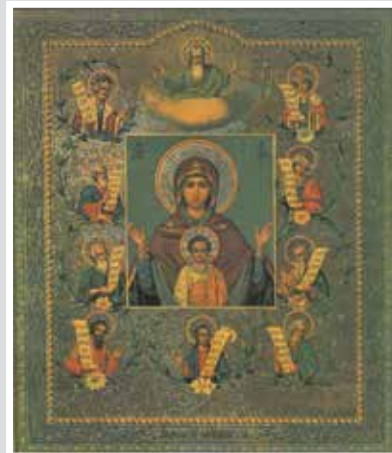




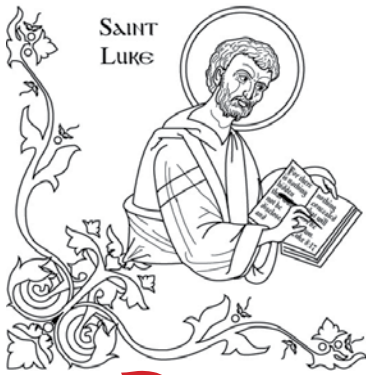
SAINTS OF THE DAY

Sunday, March 8th, 2025 • 2nd Sun. of Lent • St. Gregory Palamas

Apostle Hermas of the Seventy, Bishop in Philipopolis (1st century); Martyr Dius, by the sword; Martyrs Quinctilian and Capatolinus, at Nicomedia; Venerable Dometius, reposed in peace (363); Hieromartyr Theodoretus, priest, of Antioch (361-363); Venerable Paul the Confessor, bishop of Plousias in Bithynia (c. 840); Saint Theophylactus, Bishop of Nicomedia (842); Righteous Tarasius the Wonderworker, of Lycaonia; Saint Pontius of Carthage, a Deacon of the Church of Carthage (c. 260); Hieromartyr Cyril, a bishop, with martyrs Rogatus, Felix, another Rogatus, Beata, Herenia, Felicitas, Urban, Silvanus and Mamillus, martyrs in North Africa; Saint Provinus, Bishop of Como in Italy (c. 420); Saint Beoadh, Bishop of Ardcarne in Roscommon in Ireland (c. 518); Saint Senán mac Geirrcinn, a monk in Kilmanagh in Ireland (c. 540); Saint Felix of Burgundy, Bishop of Dunwich and Enlightener of East Anglia (c. 648); Saint Julian of Toledo, Archbishop of Toledo and Confessor (690); Saint Humphrey, Bishop of Therouanne in France and was Abbot of St Bertin (871); Saint Duthac, Bishop of Ross, patron saint of Tain, Scotland (d. 1065); Venerable Saints Lazarus (1391) and Athanasius (15th century), monks of Murman Island, Onega Lake, Republic of Karelia; New Hieromartyr John Znamensky, Priest (1923); Martyr Vladimir Ushkov (1942); Saint Andronicus (Lukash), Schema-Archimandrite of Tbilisi, Georgia, Elder of Glinsk Hermitage (1974); New Martyr and Confessor John of Sonkajanranta (Johannes (Ivan) Vasileinpoika Karhapää) (1884–1918); New Hieromartyr Liviu (Galaction) of Cluj, professor in theology at Cluj-Napoca, Confessor of the Faith in communist Romania (1961); **“Kursk Root” Icon of the Sign of the Most Holy Theotokos (“Kurska-Korinna”) (1295)**; Repose of Blessed Basiliscus of Uglich (1863); Repose of Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko) of Eastern America (1960)



A detailed description of the cover icon can be found on our website,
www.stlukeanniston.org



ST. LUKE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Diocese of the South, Orthodox Church in America

1415 Woodstock Ave., Anniston, AL 36207

The Very Rev. Archbishop Father Basil Henry

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<https://stlukeanniston.org>

