

“ENLIGHTEN MY DARKNESS, O LORD”

The Second Sunday of Lent is dedicated to the memory of a saint that may be described as a “mysterious mystic”: **St. Gregory Palamas**. Gregory was born in 1296 A.D. and received his secular education in Constantinople. His father was a prominent official in the Emperor's court, but Gregory chose to devote his life to serving a Heavenly King rather than a temporal one. At the age of 20, he entered a monastery on Mt. Athos, and was ordained to the priesthood 10 years later.

Gregory Palamas became part of a controversial monastic movement called “hesychasm.” Hesychasm called for its followers to embrace a life of silence and contemplative prayer. It taught that through fasting, rigorous bodily discipline and repetition of the Jesus Prayer, man can know God in an intimate way. For years, the only words uttered by St. Gregory were: “*Enlighten my darkness, O Lord,*” as he sought to know His Creator with all of his being.

Although he would have been content to remain on Mt. Athos for the rest of his life, Gregory was appointed Archbishop of Thessalonica in 1347 A.D. His views on theological matters came under fierce attack by his enemies, even causing him to be imprisoned for heresy on several occasions. Gregory's positions eventually became universally accepted by the entire Holy Orthodox Church, and today, Gregory Palamas is extolled as a “*Light of Orthodoxy, a teacher of the Church and an invincible champion of theologians.*”

Gregory Palamas fell asleep in the Lord in 1359 A.D. He was canonized a saint only 9 years after his death.

Icon by Austin Kachek - Manville, NJ

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WELCOME VISITORS AND GUESTS

Please take a moment to fill out a Visitor Card. We invite you to join us for coffee hour in the Fellowship Hall following the Liturgy.

RECEIVING COMMUNION

Only those Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves may approach the chalice for Holy Communion. Everyone is welcome to partake of the Holy Bread after the Liturgy.

