



# Orthodox Heights

HolyTrinityOrthodoxChurch.org

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Fr James Worthington, Acting Rector 315-706-6185

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## MARCH 12, 2017

**SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 5. St. Gregory Palamas.** Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra. Ven. Theophanes the Confessor, of Sigriane (818). Righteous Phineas, grandson of Aaron (ca. 1500 B.C.). St. Gregory Dialogus, Pope of Rome (604). Ven. Simeon the New Theologian (1021).

**EPISTLE:** HEBREWS 7.26-8.2: Our High Priest is God Himself, not subject to weakness.

HEBREWS 1.10-2.3: We must hold true to what we have learned, for it is from God Himself.

**GOSPEL:** JOHN 10.9-16: Christ is the Good Shepherd, and we are His sheep.

MARK 2.1-12: Christ heals the paralytic to the astonishment of all.

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING:** We will hold our Annual Parish Meeting on Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup> following the Divine Liturgy. Please make every effort to attend. If you are the head of a committee or may need to (or like to) report on an aspect of our Parish life, please see Fr James.

**CONFESSIONS:** In this cleansing time of the year, it is good for us to partake of the sacrament of Confession. Please have your confession heard before the Vigil of PASCHA. An appointment can be made at any time that is convenient for you, or before and after most services.

**IDEAS WALL:** What inspires you? What ministries do you feel called to? What do you want to do with your life in Christ? Fr James has note cards on which you can put your ideas for outreach ministries, building improvements, educational opportunities – anything you'd like! These will be posted in a prominent place as a reminder to continue improving our community. Stay tuned to the announcements for more information.

**CALENDARS:** The 2017 Wall Calendars are available to be taken home. With this calendar, you will have the daily readings for each day of the year, and the differing rules for fasting.

**LENTEN RESOURCES:** For lessons for children during the upcoming season, check out <http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/religious/zines/lentzine> or <http://dce.oca.org/focus/pascha/>

**LENTEN RETREAT:** Ss Peter & Paul Church in Syracuse is hosting a Lenten retreat on March 18<sup>th</sup> entitled "The Divine Liturgy: from the Mystical Supper to the Present," to be given by Abp Michael. If you are interested in attending, call Fr John at 315-468-0442.

**WELCOME VISITORS!** We warmly welcome all of our visitors! It's good to have you with us! Please know that we are glad that you are here praying with us and invite you to join us after the service for a meal and to meet everyone in our community.

**FIRST FRUITS:** The latest edition of First Fruits is now available. Christian stewardship of God's creation is essential to our spiritual and communal well-being. Please read the newsletter and prayerfully consider how to best serve the Lord.

**PHOTOGRAPHER:** With such a beautiful temple and faithful community, it would be good if we could fill our website, Facebook page and other places with images of our worship. If you are interested in helping out with this, see Fr James.

## FELLOWSHIP SCHEDULE:

**MARCH 12:** Sam

**MARCH 19:** T&M Cheplick

**MARCH 26:** Charlanow

**APRIL 2:** McKane

**APRIL 9:** King

**APRIL 16:** PASCHA!!!

## PRAYER LIST

**LIVING:**  
Apr John  
Apr Herman  
Apr Theodore  
Apr Jason  
Mat Joanna  
Mat Katherine  
Mat Christine  
Mildred  
Elizabeth  
Antonina

Kathleen  
Helen  
Peter  
Rdr Thomas  
Rdr David  
Rdr Paul  
Maria  
Leon  
Katherine  
Kate  
Kristin

Kathleen  
Michael  
Children: All of the  
Parish  
**BIRTHDAYS:** None.  
**ANNIVS:** None.  
**NAMESDAYS:** None.

### REPOSED:

Apr John U  
Priest Matthew  
Priest John

Apr Alexander  
Dn Mark  
Rdr Gregory  
Taissia  
Theophan  
Lynda  
Alfred

### NEWLY REPOSED:

Anne O (2-27), Steven  
L (3-3), Joseph (3-8),  
Debra

**ANNIVERSARIES:**  
None.

## SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK

CONFESSIONS ARE HEARD BEFORE AND AFTER VESPERS AND AT ANY OTHER CONVENIENT TIME.

