

*We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy for Coffee hour.*



# ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

## OCA – Diocese of New York & New Jersey

The Most Reverend Michael, Archbishop of NY & the Diocese of NY/NJ

V. Rev. Dr. Matthew Searfoorce, Temporary Rector

Sub-Deacon Edward Dawson    Sub-Deacon Vlashi

Parish Council President: Andrew Romanofsky

Parish Council Vice President: Dean Inferrera

## HYMNS OF THE DAY

### Resurrectional Troparion in 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. O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

### Troparion St Gregory Palamas in 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 from the Lenten Triodion in 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!”

### Kontakion St Gregory Palamas in Tone 8

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

### *Prayer Requests*

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#### *For Health of:*

**Joseph Hartzel**, on his birthday, offered by Denise Hartzel.

**Denise Hartzel**

# SAINTS AND FEASTS OF THE DAY

MARCH 4, 2018

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT: ST. GREGORY PALAMAS



## *2nd Sunday of Great Lent: St Gregory Palamas*

This Sunday was originally dedicated to Saint Polycarp of Smyrna (February 23). After his glorification in 1368, a second commemoration of Saint Gregory Palamas (November 14) was appointed for the Second Sunday of Great Lent as a second “Triumph of Orthodoxy.”

Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, was born in the year 1296 in Constantinople. Saint Gregory’s father became a prominent dignitary at the court of Andronicus II Paleologos (1282-1328), but he soon died, and Andronicus himself took part in the raising and education of the fatherless boy. Endowed with fine abilities and great diligence, Gregory mastered all the subjects which then comprised the full course of medieval higher education. The emperor hoped that the youth would devote himself to government work. But Gregory, barely twenty years old, withdrew to Mount Athos in the year 1316 (other sources say 1318) and became a novice in the Vatopedi monastery under the guidance of the monastic Elder Saint Nicodemus of Vatopedi (July 11). There he was tonsured and began on the path of asceticism. A year later, the holy Evangelist John the Theologian appeared to him in a vision and promised him his spiritual protection. Gregory’s mother and sisters also became monastics.

After the demise of the Elder Nicodemus, Saint Gregory spent eight years of spiritual struggle under the guidance of the Elder Nicephorus, and after the latter’s death, Gregory transferred to the Lavra of Saint Athanasius (July 5). Here he served in the trapeza, and then became a church singer. But after three years, he resettled in the small skete of Glossia, striving for a greater degree of spiritual perfection. The head of this monastery began to teach the young man the method of unceasing prayer and mental activity, which had been cultivated by monastics, beginning with the great desert ascetics of the fourth century: Evagrius Pontikos and Saint Macarius of Egypt (January 19).

Later on, in the eleventh century Saint Simeon the New Theologian (March 12) provided detailed instruction in mental activity for those praying in an outward manner, and the ascetics of Athos put it into practice. The experienced use of mental prayer (or prayer of the heart), requiring solitude and quiet, is called “Hesychasm” (from the Greek “hesychia” meaning calm, silence), and those practicing it were called “hesychasts.”

During his stay at Glossia the future hierarch Gregory became fully imbued with the spirit of hesychasm and adopted it as an essential part of his life. In the year 1326, because of the threat of Turkish invasions, he and the brethren retreated to Thessalonica, where he was then ordained to the holy priesthood.

Saint Gregory combined his priestly duties with the life of a hermit. Five days of the week he spent in silence and prayer, and only on Saturday and Sunday did he come out to his people. He celebrated divine services and preached sermons. For those present in church, his teaching often evoked both tenderness and tears. Sometimes he visited theological gatherings of the city’s educated youth, headed by the future patriarch, Isidore. After he returned from a visit to Constantinople, he found a place suitable for solitary life near Thessalonica the region of Bereia. Soon he gathered here a small community of solitary monks and guided it for five years.