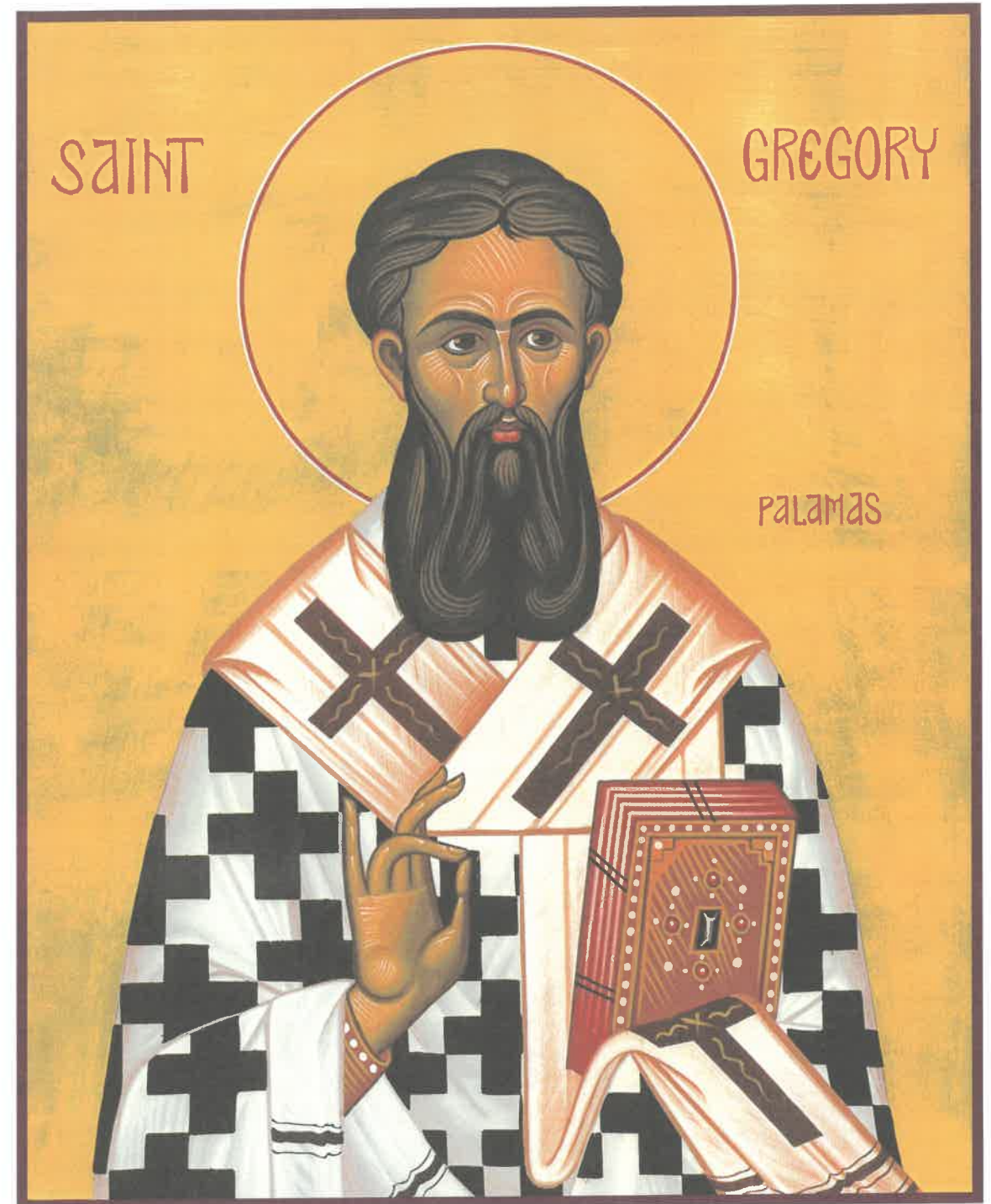
HOLY OBLATION BREAD AND MEMORIAL WHEAT

If you are offering Holy Bread, please pick up your portion on top of the chanter stand at the end of Liturgy.

If you are offering Memorial Wheat, please provide (300) 3oz Dixie cups.

Please notify the Church Office by end-of-day Tuesday.

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE DUE TUESDAY END-OF-DAY.



March 31, 2024

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HOLY OBLATION & MEMORIAL is offered in memory of The Very Reverend Archpriest Joseph Shahda (1 year) by the Shahda Family.
HOLY OBLATION is offered in memory of Rosalie Abercia (6 month), by the Abercia and Attra families.
HOLY OBLATION is offered in memory of George Asaf (25 years) by the Asaf family.
HOLY OBLATION is offered in memory of Steven, Peter & Theodore and for the health of Catherine, Sofia, Constantine, Anna, Stephanie & Theodore by Anna Ayala.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES (All services will be held in the Parish Hall).	
Monday (4/1)	6:30p Great Compline
Wednesday (4/3)	6:30p Presanctified Liturgy/Lenten Potluck Dinner
Friday (4/5)	6:30p Akathist to the Theotokos
Saturday (4/6)	6:00p Great Vespers
Sunday (4/7)	8:45a Orthros 10:00a Divine Liturgy

EVENTS

BIBLE STUDY: Tuesday mornings at 10:00a. studying the Gospel of John.
STUDY OF THE LITURGY: With Fr. Mark on Thursday mornings at 10am.
ASK ABOUNA will meditate on Orthodox Spirituality during Lent.
THE GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP: will resume meeting once a month, the last Sunday of every month after Ask Abouna at 12:30 PM in the Library.
ST. GEORGE 50 + BUS TRIP: will be visiting the St. Paraskevi Monastery Thursday, 4/18. To reserve your seat please call Faika Zaid (713-213-3211). Bus leaves St. George @ 10:00 AM. Nice fellowship trip during lent.
L.A.S. PASCHA COOKIES SALE: Please scan the QR Code to the right to preorder. Cookies pickup April 14 & 21, Spinach & Zattar pickup after March 24 from the Hall.



PALM SUNDAY FISH FRY: On Sunday 4/28, St Nicholas Men’s Group will have its annual Fish Fry following Divine Liturgy and Procession. Plates will be sold for \$20.00 and include fried fish, tahini sauce, pita bread, wedge potatoes, coleslaw, and pie. All meals are to-go. Tickets can be purchased in advance either by scanning the QR code (please pay in \$20 increments) or in the Hall after Sunday Liturgy. There will be no tickets sales on the day of the event.

ANNUAL MOTHER’S DAY CELEBRATIONS: St. George Ladies Altar society is hosting the annual Mother's Day celebration on Saturday, May 11th at 12pm at the church hall. Tickets are \$50 and \$75. For reservation, please contact Yolla Jabbour at 281-468-2219.

