

St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church of the San Fernando Valley
a Parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
16643 Vanowen Street; Van Nuys, California; 91406 stmichaelvannuys.org

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The Second Sunday of Great Lent

Commemoration of St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica;

Venerable Hilarion the New; Apostle Herodion of the Seventy;

Venerable Stephen of Triglia

Sunday, March 28, 2021

Tone 1; Eothinon 9

Apolytikion of the Resurrection (Tone 1)

While the stone was sealed by the Jews, and the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst arise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. For which cause the heavenly powers cried aloud unto Thee, O giver of life. Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ, glory to Thy kingdom, glory to Thy providence, O Thou Who alone art the lover of mankind.

Apolytikion of St. Gregory Palamas (Tone 8)

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 our Patron the Archangel Michael (Tone 4)

O ye foremost of the heavenly hosts we beseech thee, though we are unworthy, pray that we may be encompassed with a shadow of Thy unearthly glory, preserving us who kneel and cry endlessly: deliver us from oppression since ye are the prince of the Highest Power.

Kontakion of the Annunciation [and Great Lent] (Tone 8)

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."

Daily Readings

THE EPISTLE (Second Sunday of Lent)

O Lord, Thou wilt preserve us and keep us from this generation.

Save me, O Lord, for the godly man hath disappeared.

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

“In the beginning, Thou, O Lord, didst found the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands; they will perish, but Thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle Thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years will never end.” But to what angel has He ever said, “Sit at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies a stool for thy feet”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation? Therefore, we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message, declared by angels, was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard Him.

THE GOSPEL (for the Second Sunday of Lent)

The Reading of the Holy Gospel is 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 Synaxarion – March 28th

On March 28 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the Venerable Hilarion the New; Apostle Herodion of the Seventy; and Venerable Stephen of Triglia.

On this same day, the Second Sunday of the Fast, we make remembrance of our father among the saints, Gregory Palamas, archbishop of Thessalonica.

Verses

The Spring of Light now leadeth to light unwaning
The Light’s own truly great and resplendent herald.

This divine father was born in Asia and was brought up from infancy in the royal palace of Constantinople. When he was of age, Gregory left the palace and gave himself to asceticism on Mount Athos. He eventually moved to Thessalonica to seek cure for the diseases he contracted because of his asceticism and piety. In 1349, he was elevated to the episcopacy, tending to his people in an Apostolic fashion for 13 years. He is glorified as an ascetic, a theologian, a hierarch and a miracle-worker, who forsook a prominent, secular lifestyle to take up his cross and follow Christ. The Most-Holy Theotokos, St. John the Theologian, St. Demetrius, St. Anthony the Great, St. John Chrysostom and angels of God appeared to him at different times.

Through his intercessions, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

Note: On each of the five Sundays of Great Lent, the prayers of St. Basil the Great are used within the Divine Liturgy. The five Sundays of Lent are among the ten times when the Liturgy of St. Basil is used each year. Others include: January 1st, the Feast of St. Basil, January 6th, Holy Theophany, Holy Thursday, Holy Saturday and Christmas Eve.

The origin of the Liturgy of St. Basil is Antiochian, specifically from Cappadocia in Asia Minor, where St. Basil was a bishop. It is older than the Liturgy of St.

John Chrysostom, perhaps by two centuries. The Liturgy of St. Basil was known to be the standard weekday liturgy in the Great Church of Constantinople (*St. Sophia*) up until the 6th century, after which the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom began being commonly celebrated on Sundays.

To follow the service from our red Service Book, you will find the prayers of St. Basil beginning on page 132, replacing the prayers that begin on page 103 in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. In the spiral bound congregational service book the prayers are easily found on the same pages where the prayers of St. John Chrysostom are included.

OFFERINGS

Holy Bread is being offered in memory of Carrie Deeb Skaff, March 25th (12 years) and Amelia Nader March 27th (16 years) by the Deeb Family. Memory eternal.