In 1331 the saint withdrew to Mt. Athos and lived in solitude at the skete of Saint Sava, near the Lavra of Saint Athanasius. In 1333 he was appointed Igumen of the Esphigmenou monastery in the northern part of the Holy Mountain. In 1336 the saint returned to the skete of Saint Sava, where he devoted himself to theological works, continuing with this until the end of his life.

In the 1330s events took place in the life of the Eastern Church which put Saint Gregory among the most significant universal apologists of Orthodoxy, and brought him great renown as a teacher of hesychasm.

About the year 1330 the learned monk Barlaam had arrived in Constantinople from Calabria, in Italy. He was the author of treatises on logic and astronomy, a skilled and sharp-witted orator, and he received a university chair in the capital city and began to expound on the works of Saint Dionysius the Areopagite (October 3), whose “apophatic” (“negative”, in contrast to “kataphatic” or “positive”) theology was acclaimed in equal measure in both the Eastern and the Western Churches. Soon Barlaam journeyed to Mt. Athos, where he became acquainted with the spiritual life of the hesychasts. Saying that it was impossible to know the essence of God, he declared mental prayer

a heretical error. Journeying from Mount Athos to Thessalonica, and from there to Constantinople, and later again to Thessalonica, Barlaam entered into disputes with the monks and attempted to demonstrate the created, material nature of the light of Tabor (i.e. at the Transfiguration). He ridiculed the teachings of the monks about the methods of prayer and about the uncreated light seen by the hesychasts.

Saint Gregory, at the request of the Athonite monks, replied with verbal admonitions at first. But seeing the futility of such efforts, he put his theological arguments in writing. Thus appeared the “Triads in Defense of the Holy Hesychasts” (1338). Towards the year 1340 the Athonite ascetics, with the assistance of the saint, compiled a general response to the attacks of Barlaam, the so-called “Hagiorite Tome.” At the Constantinople Council of 1341 in the church of Hagia Sophia Saint Gregory Palamas debated with Barlaam, focusing upon the nature of the light of Mount Tabor. On May 27, 1341 the Council accepted the position of Saint Gregory Palamas, that God, unapproachable in His Essence, reveals Himself through His energies, which are directed towards the world and are able to be perceived, like the light of Tabor, but which are neither material nor created. The teachings of Barlaam were condemned as heresy, and he himself was anathemized and fled to Calabria.

But the dispute between the Palamites and the Barlaamites was far from over. To these latter belonged Barlaam’s disciple, the Bulgarian monk Akyndinos, and also Patriarch John XIV Kalekos (1341-1347); the emperor Andronicus III Paleologos (1328-1341) was also inclined toward their opinion. Akyndinos, whose name means “one who inflicts no harm,” actually caused great harm by his heretical teaching. Akyndinos wrote a series of tracts in which he declared Saint Gregory and the Athonite monks guilty of causing church disorders. The saint, in turn, wrote a detailed refutation of Akyndinos’ errors. The patriarch supported Akyndinos and called Saint Gregory the cause of all disorders and disturbances in the Church (1344) and had him locked up in prison for four years. In 1347, when John the XIV was replaced on the patriarchal throne by Isidore (1347-1349), Saint Gregory Palamas was set free and was made Archbishop of Thessalonica.

In 1351 the Council of Blachernae solemnly upheld the Orthodoxy of his teachings. But the people of Thessalonica did not immediately accept Saint Gregory, and he was compelled to live in various places. On one of his travels to Constantinople the Byzantine ship fell into the hands of the Turks. Even in captivity, Saint Gregory preached to Christian prisoners and even to his Moslem captors. The Hagarenes were astonished by the wisdom of his words. Some of the Moslems were unable to endure this, so they beat him and would have killed him if they had not expected to obtain a large ransom for him. A year later, Saint Gregory was ransomed and returned to Thessalonica.