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **We welcome our visitors.** Please join us for a potluck meal after Liturgy so you can get to know us. Communion is for Orthodox Christians who have fasted before Liturgy but everyone is welcome to the blessed bread an Altar Server will offer.
- Grant, O Lord, a prosperous and peaceful life, health, salvation, and furtherance in all good things to all Thy servants who are celebrating birthdays, namesdays and anniversaries, and preserve them for **MANY YEARS!**
- We are celebrating the **Liturgy of St. Basil** and will every Sunday until Palm Sunday. You'll find the service book in the rack by the front door.
- Our **Annual Parish meeting** will be next Sunday, March 15th, after liturgy. Everyone is welcome but only members are allowed to vote.
- If you wish to receive **Communion** on Wednesday, please begin to fast after lunch.

This Week's Fasting, Services and Scripture Readings

Mon., 3/9	Tues., 3/10	Wed., 3/11	Thurs., 3/12	Fri., 3/13	Sat., 3/14	Sun., 3/15
<i>Great Lent</i>						
						Divine Liturgy, 10 a.m.
		Presanctified, 4:00 p.m.			Great Vespers, 4:00 p.m.	Brunch & Fellowship
Gen. 6:9-22	Gen. 7:1-5	Gen. 7:6-9	Gen. 7:11-8:3	Gen. 8:4-21	Heb. 10:32-38	Heb. 4:14-5:6
Proverbs 8:1-21	Proverbs 8:32-9:11	Proverbs 9:12-18	Proverbs 10:1-22	Proverbs 10:31-11:12	Mark 2:14-17	Mark 8:34-9:1
Isaiah 8:13-9:7	Isaiah 9:9-10:4	Isaiah 10:12-20	Isaiah 11:10-12:2	Isaiah 13:2-13	1 Thess. 4:13-17	
					John 5:24-30	

Service times are subject to change. Any questions, text Subdeacon Nicholas @ (256) 343-1141 or nmbailey@me.com.

You can also visit stlukeanniston.org for the latest schedule.

Divine Liturgy

of St. Basil the Great

Troparia/Kontakia

REFER TO PAGE 6 IN THE LITURGY BOOK.

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 6)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb; * the guards became as dead men. Mary stood by Thy grave, * seeking Thy most pure body. * Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it. * Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. 8 O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, ** glory to Thee.

Troparion to St. Luke the Evangelist (Tone 5)

The Holy Apostle, the all-hymned Luke, * who is acknowledged by the Church of Christ * as the recorder of the Acts of the Apostles* and the splendid author of the Gospel of Christ, * let us praise with sacred hymns * as a Physician who healeth the infirmities of man * and the ailments of nature, * who cleanseth spiritual wounds ** and prayeth unceasingly for our souls.

Troparion for St. Gregory Palamas (Tone 8)

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation, * O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians, * O wonderworking Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace, ** always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved!

Kontakion to St. Luke the Evangelist (Tone 2)

Thou becamest a disciple of God the Word, * with Paul thou didst enlighten all the world, * casting out its darkness *** by composing the Holy Gospel of Christ.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit...

Kontakion for St. Gregory Palamas (Tone 8)

Holy and divine instrument of wisdom, * joyful trumpet of theology, * together we sing your praises, O God-inspired Gregory. * Since you now stand before the Original Mind, guide our minds to Him, O Father, ** so that we may sing to you: “Rejoice, preacher of grace!”

Both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Kontakion for the 2nd Sunday of Lent (Tone 4)

Now is the time for action! * Judgment is at the doors! * So let us rise and fast, * offering alms with tears of compunction and crying: * Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea; * but forgive us, O Master of all, ** so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!”

Scripture Readings

REFER TO PAGES 7-9 IN THE LITURGY BOOK.

Prokeimenon

Tone 5

(Song of the Fathers)

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever.

V. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!

Tone 1

(for St. Gregory Palamas)

V: My mouth shall speak wisdom, the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.

The Epistle Reading

Hebrews 1:10-2:3

(for the Second Sunday of Lent)

Thou, O Lord, in the Beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

Hebrews 7:26-8:2

(for St. Gregory Palamas)

Brethren, such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.

Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Alleluia

Tone 5

(for the Sunday)

V. I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.

V. For Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens.

Tone 2

(for St. Gregory Palamas)

V: The mouth of the righteous shall meditate wisdom and his tongue shall speak of judgment.

The Gospel Reading

Mark 2:1-12

(for the 2nd Sunday of Lent)

At that time: Jesus entered Capernaum and 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 him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him 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, “My son, your sins are forgiven.” Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, “Why does this man speak thus? It is a blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, “Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, take up your 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!”

John 10:9-16

(for St. Gregory Palamas)

The Lord said: “I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd.”

Theotokion

(for the Liturgy of St. Basil)

REFER TO PAGES 21-22 IN THE LITURGY BOOK.

*All of creation rejoiceth in thee, 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 thy body into a throne,
and thy womb He made more spacious than the heavens.
All of creation rejoiceth in thee, O Full of Grace.//
Glory to thee!*



The Paralytic Borne by Four

Mark 2:1-12

From *The Explanation of the Gospel of St. Mark*
by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

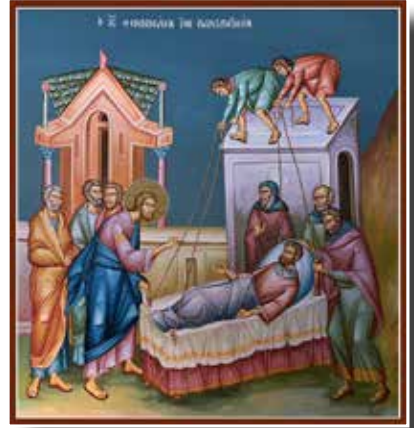
1-5. And again He entered into Capernaum after some days; and it was heard that He was in the house. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no, not so much as about the door: and He preached the word unto them. And they come unto Him, bringing a paralytic who was borne by four. And when they could not come nigh unto Him for the press, they uncovered the roof where He was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the paralytic, Child, thy sins be forgiven thee.

What does this mean, *after some days*? (Theophylact is here interpreting for his contemporary Greek reader of 1100 AD the somewhat difficult New Testament Greek phrase δι' ἡμερῶν.) It means, "when several days had gone by." When Jesus had entered the house, the people heard that He was inside and all came running, hoping that it would be easy to meet Him there. The faith of those men was so great that they even made an opening in the roof through which they lowered the paralytic. Thereupon the Lord healed him, seeing the faith of those who carried him, or of the paralytic himself. For the paralytic would not have agreed to be carried if he himself had not believed that he would be healed. Many times the Lord healed the unbelieving sick on account of the faith of those who brought them. Similarly, He often healed the one brought to Him because of that man's faith, despite the unbelief of those who brought him. First He forgives the sins of the sick man and then He cures the disease, since the most severe illnesses occur for the most part as a result of sins. So it is that the Lord said of the paralytic in John's Gospel that it was as a result of sins that the man had been paralyzed (John 5:5-15). But the paralytic in John's Gospel is not the same one mentioned here. For the man in John's account had no one to help him, while this man had four. And that man was by the Sheep's Pool; this man was in the house. And this one was in Capernaum, while the other was in Jerusalem, to name but a few differences. But know that the paralytic mentioned by Matthew (9:2-8) and the one mentioned here by Mark are one and the same.

6-12. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only? And Jesus, immediately knowing in His spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Is it easier to say to the paralytic, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath authority on earth to forgive sins—He saith to the paralytic—I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

