metropolitan Alexios on March 2nd wrote to the Metropolis of Atlanta faithful offering His guidance. [Please read it by clicking here.](#)

As before, those who continue to wear masks have every right to do so, whether or not our parish falls into a low or medium risk area. Whether others continue to wear masks for the sake of their friends or family, or even out of caution for their own health, their decisions should be respected as demonstrations of Christ-like love. May our collective intercessions to our Creator help to bring a spirit of healing and peace to our world.

Please consider that only baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians in canonical good standing may approach for Holy Communion. All are invited to partake of the Antidoron ("instead of the gifts") distributed at the conclusion of today's Divine Liturgy.

TODAY'S Spiritual Theme From the Triodion:

Since 1268, the *Second Sunday of Lent* is dedicated to the memory of *St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessaloniki* (1296-1359). This commemoration forms a continuation of last Sunday's celebration: Gregory's victory over the *heretics* of his time is seen by the Church as a renewed triumph of Orthodoxy.

SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE

1./2. Resurrectional Hymn (Plagal of the 2nd Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.118-121):

It is sung *before* and *after* the Small Entrance: The angelic powers appeared at Your tomb, the soldiers guarding it became as dead men, and Mary stood at Your grave seeking Your most pure body. But You made hell a captive; You were untouched by its might. You came to the Virgin and granted life. O Lord, Who rose from the dead, glory to You.

3. Hymn Commemorating St. Gregory Palamas – (Hymnal-pp.132-135):

It is sung after the Small Entrance. O light of Orthodoxy, O pillar of strength and teacher of the Church! Glory of monks and nuns, and of theologians the protector invincible! O wonderworker Gregory, pride of Thessalonika and preacher of grace, intercede without ceasing for the salvation of our souls.

4. Hymn Commemorating St. Christopher – (see music distributed):

It is sung after the Small Entrance: Made comely with garments woven from your venerable blood, you stand before the Lord, the King of Heaven and earth, O famed Martyr Christopher. With the choirs of Angels and the Martyrs you chant, singing the thrice-holy hymn and most awesome praises. Thus, by your intercessions with God, save us, your servants.

5. Kontakion sung for Lenten Sundays – (Hymnal-pp. 268-271):

It is sung after the Small Entrance: Victorious Lady, mighty champion, defending us, we your servants now inscribe to you this hymn of thanks, for you rescued us from suffering and tribulation. Theotokos, with your power that can never fail, keep us safe from every danger our whole life long that we may cry to you: Rejoice, O Bride unwedded.

6. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (Hymnal-pp. 298-301):

On the first five Sundays of Great Lent when we use the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, a different hymn is sung instead of “Axion Estin” or “Truly it is proper to call you blessed...”: In you, O woman full of grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of angels and the race of mankind. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virginal souls, from you our God was incarnate and became a child, He who is God from all ages. By making your womb His throne He made you more spacious than all the heavens. In you, O woman full of grace all creation rejoices. Glory to you.

SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY

<p>The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">– St. John Chrysostom</p>
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Gospel Reading During Orthros Service (Luke 24:36-53)

While they were talking about this, Jesus Himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and terrified, and thought that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at My hands and My feet; see that it is I Myself. Touch Me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." And when He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, He said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and He took it and ate in their presence. Then He said to them, "These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about Me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." Then He led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up His hands, He blessed them. While He was blessing them, He withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

Epistle Reading During Divine Liturgy (Hebrews 1:10-2:3)

And, "In the beginning, Lord, You founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands; they will perish, but You remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak You will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will never end." But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet"? Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation? Therefore we must pay greater attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. For if the message declared through angels was valid, and every transgression or disobedience received a just penalty, how can we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? It was declared at first through the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard Him,

Gospel Reading During Divine Liturgy (Mark 2:1-12)

When He returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that He was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door; and He was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to Him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the

roof above him; and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" At once Jesus perceived in His spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves; and He said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk'? But so 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, stand up, take your mat and go to your home." And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE (TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):

“When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven.’” (Mark 2:5)

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

With so much unrest in the world, Fr. George shares a timely monastic perspective from Archimandrite Zacharias Zacharou. He is a disciple of Elder Sophrony (of blessed memory), who was a disciple of St. Silouan of Mount Athos. Fr. Zacharias has been for forty years a monk in the Monastery founded by Elder Sophrony: The Patriarchal Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, Tolleshunt Knights by Maldon, Essex, England. It is reprinted from <https://pemptousia.com> (March 14, 2022).

What should we keep in mind and do in the current political situation?

“We do not know everything about the conflicts of this world, nor is it necessary to know. We just pray with a compassionate heart for the peace of the world and for all. We do not take sides, because each side will be responsible for crimes, and we do not want to share in these crimes and be condemned. If we pray for those who are more wrong than right, well, we

perform the commandment to love even enemies. And if we pray for those who are more right than wrong, we do well. Therefore, we cannot go wrong if we pray that God save all and grant peace to the world.



