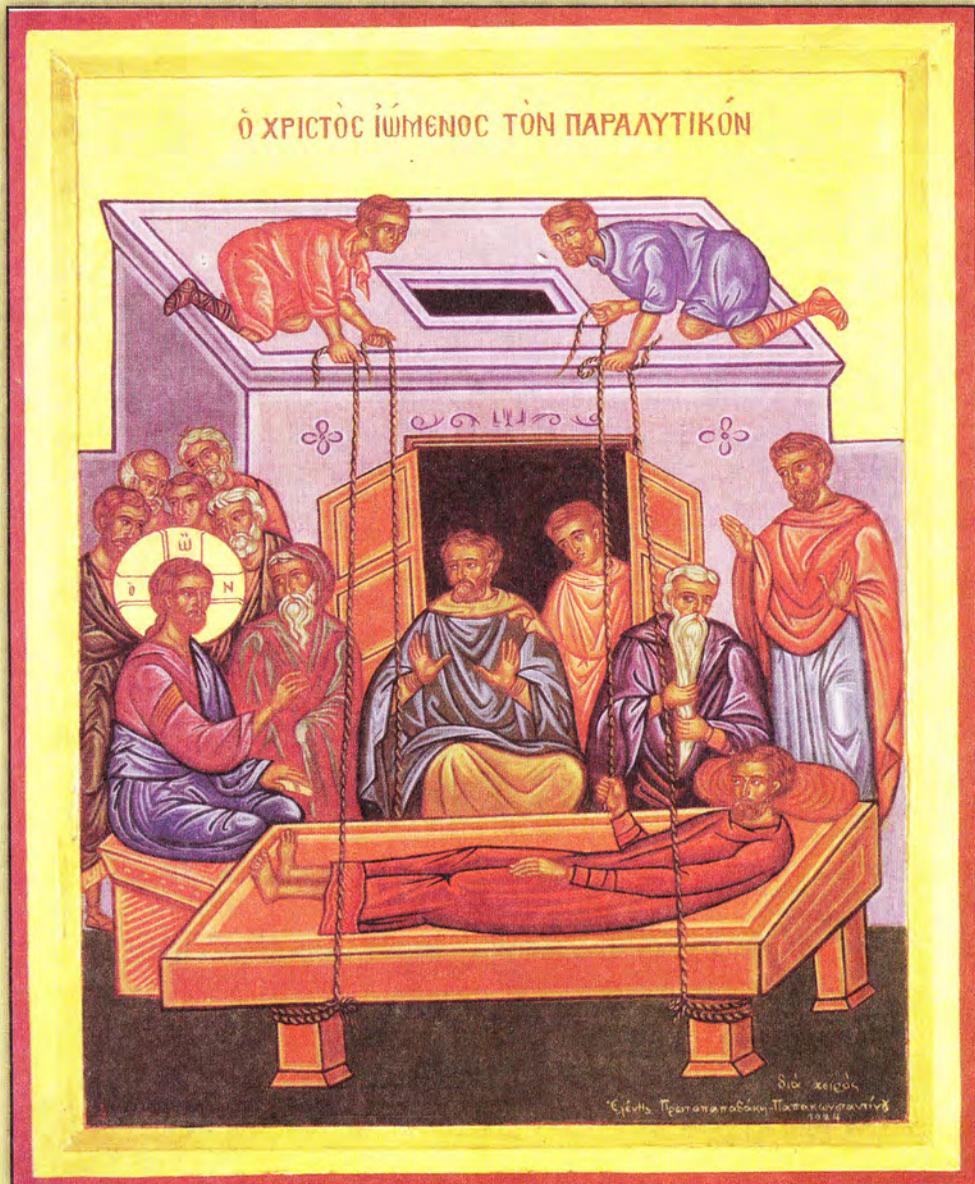


SECOND SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST



Icon of the Healing of the Paralytic



February 21, 2016

2ND SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST - GREGORY PALAMAS; – **TONE 6**
OUR VENERABLE FATHER TIMOTHY OF SYMBOLA IN BITHYNIA;
OUR HOLY FATHER EUSTACE, ARCHBISHOP OF ANTIOCH

