

SAIN'TS PETER AND PAUL ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Parish of the Orthodox Church in America
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LORD JESUS CHRIST, SON OF GOD, HAVE MERCY ON ME, A SINNER

March 31, 2013		Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am
April 3	Wednesday	Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts		6:00 pm
April 5	Friday	Akathistos Hymn	Cancelled	
April 6	Saturday	Soul Saturday Divine Liturgy	Cancelled	
	Saturday	Vespers	Cancelled	
April 7		Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross	Divine Liturgy	9:30 am

Please Note: There will be no services this coming Friday and Saturday.
Soul Saturday panikhida will be offered on Wednesday, April 3.

Saints of the Day: Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica. Saint Innocent of Moscow, Enlightener of the Aleuts and Apostle to America (1879). Venerable Hypatius the Wonderworker, Bishop of Gangra (ca. 360). Repose of Saint Jonah, Metropolitan of Kiev, Moscow, and all Russia (1461). New Hieromartyr Priest John (1938). Saint Hypatius the Healer of the Kiev Caves (14 c.). Venerable Apollonius, Ascetic of the Thebaid (395). Martyrs Abdas the Bishop and Benjamin the Deacon, of Persia (424). Venerable Hypatius, Abbot of Rufinus in Chalcedon (446). Righteous Joseph the Fair, son of Jacob (ca. 1700 B.C.). 38 Martyrs, beheaded by the sword under Julian (361-363). Saint Akakios the Confessor, Bishop of Meletinia (249-251). Venerable Blaise of Amorium and Mount Athos (908). Martyr Menander. Saint Stephen the Wonderworker, Monk. Saint Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne (709).

Please remember in your prayers: Archimandrites Alexander, Athanasy, Isidore, Nectarios, Pachomy. Archpriests Jason, John, Vincent. Priests Sergius, Andrij, Vasil. Deacons Philip, Vasil. Mother Raphaela, Sister Deborah. Michael, Stephanie, Zara, Nolan, Emelie, Connie, Michael, Ed, Maria, Michael, John, James, Nancy, Susan, Daniel, Aaron, Mark, Jennifer, Nina, Nadine, Michael, Anna, Gregory, Marianna, Mykola, Helen, Isaiah, Albert, Kevin, Robert, Robert, Andrew, David, Warren,

God Grant Many Years! Prayers for the health of Seminarian Tom Slosky, Terence Dunn, Peter Witiak and Noah Takahashi were offered at Liturgy and Moleben today at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the souls of Metropolitan THEODOSIUS (Nagashima), Mitred Archpriest Vasili Takeoka, Archpriest Alexander Marciniuk and Archpriest Samuel Sulich were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Father John Udics.

Memory Eternal. Prayers for the repose of the soul of Rose Sokol were offered at Liturgy and Litiya today at the request of Christine Sokol.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR:

- Please prepare your list of names for **Soul Saturday Liturgies**. Put the list in an envelope with your donation and hand it to Father John at your earliest convenience.
- **Fasting for the Presanctified Liturgy:** It is the discipline of the Orthodox Church to fast the entire day for the evening Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. The Holy Synod of Bishops has decreed that for those unable to fast for the entire day, a complete fast must be observed from the noon day meal hour.
- **TODAY:** Bishop MICHAEL has given permission to administer the **oath of office** to the Council.
- **April 20: Saturday:** 10:00 am – Pre-Pascha Church Cleaning
- **April 21, 2013: Sunday of Saint Mary of Egypt.** In the presence of the Myrrh-Streaming Icon of Saint Ann, Archimandrite Athanasy of Saint Tikhon's Monastery will lead us in a **Lenten Retreat** after Liturgy.
- **April 24, Wednesday,** Presanctified Divine Liturgy. **His Grace, Bishop MICHAEL** will celebrate.

Saint Gregory Palamas Sunday Sermon by + Metropolitan ANTHONY (Bloom) of Sourozh
In the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

In one of the Psalms we can read the following words: *Those who have sown with tears will reap with joy...* If in the course of weeks of preparation we have seen all that is ugly and unworthy in us mirrored in the parables, if we have stood before the judgement of our conscience and of our God, then we have truly sown in tears our own salvation. And yet, there is still time because even when we enter into the time of the harvest, God gives us a respite; as we progress towards the Kingdom of God, towards the Day of the Resurrection, we still can, at every moment, against the background of salvation, in the face of the victory of God, turn to Him with gratitude and yet, broken-heartedness, and say, 'No, Lord! I am perhaps the worker of the eleventh hour, but receive me as Thou promised to do!'