**PALAMAS SUNDAY MARCH 12:** 8:40 Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy and Social Hour

**MONDAY, MARCH 13:** Rector's Sabbath

**TUESDAY, MARCH 14:** 8:30 Abbreviated Lenten Matins

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15:** No Morning Prayers

Fr James is away for the day

**THURSDAY, MARCH 16:** 8:30 No Morning Prayers

6:30 Presanctified Liturgy for St Patrick

**FRIDAY, MARCH 17:** 8:30 Abbreviated Lenten Matins

6:30 Presanctified Liturgy

**SATURDAY, MARCH 18:** 9 AM Memorial Divine Liturgy

5 PM Great Vespers

**CROSS SUNDAY MARCH 19:** 8:40 Hours, 9 AM Divine Liturgy and Social Hour

**MARCH 26:** Annual Parish Meeting

**APRIL 7:** Presanctified Liturgy with Abp Michael

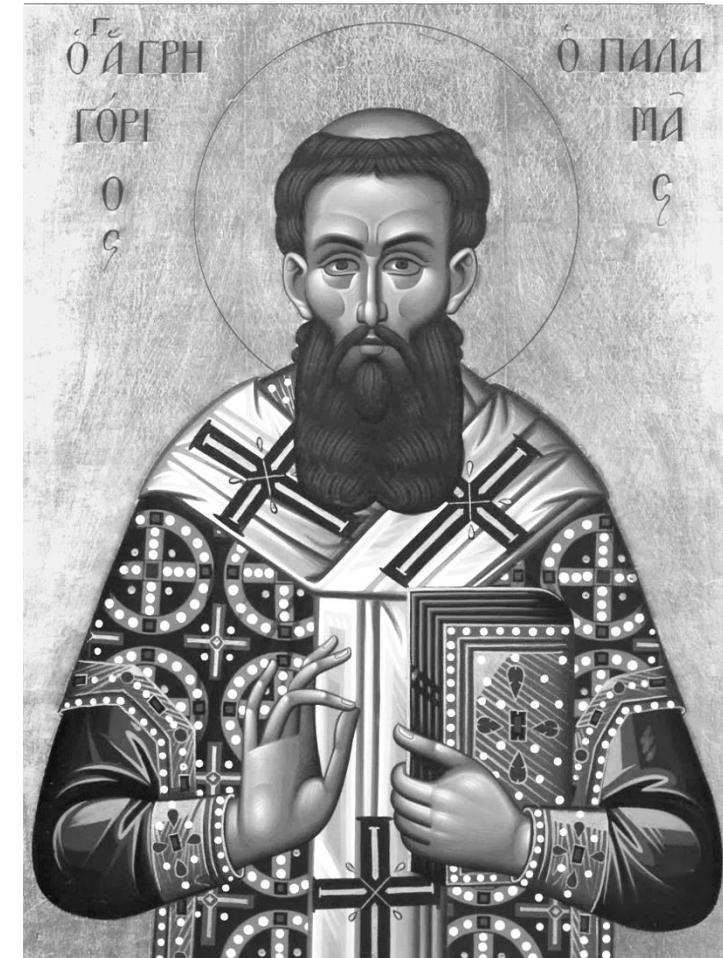
**APRIL 8:** Divine Liturgy with Abp Michael and the Tonsuring of a Reader

## A PRAYER FOR CHURCH GROWTH

Again, we pray to Thee, O Lord our God, that you would renew us and this parish by the Power of the Holy Spirit. Fill us with love and longing for Thee. Grant that we would seek not our own will but to do Thy will in all things and to be willing to lay down our lives out of love for Thee and for our neighbor. Draw thirsty souls to this place and remove their spiritual blindness, granting them through Thy grace to see the beauty of Thy Holy Glory in this place. Fill this community with new life, spiritual vigor and an insatiable desire to live godly and holy lives. Forgive us all of our sins as we fall down before Thee. Bring us all to a greater repentance and to an amendment of our lives as we look to Thee, the only Merciful and loving Lord Who calls all to salvation. We beg Thee, our merciful Lord, hear us, grant all of these petitions and all of our requests unto salvation: We pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