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 22 – FEBRUARY 28

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24

6:30 PM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26

9:30 AM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27 – OUR VENERABLE FATHER AND CONFESSOR PROCOPIUS THE DECAPOLITE;
3RD ALL SOULS SATURDAY

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy & Panakhyda For our departed loved ones

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28 – 3RD SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST; VENERATION OF THE PRECIOUS AND LIFE
GIVING CROSS; OUR VENERABLE FATHER AND CONFESSOR BASIL, FELLOW FASTER
OF THE HOLY PROCOPIUS

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

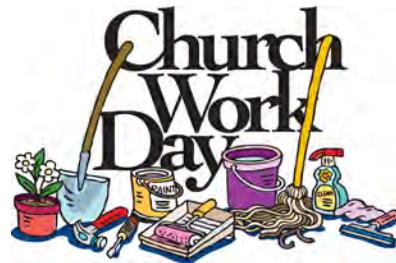
*If you are reading the bulletin during the Liturgy (including the homily),
please **stop** and be attentive – будьмо уважли!*

During the Great Fast, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts will be offered on Wednesdays evenings at 6:30 PM and Friday Mornings at 9:30 AM. Each Wednesday, following the Presanctified Liturgy, there will be a Lenten Meal and a Spiritual Talk. We need volunteers to prepare the soup for the dates of 2/24, 3/2, 3/9, and 3/16. Please talk to Olena Bankston to volunteer.

Lenten Services at

Holy Angels Byzantine Church

Each Friday during the Great Fast, Holy Angels celebrates the Presanctified Liturgy at 6:00 PM. Holy Angels is located at 2235 Galahad Road San Diego, CA 92123-3931



PARISH WORK DAYS

On Saturday, February 27th, following the Divine Liturgy, there will be a parish work day to prepare the church and the hall in preparation for the celebration of Pascha. Work will begin at approximately 11:00 AM. Please come and help. Many hands make light work

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....

Looking Ahead:

- ❖ February 27th – 3rd All Souls Saturday & Parish Work Day
- ❖ February 28th – Sunday of the Holy Cross
- ❖ March 5th – 4th All Souls Saturday
- ❖ March 12th – Akathist Saturday
- ❖ March 20th – Flowery Sunday
- ❖ March 23rd – Holy Wednesday
- ❖ March 24th – Holy Thursday
- ❖ March 25th – Annunciation & Great and Holy Friday
- ❖ March 27th – Pascha

.....
Never confuse the person, formed in the image of God, with the evil that is in him: because evil is but a chance misfortune, an illness, a devilish attack. But the very essence of the person is the image of God, and this remains in him despite every disfigurement.

- St. John of Kronstadt

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 ages of ages. Amen.

Source: Fr. Peter Preble

"A time is coming when men will go mad, and when they see someone who is not mad, they will attack him saying: 'You are mad, you are not like us.'"

- Anthony of Egypt

ON THE MYSTERY OF CONFESSION

By Saint John of Kronstadt

The person who is accustomed to give account of his life at Confession will not fear to give an answer at the terrible Judgment Seat of Christ. For this purpose was the mild tribunal of penitence instituted, that we may give an answer without shame, having been cleansed and healed through repentance here below.

The more sincerely we confess our sins, the more calm will the soul be afterwards. For sins are secret serpents, gnawing at the heart of a man, and never letting him rest; they are prickly thorns, constantly piercing the soul, they are spiritual darkness.

Bear the sufferings of the operation so that you may be restored to health—I speak of Confession. I mean that at Confession, you must declare all your shameful deeds to your confessor, without concealment, though it may well be painful, shameful, ignominious, and humiliating. Otherwise, the wound will remain unhealed, will continue to pain you, will undermine your spiritual health, and will become a cause for other spiritual weaknesses, or sinful habits or vices.