Saint Gregory performed many miracles in the three years before his death, healing those afflicted with illness. On the eve of his repose, Saint John Chrysostom appeared to him in a vision. With the words “To the heights! To the heights!” Saint Gregory Palamas fell asleep in the Lord on November 14, 1359. In 1368 he was canonized at a Constantinople Council under Patriarch Philotheus (1354-1355, 1364-1376), who compiled the Life and Services to the saint.



### ***Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra***

On the second Sunday of Great Lent, we commemorate all the Holy Fathers whose relics lie in the Near and Far Caves of the Kiev Caves Lavra.



### ***Venerable Gerasimus of the Jordan***

Saint Gerasimus was a native of Lycia (Asia Minor). From his early years he was distinguished for his piety. Having received monastic tonsure, he withdrew into the desert of the Thebaid (in Egypt). Thereafter, in about the year 450, the monk arrived in Palestine and settled at the Jordan, where he founded a monastery.

For a certain while Saint Gerasimus was tempted by the heresy of Eutyches and Dioscorus, which acknowledged only the divine nature in Jesus Christ, but not His human nature (i.e. the Monophysite heresy). Saint Euthymius the Great (January 20) helped him to return to the true Faith.

Saint Gerasimus established a strict monastic Rule. He spent five days of the week in

solitude, occupying himself with handicrafts and prayer. On these days the wilderness dwellers did not eat cooked food, nor did they kindle a fire, but ate only dry bread, roots and water.

On Saturday and Sunday all gathered at the monastery for Divine Liturgy and to partake of the Holy Mysteries of Christ. In the afternoon, taking a supply of bread, tubers, water and an armload of date-palm branches for weaving baskets, the desert-dwellers returned to their own cells. Each had only old clothes and a mat, upon which he slept. When they left their cells, the door was never locked, so that anyone could enter and rest, or take whatever he needed.

Saint Gerasimus himself attained a high level of asceticism. During Great Lent he ate nothing until the very day of the All-Radiant Resurrection of Christ, when he received the Holy Mysteries. Going out into the desert for all of Great Lent, Saint Gerasimus took with him his beloved disciple Saint Cyriacus (September 29), whom Saint Euthymius had sent to him.

When Saint Euthymius the Great died, Saint Gerasimus saw how angels carried the soul of the departed up to Heaven. Taking Cyriacus with him, the monk immediately set off to the monastery of Saint Euthymius and consigned his body to the earth.

Saint Gerasimus died peacefully, mourned by his brethren and disciples. Before his death, a lion had aided Saint Gerasimus in his tasks, and upon the death of the Elder it died at his grave and was buried nearby. Therefore the lion is depicted on icons of the saint, at his feet.



### ***Venerable Gerasimus of Vologda***

Saint Gerasimus, First Vologda Wonderworker, accepted monastic tonsure on March 4 (at that time it was customary to give a new monk the name of the saint commemorated on the day of his tonsure) at the Kiev Gniloë Dormition monastery, having been attracted to the Caves where Saint Theodosius (May 3) secluded himself during Great Lent.

Out of obedience to the brethren, Saint Gerasimus accepted the rank of hieromonk. In imitation of the exploits of the Fathers of old, the monk felt drawn to Northern Rus and he arrived at the River Vologda (August 19, 1147). He blessed the emerging settlement on the right bank, “foretelling that here would be a great city.”

The saint chose the dense virgin forest for his dwelling place, separated from the settlement by the Kaisarova creek. There the monk built a hut, and in the tranquil solitude he devoted himself to the contemplation of God, unceasing prayer and work. He built a church in honor of the Most Holy Trinity, and so the first monastery in the north named for the Most Holy Trinity came into being. The monastery served for the spiritual enlightenment of the surrounding peoples.

The monk peacefully fell asleep in the Lord on March 4, 1178, the day of his monastic tonsure, and the Feast of his namesake Saint Gerasimus of the Jordan.