Holy Bread is being offered by the Mushir Khleif family for the one-year memorial of the servant of God, Kharma Al-Rabadi (+25 March, 2020), beloved mother and grandmother. Memory eternal.

Special offerings and requests for prayer are being made . . .

by Minnie Tobey Lush and family for her sweet loving daughter,
Nicole Webster, on the occasion of her birthday.
May God grant her many years!

by Minnie for all her precious children and grandchildren, for a long,
Safe, healthy and happy life. They are Greg, Erin, Reed, Blake,
Gabrielle, Robert, Robert Joseph, Jonathan Nicole and Robert.

for our devoted husband, father and “Pa,” Subdeacon Richard Tamoush,
celebrating his birthday (March 30th), with much love by Cindy,
Tyler & Amy, Samantha, Ryan & Angela and Emiliano.
May God grant him many years!

by Richard Tamoush for the good health of Marilyn Ziton Reeves.

by Rami, Yuriko, Sarah and Leilah Yanni in memory of Dr. Ezequiel Barba, beloved father and grandfather; Helen Saleh, beloved mother, mother and great grandmother; and close friends: Maria Eugenia Ramos and Alfredo Alvarez. Memory eternal.

by the Skaff-Tortolano-Namay families for the newly-departed servants of God: Marie Skaff (+14 March, 2021), formerly of Lebanon; also Wanda Skaff of Charleston, West Virginia. May their loved ones find solace in the hopeful assurance of our Lord's Resurrection, granting them repose in the tranquility of God's heavenly Kingdom. Memory eternal.

[Marie Skaff Funeral Schedule: Friday, April 2, 2021, St. Michael Church, 12:30 p.m. followed by the Graveside Trisagion at Hollywood Hills Forest Lawn Memorial Park]

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

[Note: We are currently in the period of the Great Fast.*]

Weekday Lenten Services

Monday, March 29th – Great Compline, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 31st – Liturgy of Pre-sanctified Gifts,*** 6:30 p.m.

Friday, April 2nd – The Akathist Hymn, 3rd stasis ("Madeyeh"), 6:30 p.m.

The 3rd Sunday of Great Lent (Mid-Lent) The Procession and Veneration of the Holy Cross

Saturday, April 3rd – Great Vespers, 5 p.m.

Sunday, April 4th – Orthros, 8:45 a.m., Procession of the Holy Cross
and The Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.

*For more information on fasting or questions, speak with Father Timothy.

** Fish, wine and oil are permitted on Palm Sunday, April 25th.

Holy Pascha (Easter) is celebrated on Great and Holy Saturday-Sunday, May 1-2nd.

*** the Liturgy of Pre-sanctified Gifts is a Vespereal Liturgy and includes Holy Communion. Preparation begins with observing the fast and includes abstinence following light lunch.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Live-streaming of Services

Plan to view the services of the Akathist (Madeyeh), Great Vespers, Orthros and the Divine Liturgy on-line via FaceBook or YouTube this Friday, Saturday and Sunday, March 26-28. A direct link is provided on the home page of our parish website: www.stmichaelvannuys.org Also, your church offering may be made on-line via our website "Donation" tab.

March is “Women’s Month” in the Antiochian Archdiocese

Reading the Epistle this morning is Charlotte Murr.
The epistle reader last Sunday was Patricia Malouf.

Food for the Hungry People Drive

You may have received the Food for the Hungry People mailing from Robin Nicholas. Your contribution may be made through our parish by writing your check to “St. Michael Church”, earmarked: “FFHP” and our parish collection will be sent in at the end of Great Lent. Thank you for your support of our annual Lenten charity campaign.

Collection for Seminarian Scholarships

Your special offering for our Archdiocese Seminarian scholarships are being received in response to Metropolitan JOSEPH's appeal on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, last Sunday, March 21, 2021. Please be sure that your check is earmarked “Seminarians.” Thank you.

Note to Coffee Hour hosts: coffee and paper goods will be provided each week.

