

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH

Elmira Heights, NY – 607-732-3980 – www.holytrinityorthodoxchurch.org



Sunday, March 15, 2020

Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas – Tone 6

Second Sunday of Great Lent

SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR & SUPPERS ON PRE-SANCTIFIED EVENINGS CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

This is disappointing, as we treasure our Fellowship time; but we all know the unpredictable nature of the Coronavirus crisis, and we must do what we can for the health of every member of our beloved parish family.

COMING UP (including Postponements) IN THE PARISH, THE DIOCESE, AND ELSEWHERE ...

- **CANCELLED** – Today's Choir Rehearsal. Nina will provide updates concerning the next choir rehearsals.
- **POSTPONED** – NEW DATE TO BE DETERMINED: Saturday, March 21, Parish Church School Retreat
- **Wednesday Evening, March 25: Archbishop Michael Visiting** for Akathist Service and Slide Presentation, "Holy Week in the Holy Land", with Lenten Pot Luck Supper
- **POSTPONED** – NEW DATE TO BE DETERMINED: Friday-Saturday, April 3-5: Diocesan Lenten Teen Retreat
- **Saturday, May 2 & Saturday, May 9: Social Hall Floor Re-Finishing Work Days.** Come help!
- **Saturday, May 9: Celebration of Abp. Michael's 10th Anniversary as Bishop,** in Paramus, New Jersey
- **Friday – Sunday, May 15-17, Diocesan Altar Server Retreat,** at St. Basil Academy in Garrison NY.
- **Saturday, May 30, Archbishop Michael's Archpastoral Visit to Our Parish.** Plan to be here!

SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

Today - Sunday, March 15, Second Sunday of Lent – St. Gregory Palamas

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Reception into the Catechumenate of Justin O'Brien and Julie Slechta
Divine Liturgy

Monday, March 16

6:30 PM Vespers – Feast of Saint Patrick of Ireland

Wednesday, March 18

5:30 PM Private Confession Available

6:30 PM Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts

Friday, March 20

5:30 PM Private Confession Available

6:30 PM Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts

Saturday, March 21

9:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

10:00 AM Memorial Divine Liturgy

5:00 PM Great Vespers, with Private Confession Available Afterward

Sunday, March 22

8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hours

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

For TODAY'S EPISTLE Readings, see the Liturgy handout on the candle desk.

TODAY'S GOSPELS Mark 2:1-12 At that time Jesus entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven you." And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, "Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, "Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise, take up your bed and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins – " He said to the paralytic, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

John 10:9-16 The Lord said to His disciples: "I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd." **Daily Readings are at www.oca.org/readings**

PLEDGE UPDATE FOR 2020

So far, for 2020, 21 pledge forms have been turned in, and \$59,115 has been pledged. That's 81% of the stewardship income we will need to meet our 2020 budget. Please turn in your 2020 pledge form in the purple box in the back of the church. **If you already give regularly but haven't yet done a pledge form, please consider doing so and simply writing in the amount that you already give per week or month or year ... so that the Parish Council can include your contributions in our budgeting calculations.**

Thank you for your stewardship!

ENCOURAGEMENT FROM VARIOUS ORTHODOX CLERGY ON THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

While we will all be spending more time at home these next two weeks, we should not forget that we are in the midst of the Lenten fast, a time of extra spiritual focus and therefore—in any year—a time of additional temptation and struggle. Please discuss in your families ways that you will pray together each day. Indeed, this “change in our way of life,” to quote one of the Lenten hymns, is an opportunity not only to preserve our physical health but to revisit our spiritual health and that of our family, to look inward and to be more aware of God’s presence throughout the day and night. We can do this through prayer, the reading of Holy Scripture, and fasting not only from rich foods but also from TV, social media, video games, and the excessive and anxious consumption of news media, which brings little real benefit. This is a great opportunity for reading good literature or spiritual books, conversation, quiet board games and handiwork, household projects, and singing together!

– Father Herman, St. Tikhon’s Monastery Church Parish, South Canaan, PA

Because of Christ’s incarnation, suffering, death and resurrection, all of the contingencies of this life have already been overcome. We have absolutely nothing to fear unless our only desire is to maintain our situation exactly as it currently is. But of course, we all know as Christians that such a desire is unacceptable and that we must be committed steadfastly to overcoming the vast limitations of life in the present world. We should acknowledge the absolute irony of our situation in which the worldly rulers of society now advise and encourage us to adopt a monastic demeanor, according to which we shun social gatherings, noise and activity in favor of separation, quiet and stillness [for worldly reasons]. In reality, we already know that we should adopt these things precisely so that we can experience a foretaste of the Kingdom of God. Brothers and sisters, we do not know the extent to which we will be tested in this present crisis. But whether we will be mildly or sorely tested, we ought to rely solely upon God’s mercy and grace and not upon what we ourselves may be able to conjure up. Let us hope that God does not require of us tonight our very souls (Luke 12:20) and that He blesses us to continue, for a while longer, our sojourn here on earth. But if that is the case, the purpose is to afford us sufficient time to make repentance for our misdeeds, and to grow further yet in the knowledge and love of Him who calls us to dine with Him at the very table of His wedding feast.

– Father John Klingel, St. Andrew’s Church, Dix Hills, NY

In these days of the Wuhan virus spread, it is easy to forget the sober truth of God’s eternal love and care for us. But history shows we humans have faced epidemics and pandemics before. Each time panic has only worsened the situation. History also shows that we Christians were never ones to lose our peace during times like these. The spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire was partially due to how Christians ministered to the poor and dying during disease outbreaks in the Empire. We Christians were seen taking care of the sick, not running away in fear. And that witness of faith in God and love for our neighbors eventually led to the Roman Empire embracing the Faith once for all delivered to the saints. So ... I wanted to write you and encourage you toward Faith, not Fear. Know that God loves us more than we, ourselves, know how to love. Our faith calls us to sobriety, not fear; not panic. And that sober lifestyle means we are attentive to wisdom AND attentive to ministry, faithfulness, and joy no matter what the circumstances of our lives. Do not fear, my dear ones. Be Orthodox on Purpose!

– Father Barnabas Powell, SS. Rafael, Nicholas, and Irene Church; Cumming, GA

Host of the “Faith Encouraged” Podcast and Blog, www.ancientfaith.com/podcasts/faithencouraged