### ***Venerable Joasaph of Snetogorsk, Pskov***

The Holy Hieromartyrs Joasaph of Snetogorsk and Basil of Mirozh suffered under the Germans at two of the most ancient of the Pskov monasteries during the thirteenth century. Saint Basil directed the Savior-Transfiguration Mirozh monastery, founded in the year 1156 by Saint Niphon, Bishop of Novgorod (April 8), and by Saint Abraham of Mirozh (September 24).

Saint Joasaph was igumen (and according also to some Pskov Saints’ Lives, the founder) of the monastery of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos on Mount Snatna. The ascetics devoted much labor and concern to both the outer and inner welfare of the monasteries. In accord with the strict rule of cenobitic monastic life, introduced into his monastery by Saint Joasaph, the life of the monks was filled with prayer, abstinence and work. (Almost ninety years after the death of Saint Joasaph, his monastic Rule was reintroduced in the new monastic Rule of the Snetogorsk monastery by Archbishop Dionysius of Suzdal). The Snetogorsk monastery traced its origins from the efforts of Saint Euphrosynus of Pskov (May 15) and Saint Sava of Krypetsk (August 28).

Both these monasteries were outside the city walls and did not have any defenses. On March 4, 1299, the Germans fell upon Pskov and burned the Mirozh and Snetogorsk monasteries. During the burning of the churches, Saints Basil and Joasaph and the other monks endured an agonizing death. There was at that time much suffering in the city, and for the monks of other monasteries, and also for the women and children, but “through the prayers of the holy monk martyrs, the Lord preserved the fighting men.” Under the lead of the Pskov prince, Saint Dovmont-Timothy (May 20), they came out against the enemy and near the church of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, they defeated the invaders at the banks of the Pskova River.

Saints Basil and Joasaph were buried with their fellow ascetics beneath crypts at the churches of their monasteries. The venerable head and part of the relics of Saint Joasaph were preserved in the open in a special reliquary in the church of the Snetogorsk monastery. Holy Prince Dovmont “out of his rightful inheritance” built a stone church at the Snetogorsk monastery in place of the one that had burned, and he facilitated the restoration of monastic life at the ruined monasteries.

Soon after the martyric death of Saints Basil and Joasaph their churchly glorification took place at Pskov. On the manuscript Pskov Prologue of the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries, they are listed on March 5. But in the Pskov Chronicle and old Pskov Synodikon (Saint lists), the day of the blessed death of the holy monk martyrs is given as March 4, and at present, this is the day of their commemoration. The Chronicle mentions the presbyter Joseph, and the Prologue mentions the presbyter Constantine as their fellow sufferers.

### ***Right-believing Prince Basil (Vasilko) of Rostov***

Holy Prince Basil of Rostov belonged in lineage to the Suzdal Monomashichi, famed in Russian history. The saint’s great-grandfather was Yuri Dolgoruky, and his grandfather was Great Prince Vsevolod III “Big-Nest” (+ 1212), brother to Saint Andrew Bogoliubsky (July 4), who had been heir to and continuer of Saint Andrew Bogoliubsky’s work. From Vladimir-on-Klyazma, which became the capital of the old Rostovo-Suzdal principality, Vsevolod “Big-Nest” single-handedly set the course of affairs of the whole of Great Rus. The “Lay of Igor’s Campaign” (“Slovo o polku Igoreve”) says that he could “splash the Volga with oars, and bail out the Don with helmets.”

Saint Basil (Vasilko) was the oldest child of the “Big Nest”. The oldest grandson of Vsevolod from his oldest son Constantine, Saint Basil was born on December 7, 1208 in Rostov, where his father ruled as prince. He spent his childhood there, and in 1216, when Constantine Vsevolodovich became Great Prince of Vladimir, Rostov was apportioned to Basil (he was then eight years old) as his princely appanage to rule himself.

Military valor, sacred duty of service to country, the sense of justice and the heeding of one’s elders, all these are traditional features of a Russian princely defender of the land, and all were present in Basil. The saint’s father, Great-prince Constantine, died on February 2, 1218, when Basil was not yet ten years of age. The guide of the young Rostov prince then became his uncle, the Great Prince Saint Yuri of Vladimir (February 4).