Holy Bread Offering List

Apr 04 - (Mid-Lent) - Anne Farha Rowe
Apr 11 - the Srou and Cruz families
the Zraick family
Apr 18 - Suzan Haddad
Apr 25 (Palm Sunday) - open

Coffee Hour Hosts Calendar

Note: There are no Coffee
Hours scheduled

Please contact Fr. Timothy (818/219-3761; pastor@stmichaelvannuys.org) to sign-up to offer Holy Bread.

Our 2021 Pledge Form Provided with this Bulletin

As a committed member of St. Michael Church, please complete a new 2021 form. An annual “Fair Share Contribution” is paid by St. Michael Church to the Archdiocese (\$50/adult; \$35/17 years of age or under). Everyone’s financial situation is subject to changes from year to year. In the same way, our parish depends upon the financial pledge commitments of its members in order to meet its monthly expenses. Hard copies will be mailed to you by request.

St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church
16643 Vanowen Street, Van Nuys, CA 91406 Phone: 818-994-2313
Website: www.stmichaelvannuys.org

2021 CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP COMMITMENT FORM

1. All enrolled members must first fulfill a fair share contribution that is paid 100% by St. Michael Church to the Archdiocese annually (this does not include your family pledge obligation BELOW).

Total number of baptized Orthodox persons (age 18 & above) in your household _____ \$50 each _____

Total number of baptized Orthodox persons (age 17 & under) in your household _____ \$35 each _____

(Please print all names with information in the section below)

2. In gratitude of God's blessings, I / we pledge to contribute St. Michael Church expenses.

A total annual amount of: _____ (see Treasure self-assessment chart)

\$ _____ weekly \$ _____ monthly \$ _____ quarterly \$ _____ semi-annually \$ _____ annually

Name _____ Spouse Name _____

Phone number _____ E-mail Address _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

3. How do you wish to pay? We accept personal checks or credit card payments. (See below)

- a. You may write a check to "St. Michael Church" and mail it to the Church Office.
(see address above)
- b. You may process an "automatic bill pay" with your bank that will mail a recurring monthly hard-copy earmarked check to St. Michael Church.
- c. You may pay by credit card using our website donation page (a 3% processing fee will apply) at: <https://www.stmichaelvannuys.org/donate/> and we will be immediately notified.
- d. You may arrange for a recurring monthly automatic withdrawal from your bank account using our church bank routing number and bank account.

Note: Each donation to St. Michael Church should be earmarked, i.e., "Building Fund," "Pledge," etc.

Print names of baptized Orthodox persons in your household.

Name

Age

Bookstore Orders Available on Parish Website

You may place an order through our parish website or e-mail Bobbi Monsue (Manager) for special orders at: bobbi_monsue@att.net. Now is the time to place your order for your Holy Week Service Book. Your credit card will also be accepted for payment. Now is the time to order your copy of our Holy Week Service Book.

Antiochian Women Lenten Baked Goods Sale

Orders are being received for limited quantities of spinach pies (\$15/dozen) and pepper pies (\$12/dozen) for pick-up of wrapped and sealed packages at the church on Saturday or Sunday, April 3rd for 4th. Place your order with Charmaine Darmour at: cdarmour@sbcglobal.net

Church School Zoom Meeting Classes Meet this Sunday, March 28

The Zoom meeting links are being provided to parents and teachers.

Antiochian Women's Book Club - April 1st at 6:30 p.m.

The book selected for AW across our Archdiocese is "The Holy Angels" by Mother Alexandra. The book study will again meet this Thursday and subsequent Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. for fellowship, and study at 6:45 p.m. for an hour. This week's Zoom meeting will include the ladies from St. Luke Church in Orange County. All interested should contact Charmaine Darmour by e-mail at: cdarmour@sbcglobal.net

St. Michael Golf Classic Postponed

Our Annual St. Michael Golf Classic has been postponed to October. Our previous date in the month of May will not enable us to have an indoor buffet dinner.

St. Michael Antiochian Orthodox Church of the San Fernando Valley

16643 Vanowen Street, Van Nuys, California 91406-4622

Dear St. Michael Church Family,

I pray that you are all well and hanging in there during this difficult time. I thought of a great way for us to spend some quality family time together and entertain each other during quarantine.