LENTEN PSALTER GROUP: If you are interested in participating in daily Psalter readings (from your own home) during Great Lent 3/18-4/28/24, please contact Joan Katrib at imagatwork@mac.com. For more information & to sign up. This is a simple & wonderful way to become familiar with the Psalms & to pray as a community.

FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITY CENTER

Phase 1 of the FAC/ project is moving forward, and our fundraising deadlines are fast approaching. Please help us reach our Phase 1 goal of \$6.5 million by making and fulfilling your FAC contribution today! Pledges and donations can be made on the St. George/FAC website or by scanning the QR code.



STEWARDSHIP



2024 PLEDGE STEWARDSHIP "NEW BEGINNINGS": Our 2024 Pledge Campaign is now open, please prayerfully commit to your home of St. George. Please scan the QR code to the left to submit your 2024 Pledge Commitment. In an effort to simplify the pledging process, a new system (Tithe.ly) has been implemented.

To donate, give towards your 2024 pledge or to set up recurring payments, scan QR code to the right.



YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT EVENTS



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: is back at Saint George and registration is now open! Scan the QR code to register before May 1st for the early bird price of \$35 per kid (\$40 each after the deadline). Volunteers looking to help also need to fill out a form.

LENTEN COMMUNITY SERVICE: Teen SOYO and the Saint Nicholas Men are serving the community this Lenten season at the Houston Food Bank (535 Portwall Street) on Saturday, 4/13 from 1-4pm. Anyone not a part of SOYO or Saint Nicholas is more than welcome to join. Please RSVP with Chris (chrisaldehneh@gmail.com), a final headcount is needed.

TEEN SOYO BIBLE BOWL TEAM: Any teens interested in representing Saint George at the 2024 PLC in Beaumont, TX for Bible Bowl, please reach out to Chris (chrisaldehneh@gmail.com). The Bible Bowl consists of three teens and the book this year is St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. Practices will begin soon, in person or over Zoom, depending on preference. See link below for more information.

The Second Sunday of Great Lent

The Commemoration of St. Gregory Palamas

(The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great)

I. *The Antiphons and Little Entrance as in the service book.*

IV. *After the Little Entrance, the following are chanted:*

-*The Troparion of the Resurrection in tone 2:*

When Thou didst submit Thyself unto death, O Thou deathless and immortal One, then Thou didst destroy hell with Thy Godly power. And when Thou didst raise the dead from beneath the earth, all the powers of Heaven did cry aloud unto Thee: O Christ, Thou giver of life, glory to Thee.

-*The Troparion of St. Gregory Palamas in 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.

-*The Troparion of St. George in tone 4:*

As deliverer of captives, and defender of the poor, healer of the infirm champion of kings, victorious Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God, for our souls' salvation.

-*The Kontakion for the Annunciation (and Great Lent) in 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.

The Epistle

The Lord is my strength and my song.

The Lord has chastened me severely.

The reading is from the St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews (1:10 - 2:3).

Brethren: "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, till I make thy 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 Epistle in Arabic

قَوْتِي وَتَشْبِخَتِي الرَّبِّ.

أَدْبَا أَدْبَنِي الرَّبِّ.

(1:10-2:3) فصلٌ من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى العبرانيين