For twenty years Prince Yuri ruled Vladimir, and for all these years Basil was his closest friend and confidant. The chronicles take note of the vibrantly handsome figure of Basil, his bright and majestic glance, his daring in trapping wild game, his beneficence, his mind and deep studiousness, together with his mildness and good-nature in relations with the nobles: “Whoever served him, whoever ate his bread and drank the cup with him, could never be the servant of another prince.”

In the year 1219 Basil participated in a campaign of the Vladimir-Suzdal forces against the Volga Bulgars, and in 1221 in a campaign to the mouth of the River Oka. Saint Yuri was then held hostage at Nizhni Novgorod.

In 1223 the first Tatars (Mongols) appeared on the southern steppes, “an unknown people”, coming out of Asia. Their first victims were the Polovetsians allied with Rus. The Russian princes, with the Polovetsian khans (many of whom had accepted Holy Baptism), decided to resist the plunderers of the steppes before they reached the Russian Land. Saint Basil headed an auxiliary detachment, sent by Great Prince Yuri to participate in the Russian steppe campaign.

The enemy showed up sooner than they expected. And the centuries-old division of appenage principalities proved incapable of effective action in a large scale war. The detachment of Basil was not in time for the decisive battle, and from Chernigov came the sad news of the destruction of the Russian forces at the River Kalka on June 16, 1223. This was a bad omen, and the storm loomed on the east. Basil and his company returned to Rostov.

In 1227 (or 1228) Basil married, taking Maria, daughter of Saint Michael of Chernigov (September 20) as his wife. Basil’s uncle, Saint Yuri, had previously married Saint Michael’s sister [i.e. Basil’s uncle Yuri had married Maria’s aunt]. In 1231 Basil’s oldest son Boris was born.

The storm clouds thickened over Russia. On May 3, 1230, “the earth shook during Liturgy”, and famine and pestilence came upon Rus that year. In 1232 the Tatars made winter camp, having barely reached the capital of the Volga Bulgars. Life took its course, and Prince Yuri in 1236 married off his sons Vladimir and Mstislav, and Basil rejoiced at their weddings. All of them, however, had little more than a year to live, for the Tatars had already taken the Volga-Bulgarian land.

In 1237 the Tatar whirlwind broke upon Rus. In December Ryazan fell under Batu. Prince Yuri had decided not to send his forces over to provide assistance, since he was faced with the difficult defense of Vladimir. The Tatars offered him peace, and he was prepared to negotiate. But the conditions of the peace, tribute and vassal servitude under the Khan, were unacceptable. “A glorious fight,” said the prince, “is better than a shameful peace.” The first battle with the Tatars was at Kolomna, and Vsevolod Yurievich commanded the troops, but they were cut to pieces.

The enemy turned then towards Moscow, which they captured and burned. Yuri's other son, Vladimir, was captured while leading the defense of Moscow.

Saint Yuri and his faithful companion Saint Basil were determined to fight "for the Orthodox Christian Faith" against the "godlessly vile Tatars." Having organized his defenses and leaving his sons Vsevolod and Mstislav at Vladimir, Prince Yuri went beyond the Volga to gather new troops to replace those annihilated by Batu.

With him were his nephews, Saint Basil of Rostov and his company, and his brothers, Vsevolod and Vladimir. The Great Prince awaited the arrival of his brothers Yaroslav and Svyatoslav and their forces.

On Meatfare Saturday, February 3, 1238, quickly and without hindrance upon the wintry roads, the Tatar army approached Vladimir. Despite heroic defense, the fate of the city was sealed. Bishop Metrophanes for spiritual strength tonsured all the princes and princesses remaining in the city into the angelic schema. The city fell on February 7.