Do you have people in your family who are skilled bakers, talented musicians, or great artists? Maybe there's something fun and or silly that you know how to do and can teach others?...We'd like you to create how-to videos and we will share them on St. Michael's Facebook page so kids and others stuck at home can watch and learn from you.

Please send your videos to me at blajalat@gmail.com. My goal is to post a weekly how-to video. I would love it if each household at St. Michael's created a fun how-to video to help us all stay connected.

Blessings,

Brittney Ajalat

Young Parent's Ministry

P.S. Stay connected. Maintain contact with each other and receive informative materials from our group App. Enter the conversation by logging on to: <https://band.us/n/a0af2b6334W85>

Understanding the Discipline of the Great Fast

There are three parts of the fast:

1. **“Clean Monday” began the Great Fast** (March 15th) when all meat and dairy products were removed from our diet. “Meat” products pertain to all animals with a backbone. Note: The forty (40) days includes the five weekdays (Monday through Friday). Technically Saturday and Sundays are not part of Great Lent *per se*. These are days when the Divine Liturgy is served: Saturdays for the departed, and Sunday, celebrating Christ's Resurrection. Both Saturdays and

Sundays, however, are still considered a part of Great Lent; thus making the count of the days of fasting greater than 40. [In some communities, the fast is relaxed (moderately) on the weekends, i.e., allowing for dairy and/or fish. However this is not the rule.] Because the Divine Liturgy is not served on the weekdays, the Vespertal Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts are served in the evenings, Monday-Friday. Wednesdays are the designated days in most parishes when the Pre-sanctified Liturgy is served. In the Russian Church, the weekday Pre-sanctified Liturgy is served on Wednesdays and Fridays. In the Byzantine Churches (Greek and Antiochian), Friday evenings are dedicated to the Service of the *Akathist/Madeyeh* (Service of Intercessory Prayer) dedicated to the Protection of the All-holy Mother of God, the Theotokos—having its relevance to anticipating the Feast of the Holy Annunciation—that takes place during Great Lent (March 25th). If there is a “Feast Day” of recognition and importance to a community on a weekday of Lent, the Pre-sanctified Liturgy is served on that day. The Pre-sanctified Liturgy uses a second “lamb” (from a loaf of holy bread) that is consecrated during the Sunday Divine Liturgy of that particular week. It is put aside, and dried in a special container for the Liturgy of Pre-sanctified Liturgy of that week. The character and tone of the Pre-sanctified Liturgy is solemn and penitential, unlike the brighter celebration of the Liturgy on the weekends.

2. **Each of the five Sundays of Great Lent** are dedicated to a particular commemoration: 1) The “Sunday of Orthodoxy” (the First Sunday of Lent) and the commemoration of the restoration of Icons in the year 787 AD, following the iconoclastic (the destruction of icons) era, 2) St. Gregory Palamas (the Second Sunday of Lent), 3) The Veneration of the Holy Cross (the Third Sunday; Mid-Lent), 4) The commemoration of St. John Climacus of Mount Sinai (the Fourth Sunday of Lent), and 5) The commemoration of St. Mary of Egypt (the Fifth Sunday of Lent). Two days (during the Fast) are special Feasts that allow for fish, oil and wine to be consumed: a) The Feast of the Annunciation (March 25), and Palm Sunday (this year on April 25). In some communities, i.e., in a Seminary, a special prescription for fasting is provided in order to provide for physical strength. For example, allowing dairy products on the second and fourth weekdays of the fast. This however, is a local rule and not a universal practice.

The Church's Canon Law does not impose the fast upon people who require a specific diet for reasons of health, i.e., pregnant mothers; the elderly who are required to have more protein in their diet; persons that work jobs of hard labor. Parents should also use good judgment with children, however, it is important that a family establish a private rule of fasting. It is very important to understand that fasting does not stand by itself as a spiritual discipline. It should be accompanied with regular prayer and almsgiving (good works). Consideration should also be made to one's activities that can be distracting to one's focus upon prayer, confession, and the the spiritual life. In preparation for any Liturgy abstinence from food and drink is the norm. For example, breakfast is not consumed on Sunday mornings, following dinner on Saturday evening. For a Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, an early brunch or light lunch is the norm before abstaining to receive Holy Communion for the Vesperal Liturgy of the Pre-sanctified Gifts.