As soon as you have told the Lord your sins, with a contrite heart, they melt away; as soon as you have sighed and sorrowed for them, they are no more.

Confession can be heard following any service or by appointment. Please speak with Fr. James if you have any questions or if you would like to schedule an appointment.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE UNASHAMED

I am a part of the fellowship of the Unashamed. I have the Power of the Holy Spirit. The die has been cast. The decision has been made. I have stepped over the line. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. I won't look back, let up, slow down, back away, or be still. My past is redeemed, my present makes sense, and my future is in God's hands. I am finished and done with low living, sight walking, small planning, the bare minimum, smooth knees, colorless dreams, tamed visions, mundane talking, frivolous living, chintzy giving, and dwarfed goals.

I no longer need preeminence, prosperity, position, promotions, applause, or popularity. I don't have to be right, first, the best, recognized, praised, regarded, or rewarded. I now live by faith, I lean on Christ's presence, love with patience, live by prayer, and labor with the power of God's grace.

My pace is set, my gait is fast, my goal is Heaven, my road is narrow, my way is rough, my companions are few, my Guide is reliable, my mission is clear. I cannot be bought, compromised, deterred, lured away, turned back, diluted, or delayed. I will not flinch in the face of sacrifice, hesitate in the presence of adversity, negotiate at the table of the enemy, ponder at the pool of popularity, or meander in the maze of mediocrity.

I won't give up, shut up, let up, or slow up until I have stayed up, stored up, prayed up, paid up, and spoken up for the cause of Christ. I am a disciple of Jesus Christ, I am a Catholic. I must go until He comes again, give until I drop, speak out until all know, and work until He stops me.

And when He returns for His own, He will have no difficulty in recognizing me. My banner is clear for I am a part of the Fellowship of the Unashamed. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes..." (Romans 1:16)

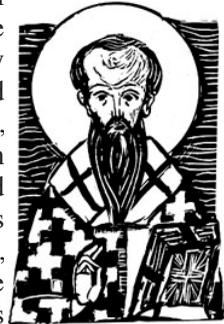
THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

is one of reconciliation with God, bringing about not only a clearing of the conscience through the remission of sins, but also a healing of the soul through our recommitment to Christ. This Sacrament should therefore be received frequently by all Catholic Christians but especially during each of the fasting seasons, including the Great Fast. For those who wish to receive Holy Communion, the Sacrament of Confession is indispensable and absolutely necessary to maintaining our spiritual health and well being. Fr. James is available to hear confessions following any service or at any other time by appointment.



ON KEEPING A SPIRITUAL FAST

There is both a physical and a spiritual fast. In the physical fast the body abstains from food and drink. In the spiritual fast, the faster abstains from evil intentions, words and deeds. One who truly fasts abstains from anger, rage, malice, and vengeance. One who truly fasts abstains from idle and foul talk, empty rhetoric, slander, condemnation, flattery, lying and all manner of spiteful talk. In a word, a real faster is one who withdraws from all evil.



– *St. Basil the Great*

FLOWER COLLECTION

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

ON THE TRULY INTELLIGENT MAN

By St. Anthony the Great

The truly intelligent man pursues one sole objective: to obey and conform to the God of all. With this single aim in view, he disciplines his soul, and whatever he may encounter in the course of his life, he gives thanks to God for the compass and depth of His providential ordering of all things. For it is absurd to be grateful to doctors who give us bitter and unpleasant medicines to cure our bodies, and yet to be ungrateful to God for what appears to us to be harsh, not grasping that all we encounter is for our benefit and in accordance with His providence. For knowledge of God and faith in Him is the salvation and perfection of the soul.

Remorse is always a prisoner of the past; it does not shrug its shoulders and forget it. The past is present; the fault is ever before the eyes, but there is no way to undo it....