The final outpost of the Vladimiriters was the Dormition cathedral, repository of the most holy object in Russia: the wonderworking Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God. The Tatars piled wood and kindling around the cathedral and made a tremendous fire. Bishop Metrophanes died in the fire and smoke, together with a thousand defenseless women and children, and Prince Yuri's entire family: his wife Agathia, daughter Theodora, daughters-in-law Maria and Christina, and the infant grandson Demetrius. His sons Vsevolod and Mstislav, together with the previously captured Vladimir, were subjected to tortures and then slaughtered "before the eyes of the Khan". (In several of the old collections of Saints' Lives, all of them are listed as saints).

Saint Yuri had been with his forces near Yaroslavl. Learning of the destruction of the capital and the death of those near and dear to him, "he lamented in a loud voice with tears." He said it would be better for him to die rather than continue to live in this world, since he alone survived. Saint Basil, arriving with the Rostov company, encouraged him to continue with the military effort.

On March 4, 1238 the decisive battle took place at the River Sita. The Tatars unexpectedly managed to encircle the Russian army, and a slaughter ensued. Few Russian warriors remained alive after this terrible battle, but the enemy paid an expensive price for its victory. Saint Yuri was cut down in distinguished combat, and the wounded Basil was brought to Batu's headquarters.

The Tatars demanded that he "follow their vile customs, be subject to their will and fight for them." The holy prince angrily refused to betray his homeland or Holy Orthodoxy. "You cannot take the Christian Faith from me" said the holy prince, like one of the ancient Christian confessors. "They tortured him a great deal, and then killed him in the Shernsk woods." Thus did holy Prince Basil commit his soul to God, resembling in death the holy Passion-Bearer Boris (July 24), the first of the Rostov princes, whom he had imitated in life. Like Saint Boris, Saint Basil was not even thirty years of age.

Bishop Cyril of Rostov, going out on the field of carnage, buried the fallen Orthodox warriors, and he sought the body of holy Prince Yuri (they did not find his cut-off head in the mass of broken bodies). He brought his holy relics to Rostov, to the Dormition cathedral. The body of Saint Basil was found in the Shernsk woods by a priest's son and was taken to Rostov. There the prince's wife, his children, Bishop Cyril and all the inhabitants of Rostov met the body of their beloved prince with bitter wailing, and they buried him beneath the arches of the cathedral church.

Describing the burial of Prince Basil, the chronicler said: "The multitude of Orthodox people wept bitterly, when they saw the departed father and nourisher of orphans, the great comforter of the sorrowful, and... the setting of a luminous star.... By his martyr's blood his transgressions and those of his brethren were washed away."

The people regarded it as a sign of God's mercy that the two princely comrades-in-arms were buried side by side in the Rostov cathedral church: "Behold the wonder, in death God has placed their bodies together." (Later on, the relics of holy Prince Yuri were transferred to the restored Vladimir Dormition cathedral).

The Church venerates Saints Basil and Yuri as Passion-Bearers, and heroic defenders of the Russian Land. Their holy example has inspired Russian soldiers in the fight against hostile invaders. The most detailed account of the life and deeds of holy Princes Basil and Yuri is preserved in the Lavrentiev Chronicle, written by the monk Laurence with the blessing of Saint Dionysius, Archbishop of Suzdal, in the year 1377, three years before the Battle of Kulikovo Pole.



### *Right-believing Prince Daniel of Moscow*

Holy Prince Daniel of Moscow was born at Vladimir in the year 1261. He was the fourth son of Saint Alexander Nevsky (August 30 and November 23) and his second wife Bassa. When he was two years old he lost his father. The date of his mother's repose is not indicated in the Chronicles; we know only that she was buried in the church of the Nativity of Christ at the Vladimir Dormition monastery (the Princess monastery), and the people in the surroundings venerated her as "Righteous."

In 1272, Prince Daniel received as his allotted portion the city of Moscow and its adjacent lands. The holy prince built a church (and a monastery beside it) in honor of his patron saint, Saint Daniel the Stylite (December 11) on the banks of the River Moskva.