3. The fast of **Great and Holy Week** (this year: April 26 to May 30) stands outside of the forty days of Great Lent and is observed with the same rule as the forty days (above). Great and Holy Friday is a day of strict fasting - commemorating the Death of Christ. On Holy Friday, "dry eating is allowed;" the consumption of fruit, nuts, juice; or anything that is uncooked. This is the only day of the year when there a Liturgy is not celebrated (i.e., Pre-sanctified Liturgy).

The other "seasons" of fasting include: **The Fast of the Dormition** ("falling asleep"/death) of the Virgin Mary: August 1-15, concluding on the Commemoration of the Dormition (August 15); the **Fast of the Apostles**: usually appearing in June (this year on a single day: June 28) concluding with the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul (June 29); and the **Fast of the Holy Nativity**: beginning on November 15 and concluding with the Feast of the Holy Nativity (December 25). There are also specific days of "strict fasting" ("dry eating") on the Commemoration of the **Beheading of St. John the Baptist** (August 29), and **The Elevation of the Holy Cross** (September 14).

May God grant us a blessed Fast! صوم مبارك Καλή τέσσερακοστή

Frequently Asked Questions

[The following article is provided for to help to clarify The Sacrament of Holy Unction.]

What is the Sacrament of Unction?

The Sacrament of Holy Unction is also called “The Sacrament of Anointing for the Healing of the Sick.” It has been incorrectly regarded as “The last Rites.” Holy Unction is administered by the priest upon request and should be sought not only when one is hospitalized or ill, but especially when one receives a medical diagnosis and prior to being hospitalized for surgery or any medical procedure. The Sacrament in its fullness is a service scheduled in the church on the evening of Wednesday of Great and Holy Week, primarily as a means of one’s full preparation for the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist at the Liturgy of the Last Supper on Great and Holy Thursday. The Sacrament in its full context includes a prayer of “general absolution” for the forgiveness of sins that should not be confused with the Prayer of Absolution that is said within the Sacrament of Confession (Penance). [It is most appropriate that one’s preparation for the Liturgy of the Last Supper and the Feast of the Resurrection also include the Sacrament of Confession.]

The scriptural basis for the Sacrament of Holy Unction is found within the Epistle of St. James (Chapter 5:14): *Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the Church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the Name of the Lord.* The Sacrament in its original form (administered in the Church in the evening of Holy Wednesday) was originally done each month in the Great Church of Constantinople (*Agia Sophia*) with seven priests. The service includes the readings of seven epistles, seven Gospels and seven prayers; each addressing an aspect of healing of our created being: body, mind and soul. The Biblical understanding of healing pertains to being made whole. The Greek word for healing is the same word for “salvation.” Ultimate healing is in the Resurrection of Christ. Adam and Eve were created as immortal beings. Their sin resulted in their (our) mortality. With that in mind, the Christian understands death as “unnatural” and contrary to God’s plan for Man. Through Holy Baptism we are united in Christ’s Death and Resurrection; initiated as partakers of a “new

nature” and regenerated by the Gift of the Holy Spirit with the Sacrament of Chrismation (“The Seal”).

What are other “oils” used in the church?

There are various uses of oil in the church (all of which are made from olives) for the purpose of anointing. There are: a) The Holy Oil of the Sacrament of Chrismation (Confirmation) used in conjunction with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. This oil (with a recipe of additives) is specially prepared by the Bishop on Great and Holy Thursday and distributed to the parishes. Holy Chrism is also used in the service for the anointing of a newly consecrated Church sanctuary by the Bishop; b) oils of lamps, some of which are from sacred sites: relics at tombs, Holy Icons, and monasteries. These oils have also been used for anointing of the sick, some known to have been miraculous; c) oil used for the anointing of a deceased person at the time of burial (what can be called “The Last Rites”); d) oil blessed within the Service of the Five Loaves on a Feast and used for anointing.

