

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 Easter. 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 realize 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 Saints who teach 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 is 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!

(Instead of "It is truly meet ...," we sing the following:)

Hymn to the Theotokos

All of creation rejoices in you, 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 your body into a throne,
and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens.
All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace.
Glory to you!



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Bulletin for Sunday, March 16, 2014

Second Sunday of Lent • Tone 5

Hebrews 1:10-2:3, Mark 2:1-12

Commemorations: St. Gregory Palamas. Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra. Martyr Sabinas of Egypt (287). Martyr Papas of Lyconia (305-311). St. Serapion, Archbishop of Novgorod (1516). Apostle Aristobulus of the Seventy, Bishop of Britain (1st c.). Hieromartyr Alexander, Pope of Rome (119). Martyr Julian of Anazarbus (3rd c.). Hieromartyrs Trophimus and Thalys, of Laodicea (ca. 300).

Welcome to Our Visitors

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy and services. While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to participate in our prayers and hymns and to join us in venerating the Cross and receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Liturgy. Feel free to ask questions before or after the services. Literature about the Orthodox faith and this parish can be found at the candle desk. Please sign our guest book and join us for refreshments and fellowships downstairs after Liturgy.

Please pray for: Olga, Vera, Richard, Daria, Daria, Evelyn, Sarah, Nancy, Alla, June, Nina, Joan, Luke, Alex, Alan, Nadia, Glenn, Kathryn, Elizabeth, Helen, Mary, Elena, Ivan, Jevon, Kyra, and Roderick.

Many Years! to: Stephanie Ruperto, Andrew Boyd and Matthew Kuziak on the occasion of their birthdays.

Upcoming Events

Monday, March 17th
6th Hour at 12p

Tuesday, March 18th
1st Hour at 7am
Choir Rehearsal at 7pm

Wednesday, March 19th
Open Doors at 4:30p
Liturgy of the PreSanctified Gifts at 6:30p

Thursday, March 20th
6th Hour at 12p

Friday, March 21st
1st Hour at 7am
Compline at 8pm

Saturday, March 22nd
Great Vespers at 5:30p

Sunday, March 23rd
Divine Liturgy at 9:30a
Lenten Vespers at 4p - St. Mary's Protection 10 Oakwood Street Bridgeport

Announcements

Confession is available before any services, after Vespers, during "Open Doors" or by appointment. You are encouraged to begin this lenten season by receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation as soon as possible. Do not wait until Holy Week!

Several "lectures" and "podcasts" have been burned to CD and placed in the Library. Topics vary from the Rule of Prayer to the History of Orthodoxy in America. They have been provided for your enjoyment and edification. Please borrow at your leisure, but return the CDs when you have finished with them so that others might have the same opportunity to learn more about our Faith

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh
Saint Gregory Palamas Sunday
11 March 1990

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, 'Oh, 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 inscrutable mystery, He had even no Name except the mysterious Name which only the High Priest knew. 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