During this period, the Moscow principality was small and unobtrusive. While growing up, Prince Daniel strengthened and expanded it, not in unjust or coercive ways, but peacefully and with benevolence. It was a time of unrest. Fratricidal strife among the appanage princes was rife. Often bloodshed was averted, thanks to Prince Daniel and his incessant striving for unity and peace in the Russian Land.

In 1293 his brother, the Great Prince Alexander, with Tatars summoned from the Horde and headed by Diuden ("the Diudenev Host"), laid waste to Russian cities: Murom, Suzdal, Kolomna, Dmitrov, Mozhaisk, and Tver. Prince Daniel decided to join them to Moscow to save their people from perishing, for they were not strong enough to resist.

The prince braced himself for terrible destruction and pillaging. Standing up for his rights, Saint Daniel was compelled to come out against his brother near a place called Yurievo Tolchische ("Yurievo Threshing-Mill"), but his desire for peace prevailed, and bloodshed was averted.

In 1300, when the Ryazan prince Constantine was making secret preparations for a sudden assault on the Moscow principality, Prince Daniel went to Ryazan with an army. He defeated the enemy, took Constantine captive, and destroyed a multitude of Tatars. This was a first victory over the Tatars, though not a tremendous victory, but it was noteworthy as a first push towards freedom.

When he had beaten the Ryazan prince and scattered his confederates the Tatars, Prince Daniel did not take advantage of his victory to seize foreign lands or take booty, as was the accepted custom during these times. Instead, he displayed an example of true non-covetousness, love and fraternity. The holy prince never resorted to arms to seize the lands of others, nor did he ever take away the property of other princes either by force or by treachery. And so the Lord saw fit to expand the boundaries of his princely realm.

Prince John of Pereslavl-Zalessk, Daniel's nephew, was gentle and pious and benevolent towards the poor, and he esteemed and loved his uncle. Dying childless in 1302, he bequeathed his principality to Saint Daniel. The Pereslavl lands together with Dmitrov, had the most inhabitants after Rostov, with the corresponding fortification befitting a major city. Pereslavl-Zalessk was well protected on all sides. But the holy prince remained faithful to Moscow and did not transfer the capital of his principality to the stronger and more significant seat of Pereslavl. This annexation allowed Moscow to be considered as the most significant principality. Here the principle of the unification of the Russian Land into a single powerful realm was set in place.

Through the ages God's providence concerning Russia and its destiny was clearly manifest!

Grateful for the constant blessings of the Hodigitria (She who leads the Way) both in his personal life, and also in the life of the Russian realm, Saint Daniel's father, Saint Alexander Nevsky said, "God is not in might, but in right!"

In 1303 Saint Daniel fell seriously ill. He assumed the great schema and commanded that he be buried at the Danilov monastery. In his deep humility he wanted to be buried not within the church, but in the common monastery cemetery. The holy prince died on March 4.

Less than thirty years after the repose of holy Prince Daniel, the Danilov monastery he founded was transformed into the Moscow Kremlin, the church was transformed into a parish church, and the cemetery became non-monastic.

At the time of Great Prince Ivan III (1462-1505), Saint Daniel gave reminders of himself to his forgetful descendants. He appeared as a stranger to a youth who attended the Great Prince and said: "Don't be afraid of me. I was a Christian and the master of this place, my name is Daniel Prince of Moscow, and by the will of God I am here. Tell Great Prince John about me saying: you are enjoying yourself while you have forgotten me, but God has not forgotten me."

After this, the Great Prince ordered Panikhida for his ancestral princes to be sung in the cathedral. During the time of Tsar Ivan the Terrible, the dying son of a barge merchant was healed at the grave of Saint Daniel. The Tsar, struck by the miracle, renovated the ancient Danilov monastery and established a yearly church procession. The Metropolitan led the way to the the holy prince's tomb, and served a Panikhida there.