Father Timothy is available to answer any questions or to further discuss the subject with anyone privately. He may also be reached by e-mail at: <frtimothy@stmichaelvannuys.org>.

Pastoral Sermon

By V. Rev. Timothy Baclig
The Second Sunday of Great Lent
March 28, 2021

In the reading of today’s Epistle we hear St. Paul say: *We must pay more careful attention, therefore to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.* There are many distractions in our lives today that can very easily cause us to “drift away” from our focus upon God. Preserving and cultivating the values that are important to our spiritual life are increasingly difficult in our day. These distractions pertain to what consumes our time and resources; what preoccupies our thoughts, our vision and hearing.

One of the reasons why the Church presents Great Lent to us as a discipline is to prevent us from being misguided by any notion of presumption and complacency. Presumption leads to pride, arrogance; being judgmental. Complacency leads one to slothfulness, neglect and procrastination. A humble person is not presumptuous and prayer is not a substitute for complacency. Humility is not exhibited in flamboyance but is practiced with modesty.

With this in mind, Great Lent also helps us to recognize that God calls us to act responsibly. Being honest and responsible; accepting responsibility for our choices and actions is the first step to a healthy spiritual life; not to mention the practice of good health.

St. James' Epistle can be very helpful with our discipline. In the first chapter (verse 19) we hear – “My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.” James 1:26 – “If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.”

Do you fast? Is fasting difficult? Have you considered self control, silence or “biting your tongue” as a kind of fast?

The verse of the Epistle of St. James continues: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

Doing what we can to help others – when it is within our ability and our means to do so is sound religion that is without hypocrisy. St. Gregory Palamas (who is among later Saints of our church) is commemorated on this, the second Sunday of Great Lent. He along with many other Church Fathers (and Mothers) teach us a tradition of prayer that is neither stagnant nor passive. For example, he says, “Union with God is achieved by the practice of virtues and communication with Him through prayer.” We tend to forget that the practice of prayer does not mean inaction or being passive. St. Gregory clearly states: “When we sit down, when we walk, when we eat, we can always pray inwardly...”

Today's reading of the Gospel illustrates the faith of the men who carried the paralytic, to extent of even making an opening in the roof in order for the man to be healed by the Lord. It was the action and faith of those who assisted the paralytic who did what was within their power to help the man who needed healing. They contributed to the paralytic's healing. In a sense, they were intercessors. They participated in helping him to get well. They did what they could to assist in his recovery.

Moreover, we tend to think of learning as something that is achieved in classrooms. Well, even educators today know that repetition; interaction, participation and involvement are among the best means of learning. This was always a part of our didactic tradition.

Conditioning ourselves through the various means provided by the discipline of our church are among the most successful ways of learning. Our Biblical prayer language helps us to make what we read in scripture something that becomes more than a way of thinking; it becomes a way of life. It helps us to form a healthy attitude. It shapes our hearts and minds and restructures our way of communicating. We guard ourselves from being hypocritical if our words of the prayers we address to God are inconsistent with the words and ways of communicating with others.

Meditation

Let us work with the body and pray with the soul. Let the outer person perform bodily tasks, and let the inner person be entirely dedicated to the service of God, never abandoning spiritual prayer... This practice of inner prayer tames passions as Daniel tamed the wild beasts. By it the dew of the Holy Spirit is brought down upon the heart, as Elijah brought down rain on Mount Carmel. This mental prayer reaches to the very throne of God and is the light, which illuminates man's soul and inflames the heart with the fire of the love of God (St. Gregory Palamas; *On Prayer and Purity of Heart*).