Repentance is also self-reproach, like the other states, but it is never sterile; it lays hold of the past by undoing it through penance. Both Judas and Peter denied Our Lord, but Judas repented unto himself, which was regret and remorse, and took his own life; Peter repented unto the Lord, which produced a new man

Venerable Fulton J. Sheen

"THE COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT IMPOSITIONS FROM SOME DESPOT, BUT RATHER THE THERAPEUTIC CURE FOR A COMPLETE RECOVERY FROM THE CORRUPTION OF OUR NATURE. THE LORD DID NOT GIVE COMMANDMENTS FROM THE HEIGHT OF HIS DIVINE GREATNESS, BUT RATHER CAME DOWN AMONG US AND OBSERVED THESE COMMANDMENTS HIMSELF, FIRST, EXHORTING US TO IMITATE HIM AS HIS TRUE FRIENDS (SEE JOHN 15:14). THEREFORE, CHRISTIANITY IS NOT AN ABSTRACT IDEOLOGY, BUT A PRACTICAL AND CONCRETE CONFESSION. IN THE FACE OF EVERY SENSUAL ENTICEMENT OF SIN ENCOUNTERED BY MAN FROM THE SPIRIT OF THE WORLD, THE FLESH AND THE DEVIL, THE CHRISTIAN CONFESSES HIS FAITH IN CHRIST OUR GOD BY REJECTING THE SIN, AND THUS SHOWING HIS LOVE FOR GOD BY THE KEEPING OF HIS COMMANDMENT. 'HE WHO HAS MY COMMANDMENTS AND KEEPS THEM, HE IT IS WHO LOVES ME' (JOHN 14:21) CHRIST TAUGHT US TO FULFILL THE WILL OF THE HEAVENLY FATHER, JUST AS TO THE FATHER HE BECAME 'OBEDIENT UNTO DEATH, EVEN

UNTO DEATH ON A CROSS' (PHIL. 2:8). THE KEEPING OF THE COMMANDMENTS IS THE PRECISE MEANS OF COMMUNION BETWEEN THE PERSONAL GOD AND MAN.

TODAY'S MAN HAS BEEN BROUGHT UP ON MATERIALISTIC IDEOLOGIES AND HAS LITTLE OR NO IDEA OF THE INNER PEACE AND CALM BESTOWED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT UPON THOSE WHO LIVE IN HARMONY WITH HIS COMMANDMENTS. THUS THE GENERAL SELF-DISCIPLINE WITH REGARDS TO THE SENSUAL PLEASURES AND THE LABORIOUS ATTEMPT TO ACQUIRE THE HOLY VIRTUES - WHICH HAVE AS A BASIS THE SACRIFICE OF OURSELVES FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS - ARE REGARDED BY MOST AS 'FOLLY'. THIS 'FOLLY' OF THE CROSS AND THE GOSPEL IS SUMMED UP IN THE WORDS OF OUR LORD, 'IF ANY ONE WOULD COME AFTER ME, HE MUST TAKE UP HIS CROSS, AND FOLLOW ME'."

- ELDER EPHRAIM OF VATOPEDI
FROM THE PROLOGUE OF THE BIOGRAPHY
OF ELDER JOSEPH THE HESYCHAST

FOR CONSIDERATION

On one of the stones in the Church of Hagia Sophia, the following words were engraved: "Wash your sins, not only your face." Whoever entered this glorious church read this inscription and remembered that the Christian Faith requires of him moral purity: purity of the soul, purity of the heart and purity of the mind. Just as in the heart of man is concentrated the complete spiritual man, this is what the Lord also said, "Blessed are the pure of heart" (*St. Matthew 5:8*). Total external cleanliness does not help at all in gaining the kingdom of heaven. Oh, if only we would invest as much effort in washing ourselves from sins as we invest daily in washing our faces, then God would truly be seen in our hearts as in a mirror!