Last week we have kept the day of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, the day when the Church proclaimed that it was legitimate and right to paint icons of Christ; it was not a declaration about art, it was a deeply theological proclamation of the Incarnation. The Old Testament said to us that God cannot be represented by any image because He was unbottomed mystery; He had even no Name except the mysterious name which only the High Priest knows. But in the New Testament we have learned, and we know from experience that God has become Man, that the fullness of the Godhead has abided and is still abiding forever in the flesh; and therefore God has a human name: Jesus, and He has got a human face that can be represented in icons. An icon is therefore a proclamation of our certainty that God has become man; and He has become man to achieve ultimate, tragic and glorious solidarity with us, to be one of us that we may be one of the children of God. He has become man that we may become gods, as the Scripture tells us. And so, we could last week already rejoice; and this is why, a week before, when we were already preparing to meet this miracle, this wonder of the Incarnation, softly, in an almost inaudible way, the Church was singing the canon of Easter: Christ is risen from the dead! - because it is not a promise for the future, it is a certainty of the present, open to us like a door for us to enter through Christ, the Door as He calls Himself, into eternity.

And today we remember the name of Saint Gregory Palamas, one of the great Saints of Orthodoxy, who against heresy and doubt, proclaimed, from within the experience of the ascetics and of all believers, proclaimed that the grace of God is not a created Gift - it is God Himself, communicating Himself to us so that we are pervaded by His presence, that we gradually, if we only receive Him, open ourselves to Him, become transparent or at least translucent to His light, that we become incipiently and ever increasingly partakers of the Divine nature.

This is not simply a promise; this is a certainty which we have because this has happened to thousands and thousands of those men and women whom we venerate as the Saints of God: they have become partakers of the Divine nature, they are to us a revelation and certainty of what we are called to be and become.

And today one step more brings us into the joy, the glory of Pascha. In a week's time we will sing the Cross - the Cross which was a terror for the criminals, and has become now a sign of victory and salvation, because it is to us the sign that God's love has no measure, no limits, is as deep as God is deep, all-embracing as God is all-embracing, and indeed, as tragically victorious as God is both tragic and victorious, awe-inspiring, and shining the quiet, joyful light which we sing in Vespers.

Let us then make ourselves ready to meet this event, the vision of the Cross, look at it, and see in it the sign of the Divine love, a new certainty of our possible salvation; and when the choir sings this time more loudly the canon of the Resurrection, let us realise that step by step God leads us into a victory which He has won, and which He wants to share with us.

And then we will move on; we will listen to the Saint who teaches us how to receive the grace which God is offering, how to become worthy of Him; and a step more - and we will see the victory of God in Saint Mary of Egypt and come to the threshold of Holy Week. But let us remember that we are now in the time of newness, a time when God's victory has been revealed to us, that we are called to be enfolded by it, to respond to it by gratitude, a gratitude that will make us into new people - and also with joy! And joy full of tears in response to the love of God, and a joy which is a responsible answer to the Divine love. Amen!

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Repentance : Its Real Meaning by Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia.

After His baptism by John in the Jordan and the forty days of temptation in the wilderness, Jesus begins to preach the Good News. And precisely how does His preaching commence? With a single word: Repent! (Matthew 4:17). Such is the starting-point of the Gospel: Repentance.

Yet how fatally easy it is to misunderstand this decisive term 'repentance'! All too often we imagine that it means a feeling of shame and guilt, of remorse and self-disgust. But that is not real repentance. Properly interpreted, repentance is not negative but positive, not backward-looking but forward-looking. It is not gloom but new hope. 'Metanoia', the Greek word for repentance, means literally 'change of mind' - transformation of consciousness, reversed perspective. To repent is to smile, not to frown - to look up, not down. It is not just the recognition that things have gone wrong, but the realization that through Christ they can be put right. It is not the sight of our own ugliness but the vision of God's beauty.

We notice the immediate context in which the saving message of repentance is placed. First the Evangelist quotes from the prophet Isaiah (9: 1-2): *'The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light ...'* Next comes Christ's word of salvation: *'Repent'*. Then He continues, *'The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'* So the call to repentance does not stand on its own, but is preceded by the promise of a 'great light' and it is followed by the proclamation of the heavenly Kingdom.

Saint Theophan the Recluse observes that, so long as a room is in darkness, we do not notice the dirt; but as soon as a bright light is brought into the room, we can see every speck of dust. So it is with repentance. Only when the 'great light' of Christ enters within the room of our heart can we see the dust and so 'change our mind'. The light has to come first, not afterwards, for it is only the shining of the light that makes our repentance possible. And having repented - having accepted the light and changed our mind - we then become aware of the immediacy of God's Kingdom.

Light, repentance, the Kingdom: these three go together.

O Lord and Master of my life, take from the spirit of laziness, despair, lust of power and idle talk.

But grant rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience and love to Thy servant.

Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother; for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. Amen.