أَنْتَ يَا رَبُّ فِي الْبَدْءِ أَسَّسْتَ الْأَرْضَ وَالسَّمَاوَاتِ هِيَ صُنْعُ يَدَيْكَ * وَهِيَ تَزُولُ وَأَنْتَ تَبْقَى وَكُلُّهَا تَبْلَى كَالثَّوْبِ * وَتَطْوِيهَا كَالرِّدَاءِ فَتَتَغَيَّرُ، وَأَنْتَ أَنْتَ وَسَنُوكَ لَنْ تَفْنَى * وَلِمَنْ مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ قَالَ قَطُّ اجْلِسْ عَن يَمِينِي حَتَّى أَجْعَلَ أَعْدَاءَكَ مَوْطِنًا لِقَدَمَيْكَ * أَلْيَسُوا جَمِيعُهُمْ أَرْوَاحًا خَادِمَةً تُرْسَلُ لِلخِدْمَةِ مِنْ أَجْلِ الَّذِينَ سَيَرْتَوْنَ الْخَلَاصَ فَلِذَلِكَ يَجِبُ عَلَيْنَا أَنْ نُصْغِيَ إِلَى مَا سَمِعْنَاهُ إِصْغَاءً أَشَدَّ لِكَلَّا نَسْرَبَ مِنْ أَذْهَانِنَا * فَإِنَّهَا إِنْ كَانَتْ الْكَلِمَةُ الَّتِي نُطْقُ بِهَا عَلَى أَلْسِنَةِ مَلَائِكَةٍ قَدْ ثَبَّتَتْ وَكُلُّ تَعَدٍّ وَمَعْصِيَةٍ نَالِ جَزَاءٍ عَذَابًا * فَكَيْفَ نُفْلِتُ نَحْنُ إِنْ أَهْمَلْنَا خَلَاصًا عَظِيمًا كَهَذَا قَدْ ابْتَدَأَ النَّطْقُ بِهِ عَلَى لِسَانِ الرَّبِّ ثُمَّ ثَبَّتَهُ لَنَا الَّذِينَ سَمِعُوهُ.

The Gospel

The reading is from the Holy Gospel 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 you 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 Gospel in Arabic

(2:1–12) فصل شريف من بشارة القديس مرقس الإنجيلي البشير والتلميذ الطاهر

فِي ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانِ دَخَلَ يَسُوعُ كَفَرْنَاحُومَ وَسَمِعَ أَنَّهُ فِي بَيْتٍ * فَلِلْوَقْتِ اجْتَمَعَ كَثِيرُونَ حَتَّى أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَبْعُدْ مَوْضِعٌ وَلَا مَا حَوْلَ الْبَابِ يَسَعُ وَكَانَ يَخَاطِبُهُمْ بِالْكَلِمَةِ * فَأَتَوْا إِلَيْهِ بِمُخْلَعٍ يَحْمِلُهُ أَرْبَعَةٌ * وَإِذْ لَمْ يَقْدِرُوا أَنْ يَقْتَرِبُوا إِلَيْهِ لِسَبَبِ الْجَمْعِ كَشَفُوا السَّقْفَ حَيْثُ كَانَ. وَبَعْدَ مَا تَقَبَّوْهُ دَلُّوا السَّرِيرَ الَّذِي كَانَ الْمُخْلَعُ مُضْطَجِعًا عَلَيْهِ * فَلَمَّا رَأَى يَسُوعُ إِيْمَانَهُمْ قَالَ لِلْمُخْلَعِ يَا بُنَيَّ مَغْفُورَةٌ لَكَ خَطَايَاكَ * وَكَانَ قَوْمٌ مِنَ الْكَتَبَةِ جَالِسِينَ هُنَاكَ يُفَكِّرُونَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَا بَالُ هَذَا يَتَكَلَّمُ هَكَذَا بِالتَّجْدِيفِ. مِنْ يَقْدِرُ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ الْخَطَايَا إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ * فَلِلْوَقْتِ عَلِمَ يَسُوعُ بِرُوحِهِ أَنَّهُمْ يُفَكِّرُونَ هَكَذَا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ لِمَاذَا تُفَكِّرُونَ بِهَذَا فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ * مَا الْأَيُّسَرُ أَنْ يُقَالَ مَغْفُورَةٌ لَكَ خَطَايَاكَ أَمْ أَنْ يُقَالَ قُمْ وَاحْمِلْ سَرِيرَكَ وَامْشِ * وَلَكِنْ لِكَيْ تَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ ابْنَ الْبَشَرِ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ الْخَطَايَا (قَالَ لِلْمُخْلَعِ) لَكَ أَقُولُ قُمْ وَاحْمِلْ سَرِيرَكَ وَادْهَبْ إِلَى بَيْتِكَ * فَقَامَ لِلْوَقْتِ وَاحْمِلَ سَرِيرَهُ وَخَرَجَ أَمَامَ الْجَمِيعِ حَتَّى دَهَشَ كُلُّهُمْ وَمَجَّدُوا اللَّهَ قَائِلِينَ مَا رَأَيْنَا مِثْلَ هَذَا قَطُّ.