TO THINK ABOUT

The three temptations by which Satan tempted the Lord Jesus after His Baptism in the Jordan River:

1. Gluttony: The temptation with bread;
2. Pride: Lifting Him above the Temple;
3. Greed: Offering Him the possession of the entire world.



From January 8th of the Prologue of Ochrid By Saint Nikolai Velimirovich

PLANT YOUR GARDEN TODAY!

Anyone who works in the garden knows the importance of putting good seed into the ground because as the saying goes we shall reap what we sow. It is the same with the human heart – what goes into the soil of the human heart will ultimately grow and sprout forth, manifesting itself in our words and actions. The following is a recipe for a Christian heart which by the grace of God will bear much fruit!

1. FIRST, PLANT THREE ROWS OF PEAS

- ❖ Patience
- ❖ Promptness
- ❖ Prayer

2. NEXT, PLANT THREE ROWS OF SQUASH

- ❖ SQUASH gossip
- ❖ SQUASH indifference
- ❖ SQUASH criticism

3. THEN, PLANT FOUR ROWS OF LETTUCE

- ❖ LET US obey the Lord
- ❖ LET US be loyal
- ❖ LET US be true to our obligations
- ❖ LET US be unselfish

4. FINISH WITH FOUR ROWS OF TURNIP

- ❖ TURN UP when needed
- ❖ TURN UP with a smile
- ❖ TURN UP with a vision
- ❖ TURN UP with determination

Plant your garden today, remembering the Apostle Paul's words, "He who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully." (2 Cor. 9:6)

ALL WHO HAVE LIVED ACCORDING TO GOD STILL LIVE UNTO GOD, THOUGH THEY HAVE DEPARTED THIS LIFE. FOR THIS REASON, GOD IS CALLED THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB, SINCE HE IS THE GOD, NOT OF THE DEAD, BUT OF THE LIIVING.

– ST. GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN

Sunday offering for February 14

Amount	Number
\$11.00	1 (loose)
\$15.00	1
\$20.00	5
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	2
\$50.00	3
\$70.00	1
\$80.00	1
\$85.00	1
\$125.00	3
\$300.00	1
<hr/>	
\$1096.00	

Parishioner Total: \$971.00

Guest Total: \$125.00

Average / parish household (42): \$12.45

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: (\$1229.00)

Year-to-date deficit: (\$8460.00)

Pastor:

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

Pastoral Council:

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

Social Committee Chair:

Megan Hartman (619) 540-4291

Finance Committee:

Bohdan Knianicky: (619) 303-9698



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

4400 Palm Avenue
La Mesa, CA 91941
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

Pastor: Fr. James Bankston
frjames@mac.com
Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

The Grace of Almsgiving

The kind and merciful Lord, dearly beloved, deigns to provide occasions and opportunities in many ways, whereby we can redeem our sins without great labor and difficulty. Since He sees people without the strength to fast for their sins or unable to abstain from meat or wine, the poverty of the poor gives the wealthy an opportunity to sell their earthly goods and distribute them to the poor. His secures abundant fruits, for by generously bestowing their superfluities upon poor men they obtain the remission of their sins.

What can be so good and delightful, so easy and ready at hand, dearly beloved, as to strive to redeem your sins by giving alms out of what God has deigned to give you more than you need? God does not command you to spend what is necessary for yourself or your family, for of this the Apostle says: I do not mean that the relief of others should become your burden (2 Corin-

thians 8:13). God does not need to spend your superfluities on Himself, but He wants to keep them for you in eternal bliss. Indeed, He wanted the poor to be so in order that the rich might have a means of redeeming their sins. God could have made all people rich, but He wanted to provide the rich with an opportunity for showing mercy.

Not for their own merit do the few rich gain more than they need and the many poor people not acquire even what they need. This is the cleverness of divine mercy, as I said before, so that while the poor patiently bear their poverty they may obtain forgiveness of their sins, and the rich, in turn, while they mercifully distribute their superfluities, they may redeem their offenses, and attain eternal rewards.

St. Caesarius of Arles

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