EOTHINON 9
الايوثين 9

TONE 1
الحن 1

SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
COMMEMORATION OF GREGORY PALAMAS,
ARCHBISHOP OF THESSALONICA

طروبارية القيامة على اللحن الأول

إِنَّ الْحَجَرَ لَمَّا خُتِمَ مِنَ الْيَهُودِ، وَجَسَدَكَ الطَّاهِرَ حَفِظَ مِنَ الْجَنْدِ، قُتِمَتْ فِي الْيَوْمِ الثَّلَاثِ أَيَّهَا
الْمَخْلُصُ، مَانِحاً الْعَالَمَ الْحَيَاةَ. فَلِذَلِكَ قَوَاتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ هَتَفُوا إِلَيْكَ يَا وَاهِبَ الْحَيَاةِ: الْمَجْدُ
لِقِيَامَتِكَ أَيُّهَا الْمَسِيحُ، الْمَجْدُ لِمَلِكِكَ، الْمَجْدُ لِتَدْبِيرِكَ يَا مُحَبِّبَ الْبَشَرِ وَحَدِّكَ

طروبارية القديس غريغوريوس على اللحن الثامن

يَا كَوْكَبَ الْأَرْتُوذُكْسِيَّةِ، وَثَبَاتِ الْكَنِيسَةِ وَمَعَلَّمَهَا، يَا جَمَالَ الْمُتَوَحِّدِينَ، وَالْمَجَاهِدَ الَّذِي لَا
يُفْهَرُ عَنِ الْمُتَكَلِّمِينَ، وَفَخْرَ تَسَالُونِيكِي، وَالْمُبَشِّرَ بِالنِّعْمَةِ، غَرِيغُورِيُوسَ الْمَجْتَرِحَ
الْعَجَائِبِ، إِبْتَهَلَ عَلَى الدَّوَامِ فِي خِلَاصِ نَفْسِنَا.

طروبارية رؤساء الملائكة بالحن الرابع

أَيُّهَا الْمُتَقَدِّمُونَ عَلَى الْأَجْنَادِ السَّمَاوِيِّينَ، نَتَوَسَّلُ إِلَيْكُمْ نَحْنُ غَيْرِ الْمُسْتَحَقِّينَ، حَتَّى أَنْكُمْ
بَطْلِبَاتِكُمْ تَكْتَنُفُونَنَا بِظِلِّ أَجْنَحَةِ مَجْدِكُمْ غَيْرِ الْهَيُولِيِّ، حَافِظِينَ إِيَّانَا نَحْنُ الْجَائِثِينَ
وَالصَّارِحِينَ بِغَيْرِ فِتْوَرٍ، أَنْقَدُونَا مِنَ الشَّدَائِدِ، بِمَا أَنْكُمْ رُؤَسَاءُ مَرَاتِبِ الْقَوَاتِ الْعُلُويَّةِ.

قُتْدَاقِ آحَادِ الصُّومِ عَلَى الْلَحْنِ الثَّامِنِ

إِنِّي أَنَا عَبْدُكَ يَا وَالِدَةُ الْإِلَهِ، أَكْتُبُ لَكَ رَايَاتِ الْغَلْبَةِ يَا جَنْدِيَّةَ مَحَامِيَّةٍ، وَأَقْدِمُ لَكَ الشُّكْرَ
كَمُنْقَذَةٍ مِنَ الشَّدَائِدِ. لَكِنْ بِمَا أَنَّ لَكَ الْعِزَّةَ الَّتِي لَا تَحَارِبُ، أَعْتَقِنِي مِنَ صُنُوفِ الشَّدَائِدِ،
حَتَّى أَصْرُخَ إِلَيْكَ: افْرَحِي يَا عُرُوسَا لَا عُرُوسَ لَهَا

الرسالة

أَنْتَ يَا رَبُّ تَحْفَظُنَا وَتَسْتُرُنَا مِنْ هَذِهِ الْجَيْلِ، خَلَصْنِي، يَا رَبُّ، فَإِنَّ الْبَارَ قَدْ فَنِي
فَصَلِّ مِنْ رِسَالَةِ الْقَدِيسِ بُولَسَ الرَّسُولِ إِلَى الْعِبْرَانِيِّينَ