# Holy Trinity Orthodox Church

Elmira Heights, New York



SUNDAY, MARCH 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2017

SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

SUNDAY OF ST GREGORY PALAMAS

# WEEKLY HYMNS FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 12<sup>TH</sup>

## Troparion Tone 5 *(Resurrection)*

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word,  
co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit,  
born for our salvation from the Virgin;  
for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,  
to endure death,  
and to raise the dead//  
by His glorious Resurrection.

## Troparion Tone 8 *(St Gregory Palamas)*

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation,  
O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians,  
O wonderworking Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace,//  
always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved!

## Kontakion Tone 4 *(from the Lenten Triodion)*

Now is the time for action!  
Judgment is at the doors!  
So let us rise and fast,  
offering alms with tears of compunction and crying:  
"Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea;  
but forgive us, O Master of all,//  
so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!"

## Kontakion Tone 8 *(St Gregory Palamas)*

Holy and divine instrument of wisdom,  
joyful trumpet of theology,  
together we sing thy praises, O God-inspired Gregory.  
Since thou now standest before the Original Mind, guide our  
minds to Him, O Father//  
so that we may sing to thee: "Rejoice, O preacher of grace!"

## Prokeimenon Tone 5

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever. *(Ps 11/12:7)*  
*v: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly! (Ps 11/12:1)*  
**Tone 1:** My mouth shall speak wisdom, the meditation of my heart shall be understanding. *(Ps 48/49:3)*

## Alleluia Verses Tone 5

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

*v: I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. (Ps 88/89:1)*

*v: For Thou hast said: "Mercy will be established forever; My truth will be prepared in the heavens." (Ps 88/89:2)*

**Tone 2:** *v: The mouth of the righteous shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak of judgment. (Ps 36/37:30)*

## Hymn to the Theotokos

All of creation rejoiceth in thee, O Full of Grace:  
the assembly of Angels and the race of men.  
O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise,  
the glory of virgins,  
from whom God was incarnate and became a Child:  
our God before the ages.  
He made thy body into a throne,  
and thy womb He made more spacious than the heavens.  
All of creation rejoiceth in thee, O Full of Grace.//  
Glory to thee!

## Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! *(Ps 148:1)*  
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings. *(Ps 111/112:6b-7a)* Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## INNER UNITY OF THE TRIODION:

### SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT: ST GREGORY PALAMAS

Since 1368 this Sunday has been dedicated to the memory of St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica (1296-1359). This commemoration forms a continuation of the feast celebrated on the previous Sunday: St. Gregory's victory over Barlaam, Akindynos and the other heretics of his time is seen as a renewed Triumph of Orthodoxy. In the earlier period there was on this day a commemoration of the Great Martyr Polycarp of Smyrna (+ c. 155), whose feast was transferred from the fixed calendar (23 February). This commemoration, like that of St. Theodore, underlined the connection between Lenten asceticism and the martyr's vocation. The second Sunday also takes up the theme of the Prodigal Son as a model of repentance, with the first of the two Canons at Mattins being devoted to this parable.

# FROM: AN ORTHODOX UNDERSTANDING OF STEWARDSHIP

By Benjamin D. Williams

How do we live as stewards? One of the counsels of St. Anthony is perhaps the most practical and cuts through all of the mixed motives: "Indeed, if we too live as if we were to die each new day, we shall not sin . . . When we awaken each day, we should think that we shall not live till evening; and again, when about to go to sleep we should think that we shall not awaken ...If we are so disposed and live our daily life accordingly, we shall not commit sin, nor lust after anything, nor bear a grudge against anyone, nor lay up treasures on earth. . . ." (St. Athanasius, Life of St. Anthony, 36) Nor, we might add, will we be anything less than good stewards!

