



# CHRIST THE SAVIOR ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## BULLETIN OF FEBRUARY 28, 2010

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28<sup>TH</sup>

#### ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

8:40a.m. Hours  
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
 Coffee Hour

### MONDAY, MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>

7:00p.m. Lenten Vespers  
 Greatest Story: Part II

### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3<sup>RD</sup>

7:00p.m. Presanctified Liturgy  
 Lenten Potluck

### SATURDAY, MARCH 6<sup>TH</sup>

#### MEMORIAL SATURDAY

9:00a.m. Memorial  
 5:00p.m. Orthodoxy 101  
 6:00p.m. Great Vespers

### SUNDAY, MARCH 7<sup>TH</sup>

#### SUNDAY OF THE CROSS

8:40a.m. Hours  
 9:00a.m. Divine Liturgy  
 Coffee Hour  
 Paschal Choir Practice

*"It is more important that we should remember God than that we should breathe: indeed, if one may say so, we should do nothing else besides."*

St. Gregory the Theologian

#### READER SCHEDULE

**Sunday, Mar. 7<sup>th</sup>**

Jodi McElwee

**Sunday, Mar. 14<sup>th</sup>**

Bruce Eckerd



#### Please Remember in Prayer

Gabriela Jones, Connie Mitsopolous, Melvin Woodall, Patty Leyse, Mat. Dunia Hubiak, Anna Varone, Jerrie Rife, Michelle Wilson, Bill & Kathy Parrish, Carole Boris (newly-departed), Archpriest Michael, Monk Christian, Marie, Thomas, Judith Kocinski, Jane Koshutko, Robert Evanusa, Nicholas & Linda, Nicholas, Anna, Steven, Yvonne, Katherine, Michael, Gregory, Todd & Olga Leisure, Nina Gordon, Constantina & Christos, Mirela & Chris, Jaroslav, Troy Paul Duker, Frank & Mary Miranda, Kathy T. Requests? Please see Fr. John.

#### The 2010 Parish Council Officers

At this past Sunday's meeting of the Parish Council, the following officers were elected: Diane Evanusa (senior warden), Alice Peters (junior warden), and Michael McFarland (treasurer). The position of secretary was not up for election and Gabriela Jones remains at this post. May the Lord bless all the officers and members of the 2010 Parish Council!



#### The Finance Committee

will meet again tomorrow, Monday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, at 6pm at the church.

#### Congratulations!

to all those celebrating their birthdays, namesdays, and anniversaries this March, especially Matushka Emily who is celebrating her 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. May the Lord grant all of you many blessed years!

#### Lenten Vespers / Orthodox Movie Nights

On Mondays this Great Lent, we will have the Lenten Vespers followed by the film, "The Greatest Story Ever Told"; a 1965 retelling of the life of Christ, from the Nativity through the Resurrection. The 199 minute film will be broken into five 40 minute segments.



#### A Note on Potlucks

As a reminder, instead of individual people volunteering for coffee hour on Sundays we have opted for a potluck, where those who can bring something are asked to please do so. There will also be potlucks offered following the Presanctified Liturgy on Wednesdays.

#### Choir Practice

There will be a special choir practice following the coffee hour next Sunday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. We will be going over music for Holy Week and Pascha. Fr. John's mother, Daria, who will direct the choir for us again this Pascha, is making a special trip to be here for this choir practice. All choir members are asked to please make an effort to be present. Thank you!



#### St. George's in Ocean City's Paschal Dinner

All are invited for a Paschal Dinner on Sunday April 4 2009. A flyer with details of the event is available in the back.

## Patriarch Blesses Paralympic National Team

On February 18, 2010 on the threshold of the X Paralympic winter games in Vancouver patriarch Cyril met with the members of Para Olympic team of Russia in Christ's the Savior Cathedral. "By the fact of your participation you testify to the entire world about the victory of man over himself, said the Patriarch to the Para Olympic national team.

"Regardless of the results, the very fact of your participation in the competitions is an expression of this great victory. We frequently speak, that the society must be more attentive to people with handicaps but it is society who needs to be more attentive to them. People, who bear on themselves the seal of grief and suffering and who conquer in themselves this grief and suffering are a bright and strong example to entire society."

### About the Paralympic Games

*The Paralympic Games are a multi-sport event for athletes with physical and visual disabilities. This includes athletes with mobility disabilities, amputations, blindness, and cerebral palsy. The Paralympic Games are held every four years, following the Olympic Games, and are governed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC). The Paralympic Games are sometimes confused with the Special Olympics World Games, which are only for people with intellectual disabilities. (From Wikipedia.org)*



## Sense of Humor Needed

From Anonymous Sources

Doug was leaving church after Christmas services when Father McCarthy took him aside. "Douglas, my son," he said, "it's time you joined the Army of the Lord. We need to see you every Sunday."

"I'm already in the Army of the Lord, Father," Doug replied.

"Then why do we only see you on Christmas and Easter?"

Doug looked to the right and to the left, and then leaned over to whisper in Father McCarthy's ear. "I'm in the Secret Service."