أَنْتَ يَا رَبُّ، أَسَسْتَ الْأَرْضَ فِي الْبِدْءِ، وَالسَّمَاوَاتِ هِيَ صَنْعُ يَدَيْكَ، هِيَ تَزُولُ وَأَنْتَ
تَبْقَى، وَكُلُّهَا كَالثُوبِ تَبْلَى، وَتَطْوِيهَا كَالرِّدَاءِ فَتَتَّعِيرُ. وَأَنْتَ أَنْتَ، وَسُنُوكَ لَنْ تَنْتَهِيَ. وَلِمَنْ
مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ قَالَ يَوْمًا: اجْلِسْ عَنِ يَمِينِي حَتَّى أَجْعَلَ أَعْدَاءَكَ مَوْطِنًا لِقَدَمَيْكَ؟ أَمَّا هُمْ أَرْوَاحُ
خَادِمَةٌ تُرْسَلُ لخدمَةِ الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْخِلَاصَ. لِذَلِكَ يَجِبُ عَلَيْنَا أَنْ نُصْغِيَ إِلَى مَا سَمِعْنَاهُ
إِصْغَاءً شَدِيدًا، لِئَلَّا نَضَلَّ. فَالْرِسَالَةُ الَّتِي جَاءَتْنا عَلَى لِسَانِ الْمَلَائِكَةِ ثَبَتَ صَدْقُهَا، فَنَالَ كُلُّ

من خالفها أو عصاها جزاءه العادل. فكيف ننجو إنْ أهملنا خلاصاً عظيماً كهذا؟ فقد أعلنه الربّ أولاً، وأثبتّه لنا الذين سمعوه.

الإنجيل

فصلٌ شريفٌ من بشارَةِ القديسِ مرقس

في ذلك الزمان، دخل يسوع كفرناحوم، فسمع الناس أنه في البيت. فتجمع عدد كبير، ولم يبق موضع خالياً حتى عند الباب، فأخذ يخاطبهم بالكلمة، فأتوه بكسيحٍ يحمله أربعة رجال، فلما لم يقدرُوا أن يصلوا إليه لكثرة الجمع، نقبوا السقف وكشفوا فوق المكان الذي كان يسوع فيه ودلوا الفراش الذي كان عليه الكسيح. فلما رأى يسوع إيمانهم قال للكسيح: "يا بني، مغفورة لك خطاياك!" وكان بين الحاضرين هناك بعض معلمي الشريعة، ففكروا في قلوبهم: "ما بال هذا الرجل يتكلم كلاماً كهذا؟ إنه يكفر! من يقدر أن يغفر الخطايا إلا الله وحده؟" وعرف يسوع بروحه أنهم يفكرون في ذلك في أنفسهم، فقال لهم: "لماذا تفكرون في ذلك في قلوبكم؟ أيما أيسر: أن يقال لهذا الكسيح: مغفورة لك خطاياك، أم أن يقال له: قم واحمل سريرك وامش؟ فلكي تعلموا أن ابن البشر له سلطان على الأرض ليغفر الخطايا. قال للمخلع: أقول لك قم واحمل فراشك واذهب إلى بيتك!" فقام في الحال وحمل فراشه وخرج بمشهد من الحاضرين. فدهش كلهم. "ومجدوا الله قائلين: "ما رأينا مثل هذا قط."

ملاحظة بخصوص تناول القربان المقدس

إن مفهومنا لتناول القربان يعنى عمومية المشاركة فيه لذوى العقيدة الواحدة، الا إن المشاركة في سر القربان المقدس هنا مقتصر فقط على أعضاء الكنائس الارثوذكسية والذين يحضرون أنفسهم بالصلاة والصوم والاعتراف منذ فترة قريبة (وعلى كل حال، فإننا ندعو الجميع للمشاركة في الخبز المقدس الذى يوزع عند إنتهاء مراسيم القداس). رجاء مراجعة الكاهن. إذا رغبت أن تصبح عضواً فى الكنيسة الارثوذكسية