If we understand stewardship properly, then being stewards will become our way of living; and this higher calling will experience and encounter life in all its facets - its joys and its sorrows, its victories, and its setbacks. We can muster the courage and strength to travel on this stewardship journey because "God is with us." Good stewardship brings joy into the lives of others, helps those in need, enables those who desire to improve, loves and cares for the people in our lives, cares for God's creation, supports the Church financially, participates in the sacramental life of the Church, teaches and guides others, nurtures the gifts which God has given us. All of these factors are qualities of good stewardship. If practiced well, all of these qualities can become normal parts of life. Returning to St. Anthony, which event in his life do you think provided the holy physician in Alexandria the most joy? Giving away all of his excess to the poor-the very thing that convinced St. Anthony of the physician's holiness!

One of the greatest limiting factors to our stewardship is that we don't practice good discernment. We make decisions on a legal, contractual level. You see, most of us bring a contractual understanding to the subject of stewardship. This simply means that for most of our lives, and especially at work, we have learned that we are supposed to get something in exchange for what we give! We must have an equal exchange of value. If I give you forty hours of my time per week, then I expect to get paid in return. I contribute my expertise, I get paid. A contractual mindset, applied in all circumstances, will kill stewardship. A contractual approach to giving means we are not truly free. By contrast, unqualified giving without constraint is a mark of freedom. When we bring a contractual understanding to our giving, then not only are we not free, but God is shortchanged. God has already given us much; our life, our possessions, and His Son! And now we want to strike bargains with Him?

St. John Climacus said, "It is better to insult your parents than it is to insult God." (St. John Climacus, The Ladder of Divine Ascent, Step 3, "On Exile," Classics of Western

Spirituality, New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1982) God gives to us without strings. We must reach a level of spiritual maturity from which we can give back to God without expecting to get more in return. If we don't, then our attitude and behavior are downright sinful. Broadening this discussion to include God's Church, the problem is that we, in our contractual mindset, expect to receive in like kind from the Church when we give. We expect to get equal or greater value for our money. This attitude can easily degenerate into viewing the Church as a dispenser of goods and services. This is not a Christian attitude, it is a cultural understanding we have accepted. Such a view betrays a lack of understanding of the Church's vision and misunderstands our identity as members of the Body of Christ.

## TOWARD A DEFINITION OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

Can we now build a definition for stewardship? How might we describe "stewardship in action?" The following list is adapted from one prepared by Ron Nicola:

1. Stewardship is our active commitment to use all our time, talent and treasure for the benefit of humankind in grateful acknowledgment of Christ's redeeming love.
2. Stewardship is caring for the needs of others.
3. Stewardship is offering one's self to God as He offered Himself to us.
4. Stewardship is what a person does after saying "I Believe . . .", as proof of that belief.
5. Stewardship is learning how to be a responsible and concerned caretaker of Christ's Church; it is learning how to enjoy Church life and be happy in Church work, for in Her dwells the fullness of the Spirit of God.
6. Stewardship is devotion and service to God and his Church as persons, as families, as deaneries, as diocese, as national Church, and as the Church universal. (Ron Nicola, "Stewardship - A Set of Basic Principles," The Word, November 1982,4.)

Perhaps we could summarize the points just mentioned this way: Christian stewardship is a life in service to God and His Church motivated by our thankfulness for His love to us . . . ".... in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." It is the wise and proper use of all the gifts God has entrusted to our care. (See Romans 5:8) What then are the essential elements of stewardship?

## THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

1. Acceptance of the belief that all life and life itself is a gift from God.
2. Freedom to choose not to sin and freedom from the constraints, pressures and temptations of the world that smother the expression of this belief.
3. Life in the Spirit which is characterized by behavior that uses and nurtures the time, talents, and treasure entrusted to us by God.