When the Lord said that He could forgive sins, the Pharisees falsely accused Him of blasphemy, since God alone can forgive sins. But the Lord gives yet more evidence that He is God, by revealing what was in their hearts. God alone knows what is in the heart of each, for, as the prophet says, *Thou alone knowest the hearts of the sons of men.* (II Chron. 6:30, III Kings 8:39) Although the Lord had revealed their innermost thoughts, the Pharisees remained senseless, not conceding that He Who knew their hearts could heal their sins as well. By healing the body, the Lord makes credible and certain the healing of the soul as well, confirming the invisible by means of the visible, and the more difficult by what was easier, though it did not appear so to the Pharisees. For the Pharisees thought it was more difficult to heal the body, because it was something visible. And they thought that it was easy to say that the soul had been healed because this

healing was invisible. Perhaps they were thinking thoughts like these: “Look at this deceiver. He declined to heal the body which is visible, and instead claims to heal the soul which is invisible, saying, *Thy sins be forgiven thee*. Certainly, were He able, He would heal the body rather than pretend to do something that cannot be seen.” Therefore the Saviour shows them that He is able to do both, saying, “Which is easier? To heal the body or the soul? Certainly it is easier to heal the body, but you think just the opposite. So I will heal the body, which in fact is easy, although it seems difficult to you. By so doing I will confirm the healing of the soul as well, which is difficult although it seems easy because it is invisible and cannot be verified.” Then He says to the paralytic, *Arise, and take up thy bed*, to confirm even more that the miracle was not a phantasy, and also to show that He had not only healed him but had filled him with strength.



The Lord does the same with our spiritual sicknesses. He not only delivers us from our sins, but fills us with strength to do His commandments. Therefore I, too, who am a paralytic can be healed. For Christ at this very moment is in Capernaum, which, interpreted, is *the house of comfort and consolation*, which is the Church. For the house of the Comforter is the Church. I, too, am a paralytic, for the powers of my soul are inert and will not move to do good. But if I am carried by the four Evangelists and brought to the Lord, then I will hear Him call me, *Child*, (for by doing His commandments I become a son of God) and my sins will be forgiven me.

But how can I be brought to Jesus? If they make an opening in the roof. And what is the roof? It is my mind, which over-arches all that is within me. It is a roof made of many earthen and clay tiles, signifying earthly affairs. But if all these things are pulled away, and the strength of the mind within us is opened up and freed of the weight of earthly things, then I will be lowered, that is, I will be humbled. For I ought not to rise up in pridefulness that I have been unburdened of earthly things; but instead, after I have been unburdened of earthly things, I ought to be lowered, that is, humbled. Then I will be healed and I will take up my bed, which is my body, and employ it to do the commandments. For I should not only be raised up from sin and understand that I sin; I should also take up my bed, that is, get my body up and set it to do good. Then we shall also be able to see with spiritual eyes, so that all our thoughts within us can say, *We never saw it on this fashion*, which means, “We never understood until now that we were paralytics and have now been healed.”

Do Not Neglect Salvation

Hebrews 1:10-2:3

From *The Explanation of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews*
by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria

1:10. And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. Paul does not want you to interpret his saying, *he bringeth in the first begotten into the world* as if the world were a gift bestowed on the Son subsequently by the Father, so he now indicates that the Son is the Creator of the world—*not in the last days*, but since the very beginning. This cuts against Paul of Samosata by portraying Christ as the Maker of creation even before taking on flesh from Mary. It also contradicts Arian, who makes the Son out to be an assistant, or even an instrument, because earlier Paul had said, *by whom also he made the ages*—Paul presents him here as the Creator himself! Note how the description of his uncreated nature and that of the economy are intertwined, and Paul will sometimes speak loftily about

the former, and sometimes humbly about the latter.

1:11-12. They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. Paul alludes here to something even greater than creation—the reconfiguration of the world. All things shall change from corruption into incorruption, as easily as *folding up a vesture*. If transformation and creation of what is greater can be so easily achieved, can creation of what is less require anything more? It is no small comfort to believers suffering in this life to know that things will not always be this way, but that a change is coming, and that the one whom they worship shall live forever: *Thy years shall not fail*.