## MARCH CONGRATULATIONS!

### Birthdays:

3/1	Stephen Parrish
3/5	Mat. Emily Parsells
3/6	John Jenkins
3/8	Monica Stoicovy
3/21	Fr. John Parsells
3/24	Mat. Dunia Hubiak

### Namesdays:

3/1	St. Evdokia
	Mat. Dunia Hubiak
	Karen Nichols

*If your name is not on this list and it should be, please see Fr. John, as soon as possible!*



## ABOUT ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

This divine Father, who was from Asia Minor, was from childhood reared in the royal court of Constantinople, where he was instructed in both religious and secular wisdom. Later, while still a youth, he left the imperial court and struggled in asceticism on Mount Athos, and in the Skete at Beroea. He spent some time in Thessalonica being treated for an illness that came from his harsh manner of life. He was present in Constantinople at the Council that was convened in 1341 against Barlaam of Calabria, and at the Council of 1347

against Acindynus, who was of like mind with Barlaam; Barlaam and Acindynus claimed that the grace of God is created. At both these Councils, the Saint contended courageously for the true dogmas of the Church of Christ, teaching in particular that divine grace is not created, but is the uncreated energies of God which are poured forth throughout creation: otherwise it would be impossible, if grace were created, for man to have genuine communion with the uncreated God. In 1347 he was appointed Metropolitan of Thessalonica. He tended his flock in an apostolic manner for some twelve years, and wrote many books and treatises on the most exalted doctrines of our Faith; and having lived for a total of sixty-three years, he reposed in the Lord in 1359.

The idea that any Westerner has about fasting is strongly linked with renunciation, with giving-up, with sacrificing something for God. In the Eastern Orthodox Church however, fasting achieves a much richer meaning. Fasting is not only about giving up, but it is actually more about gaining, about being able to reach things that are possible only through this spiritual exercise.

In a legalistic understanding of salvation some believe that Christ has come on earth to fulfill a duty, to repair an offense that man has brought unto God. His sacrifice on the Cross satisfies this need and mankind enters again in God's favors. From this perspective fasting is a similar symbol: a personal sacrifice that one makes to step back into God's grace. This can be anything ranging from giving up chocolate to abstaining from Facebook for the Lenten period. But such frivolous renunciations really don't cut it into the genuine meaning of fasting. God doesn't need any of these sacrifices as He does not need the whole burnt offering of the Old Testament anymore. It is us, not God, who need the fasting rule.

Reducing the fasting to a symbol, to a mere idea of fasting, the entire exercise of Great Lent is perverted. Fasting becomes a theoretical notion that can be achieved through an act that involves little or no effort because, at the end, is not the fasting that is important, but only the idea of fasting. This intellectual reduction is yet another symptom of our brokenness, of the ontological separation between our mind and our heart. Seduced by dry rationality the mind construes an entire new reality that we confuse many times with the true authenticity of existence that only a heart open to God can perceive.

In this world, made-up by our minds saturated with secular values, the importance of the complete involvement of the body in fasting is forgotten, because for the mind a symbol is enough. But man does not exist in a fantasy of the mind, but lives in the real world, as a true person, body and souls, both physical and spiritual.

Christ saves the world not by spreading the idea of salvation, but coming down Himself, taking body

from the Virgin Mary and physically becoming one of us; not a ghost, not a spirit, but flesh and bones. His death on the cross was not a symbol, but a painful reality. His resurrection was not a simple story full of morality, but the defining moment of a new stage in human existence. By reducing everything to symbols we end up living in our minds and missing the genuine existence.

In the Orthodox understanding man is utterly aware that living in a physical world, with a corrupted and fallen nature, the body is subject to passions that affect the state of his entire being. Controlling the body through fasting directs the entire human being towards God, because "a body subdued by fasting brings the human spirit freedom, strength, sobriety, purity, and keen discernment." (St. Ignatius Brianchaninov). In a paradoxical way by starving the body the entire human being is nourished spiritually and is able to "ascend on high, to contemplate lofty things and to put the heavenly higher than the pleasant and pleasurable things of life." (St. John Chrysostom).

We don't want however to reduce the experience of fasting to a mere vegetarian diet. The Great Lent is a period of total transformation, of metanoia, as the Greek fathers call it. The faster should strive to change his or hers entire way of life, redirecting priorities, seeking new avenues to God, striving for perfection in Christ. As St. Basil the Great advises "True fasting lies in rejecting evil, holding one's tongue, suppressing one's hatred, and banishing one's lust, evil words, lying, and betrayal of vows."

From this perspective we can truly say, paraphrasing St. John Chrysostom, that fasting of the body is a feast for the soul. A soul liberated from the weight of an overfed body and nourished with the manna of virtues can reach into the spiritual heights, free of the passions that drag it to the ground. Such a soul can pray more, can forgive more, can love more. Fasting is not a simple renunciation but an exercise of love, as salvation is not an honor satisfying sacrifice but the greatest act of love ever seen.