Especially for us, priests and monks, it is very important not to be political at all, because we offer our sacrifice to God, the Holy Liturgy, for the whole world; and if we are for some and against others, our sacrifice is annulled. I think that when there is a war, the

best is not to be judgmental, but to have compassion and pray that the Lord may spare all from suffering. If my Liturgy is to have any value, no one should be missing from my heart when I stand before the altar of God and say to Him, 'Thine own of Thine own, we offer unto Thee, in all and for all.'"



["Follow" & "Like" our Facebook page.](#) *Be sure to check our status for updates and photos.*

On this the 898TH Sunday of our St. Christopher's parish community, we continue to thank each of you for your presence and support. Although it may seem like we are just a handful of men, women, and children, if we commit ourselves to serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we will experience the miracle of growth as the Holy Spirit brings others into His service to help us build His new church in the Peachtree City, Georgia, area for the glory of God!

COMMUNITY SCHEDULE *(CHECK WEB CALENDAR FOR MORE...)*

Sunday, March 20th (2nd Sunday of Great Lent – Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas):

7:30 am Orthros Service

9:00 am Divine Liturgy

10:45 am Religious Education Classes *(for all ages)*

11:30 am Philoptochos General Meeting

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2022

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 13th	 <i>TRIODION WEEKS</i> Publican and the Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3: 10-15 Gospel: Luke 18: 10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 20th	 The Prodigal Son Returns! Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6: 12-20 Gospel: Luke 15: 11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare FEBRUARY 27th FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	 The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8: 8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25: 31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare MARCH 6th FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	 Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13: 11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent MARCH 13th	 SUNDAY OF ORTHODOXY Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 20th	 ST GREGORY PALAMAS Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent MARCH 27th	 VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4: 14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8: 34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bowl
4th Sunday of Lent APRIL 3rd	 ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9: 17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent APRIL 10th	 ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9: 11-14 Gospel: Mark 10: 32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! APRIL 17th GREAT WEEK BEGINS	 <i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Epistle: Philippians 4: 4-9 Gospel: John 12: 1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 22nd	 GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! APRIL 24th NO FASTING!	 <i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: Jan 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!



*All Sundays in March:
Bloom Our Youth in
Fayetteville, Georgia*



***Hands of Love* will be accepting monetary and in-kind donations to benefit *Bloom Our Youth* through March 2022**



Bloom Our Youth is a shelter, a resource and a foster agency finding homes for neglected and abused children. Founded in 1986 as the Fayette Youth Protection Homes by **airline pilot Jim Friday** when he discovered there was no shelter for abused children. At ***Bloom our youth***, support is provided to children and their families through counseling and advisors.

- **Bloom Foster Parent Program** is licensed to recruit, train, and support a network of family foster care homes
- **Bloom Closet** is stocked with lightly worn clothing in child and youth sizes
- **Bloom University** trains and supports foster families

There is a year-round need for new backpacks, school supplies and toiletry items. Each child is given a backpack as a welcome gift upon joining the Bloom program. You may bring your donations to the **red "Hands of Love" box** in the church narthex, or donate online at:

<https://stchristopherphiloptochos.square.site>

<https://saintchristopherhoc.org/hands-of-love-ministry>

Faithfully yours,

Anna Andreeva-Naydenova, "Hands of Love" Philoptochos Ministry Chair

The Desert Fathers say, "A man who cannot be silent has nothing to say." In this silence, we drown out the noise of the world; we find peace; we gain strength; we listen to the voice of God; we are illumined with the Mt. Tabor light within ourselves; and, as St. Gregory Palamas argues, we experience God Himself.

Our Lord said, "Be still, and know that I am God." Great Lent reminds us to stop scurrying around and being anxious like Martha and to concentrate on the "one needful thing" like Mary. When we make the time to experience God in a personal way – when we take our own 40-day sojourn in the wilderness – then we are equipped to present God and His will in the world through our actions. We prepare during Great Lent to die with Christ so that we may share in His resurrection and be little "Christs" to the world.

FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read the reflection above with your family. To help you apply its message to your daily lives, discuss the following questions:

1. Identify barriers to finding time to pray and fast during Great Lent. Seek family consensus on how to succeed and work together to overcome them.
2. What ways can we drown out the unnecessary and unimportant noise of the world that keeps us from living our Christian faith?

3. Explain what "silence" means in the context of Psalm 46:10: "Be still, and know that I am God".
 4. What does it mean to be a "Mary" or a "Martha"? Why does it matter?
 5. Explain how Great Lent benefits Christians just like Jesus' stay in the desert for 40 days following His baptism and before His public ministry.
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FOR FURTHER REFLECTION



Our youth will grow up knowing and teaching their children the transformative and restorative power of our Lenten practices. How? By us, their family and parishioners modeling our own dependence on God through our actions and speech. What have we taught them so far these first two weeks of Great Lent? What else could we strive to be teaching them? Be specific...

Fr. Nicholas Triantafilou's message is reprinted from "Spiritual Reflections for Great Lent: Journey to Pascha" for IOCC. Discussion questions were developed by Fr. George Tsahakis for St. Christopher Church. Share this resource with your family and friends. Come and worship God with us often. Offer charity to those in need. Witness the power and presence of God to the world through your loving acts of mercy in His behalf. Commune with Him and His Holy Body as His Royal Priesthood. Amen.