1:13. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Paul again encourages the Hebrews in the knowledge that their enemies will be vanquished, and that their enemies are likewise foes of Christ. The Father did not promise to subdue the Son's enemies because the Son was powerless—if the Son will one day be their judge, then there is no reason why he could not repay them now—but because the Father wished to honor the Son. Is it not a sign of honor that the Father's wrath burns against the Son's enemies? Does it not signify his deep love for the Son? Paul speaks more comprehensively on this passage in 1 Corinthians; refer to my comments there. (1 COR. 15:25-27)



1:14. Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation? Paul elevates the minds of his listeners by showing how much God cares for us, since he even deploys *angels to minister to our salvation*, even though they are superior to us. Paul is also evidently discouraging some who were too devoted to the angels or rather, all the Hebrews in general, since they were devoted to the law that had been given by *angels* (HEB 2:2; ACTS 7:53; GAL 3:19) and the *ministry* prescribed therein, favoring it over Christ. “Do not

attend to them—they are your fellow servants.” Note how Paul sees no great difference between creatures; even though angels are much greater than men, Paul puts them close together. One creature can only be so much greater than another. *Angels ministered* often in the Old Testament and in the New: they warned Joseph, gave glad tidings to the shepherds, (MATT 2:13) sat at the graveside and announced the resurrection, (MATT 28:6) and told the disciples at the ascension that he would come again in the same way. (ACTS 1:11) An angel came to Cornelius, (ACTS 10:3) to Philip, (ACTS 8:26) to Peter in prison, (ACTS 12:7) and on many, many other occasions like those. Observe that it is the occupation of the angels to *minister to the salvation* of mankind, and even of Christ himself. Let us not, therefore, disregard such *ministry*.

2:1. Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard. “Since the Son who has spoken to us is so far superior to the prophets and angels who ministered in the Old Testament, *we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which* have been said in the law.” Paul does not come out and say this plainly to avoid offending the Hebrews right from the outset; instead, he lets them draw the logical conclusions. He is not pitting the Old Testament against the New either (heaven forbid!), but only the Hebrews' inflated veneration for the Old Testament against their disregard for the New. **Lest at any time we should slip away.*** That means, “*lest we should* fall away, perish.” Paul took this expression from Proverbs: My son, do not slip away.** This shows just how easy it is to slip, and how terrible the downfall, for what has *slipped away* can scarcely return.

2:2. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast. Paul is concealing what he means to say. *The word spoken by angels* could refer to the ten commandments, since the angels entrusted with the care of the nation

were certainly present there, and it was they who blew the trumpets, and did all the other things, such as the fire and thick darkness. As he says in Galatians, *ordained by angels*, (GAL 3:19) and again, *received the law by the disposition of angels*. (ACTS 7:53) Alternatively, the word could be the instructions conveyed in the Old Testament by angels, such as at the place of weeping, (JUDGES 2:1) for the judges, (JUDGES 6:11) and for Samson. (JUDGES 13:3) That might be why he does not say “the law” but the word. All of these things are steadfast, meaning “they came true,” the threats were realized, and nothing failed to come to pass. **And every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward.** Not just “some *transgression and disobedience*,” but every one—nothing will go unrequited. *Reward* here refers to “punishment”, even though the term is usually taken in the positive sense, the Apostle is not unduly concerned with words.

2:3. How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? “In the Old Testament they had the *word*, but now we have *salvation*. What *salvation* they did have was not of consequence: they were saved from their enemies in battle and received the richness of the land. But our *salvation* is *great* (which is why he says *so great salvation*). The destruction of death, the downfall of the demons, the kingdom of heaven—all these things promised by the Son are yours.” **Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.** Paul substantiates his claims: “This salvation was not *spoken* by prophets or angels, but personally *by the Lord* of all. It *first began* from the very wellspring itself. From there it was then conveyed to us, securely and reliably, by the very *eyewitnesses and ministers of the word*, as Luke reports. (LUKE 1:2) They *confirmed unto us* the message.” Why does Paul elsewhere claim that he did not hear the gospel from men? (GAL 1:11) Because there it was important and necessary for him to back up his claim that he was not a disciple of mere men. His detractors were claiming that he had not heard the Lord, to the point where his preaching was in danger of being rejected by his disciples. But in this context, there is no need for that. He had never taught the Hebrews, and no one had falsely claimed he had taught that he was a disciple of men, and not of Christ. Or else he may have added the phrase, *God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders* to show that it was not from men that he received the gospel, but from *God*.

* KJV: *let them slip*. The KJV notes that a more literal rendering of the Greek is *run out as leaking vessels*, and refers the reader to a similar meaning in Job 6:15. Theophylact concurs that this verb envisions not “letting the things which we have slip away”, but “slipping away ourselves.”

** Prov 3:21. Brenton OT translation: *My son, let them not pass from thee*. Like the KJV translation of Heb 2:1, the Brenton translation of Prov 3:21 renders this passive verb with an active sense.

Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas

The Holy Church calls the second Sunday of Great Lent the Sunday of the Light-Creating Fasts. In its Divine services, in line with the destruction of the sinful condition of man, it is descriptively and touchingly represented in the church hymns, which explains the Gospel parable about the Prodigal son, and praises the fast as a means to the beneficial inner light, and posits in this glorification a new impulse for the ascetic effort of the fast. The Orthodox teaching about fasting as a means for the beneficial inner light is opened with special power in the commemoration on this Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica and Wonderworker (see Nov. 14).

St. Gregory is known as the one who exposed the heresy of Barlaam, the Calabrian monk, who rejected the Orthodox teaching about the blessed light, which illuminates the internal person sometimes openly visible (as for example on Tabor and Sinai), and who did not admit the possibility to achieve this inner light through both prayer and fasting and other individual efforts. At the Council in Constantinople called in 1341 concerning this heresy, Barlaam, his disciple Akindynos, and their other accomplices were condemned for this false teaching. And during the subsequent time of his life St. Gregory zealously struggled for Orthodoxy, “not once”, but “many times many” through his inspired speeches and writings denying the teachings and compositions of the evil followers of Akindynos and Barlaam.

For this ascetic effort for the benefit of the Holy Church, and also for the confession and witness for the Faith and Christ’s flock, for the sanctity of the strict ascetic life and the deep edification for all ascetics through his works, St. Gregory is also glorified in the service on this day by the Holy Church. Thus the Holy Church, celebrating on the previous Sunday the triumph of Orthodoxy over all heresies, on the present Sunday celebrates the victory of Orthodox ascetic teachings over all false doctrines opposing it. The first celebration is in general for all Orthodox Christians; the second is for the use of ascetics, the monks.

Patriarch Philotheus of Constantinople composed the church service in honor of the originator of this latter celebration, for St. Gregory. In it St. Gregory is also glorified, as “the labor of theology, the flaming mouthpiece of grace, the honorable vessel of the Spirit, the unshakable pillar of the church, the great adornment of the universe”, “the sword and arrows for the slanderers” that broke, “the pride of Barlaamites, and any heretical power”, “like the web of spiders” he brushed away, “the preacher of the divine light, the initiate of the heavenly mysteries of the Trinity”, “the healer of human infirmities”, “the most holy father, the good shepherd”, “you gave your soul for your sheep”, “the firm sufferer and faster”, “the advocate of the pious, and the opponent of the impious, the fervent defender of the faith, the great guide and teacher”, “the adornment of monastic life, glorified in action and contemplation”.

By Sergei V. Bulgakov [https://www.jobsanidopoulos.com/2011/03/st-gregory-palamas-and-second-sunday-of.html



Let my prayer...

During the season of the Great Fast, this being the time of repentance, the ancient discipline did not permit joyous and triumphant celebrations such as the Divine Liturgy.

The liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is a special service. It is a combination of Vespers and a Communion service and is traditionally celebrated on Wednesdays of the six weeks of Great Lent.



... arise like incense
before You.

Liturgy of The Presanctified Gifts

Every Wednesday during Lent @ 4:00 p.m.

St. Luke Orthodox Church
1415 Woodstock Ave., Anniston, Alabama