In 1652 holy Prince Daniel was glorified by the uncovering of his incorrupt relics, which were transferred on August 30 to the church dedicated to the Holy Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Council.

The holy relics were placed in a reliquary “to the glory of the Holy Trinity and for the healing of the infirm.” Metropolitan Platon of Moscow (+ 1812), in the Life of the holy prince which he compiled, writes: “The founder laid the foundation of Moscow’s grandeur, modestly making only a small path to it. Just as any edifice, which is not built with excessive haste, but rather with great artistry and skill, receives a particular firmness and stands indestructible for a long time; like a tall tree that grows for many centuries after beginning as a small sapling, then slowly becomes sturdier, with its branches spreading about far around, so this city was to grow from small, but firm beginnings, so that its first sparkle would not bedazzle the eyes of the envious, and so it would not be shaken or felled early on, before it had attained its full height. Thus did this founder prepare the great city given him, giving it a modest but steady radiance, undisturbed by any gusts of the wind. He left the great glory of its rise to his son Great Prince John, called Kalita.”

### ***Martyr Paul and his sister Juliana***

The Holy Martyr Paul and his sister Juliana were executed under the emperor Aurelian (270-275) in the Phoenician city of Ptolemais. The emperor happened to visit Ptolemais, and among those who met him was Paul, who made the Sign of the Cross. They arrested him and threw him in prison.

On the following day, when they brought him to trial, he openly and boldly confessed his faith in Christ, for which he was subjected to fierce tortures. Juliana, seeing the suffering of her brother, began to denounce the emperor for his injustice and cruelty, for which she was also subjected to torture.

They beat the martyrs, tore their bodies with iron hooks, burned them over red-hot grates, but they were not able to break the wondrous endurance of the Lord’s confessors. Three soldiers torturing the saints were struck by the courageous spirit of the martyrs, and they in turn believed in Christ. These newly chosen of God were named Quadratus, Acacius and Stratonicus, and they were immediately executed.

The tormentor tried to seduce Saint Juliana with a promise to marry her, if she were to renounce Christ, but the saint refused the offer and remained steadfast. By order of the emperor they sent her to a brothel to be defiled. The Lord also preserved her there, and anyone who tried to touch the saint lost his sight. Then the enraged emperor commanded that they again burn the bodies of the saints. Those who saw the suffering of the saints began to murmur loudly, and Aurelian gave orders to behead the martyrs. With gladdened face the brother and sister went to execution singing, “For Thou hast saved us from those who afflicted us and hast shamed those who hated us” (Ps. 43/44:7).

### ***St. James the Faster of Phoenicia, Syria***

Saint James the Faster lived a life of asceticism near the Phoenician city of Porphyriion in the sixth century. For fifteen years, he lived in a cave devoting himself to monastic deeds, and he received the gift of wonderworking from the Lord. Under his influence many of the local inhabitants were converted to the Christian Faith.

News of the ascetic spread everywhere, and so went to another place so that he would not fall into temptation. He found a new cave, and lived there for thirty years. The devil set terrible snares for the ascetic. James healed a young girl from demonic possession, but then fell into sin with her. In order to conceal his sin, he killed the girl and threw her into a river.

Distraught over this sin, he repented for what he had done. For a long time he hid himself away in the wilderness, bereft of shelter and peace, tormented by the pricks of conscience, and he was on the point of forsaking the monastic life and returning to the world. But the immeasurable mercy of God, against which the sins of this world cannot prevail, and which desires salvation for all mankind, would not permit the ruin of this monk who had toiled so many years for the Lord.

The Lord thwarted the devil’s intent to destroy the ascetic, and returned him through repentance to the path of salvation. Wandering about the wilderness, James saw a monastery, and entering it, he confessed his sin before the igumen and the brethren. The igumen urged him to remain with them, fearing that he would ultimately fall into despair. But James went off and again he wandered the wilderness for a long time.

Finally the All-Beneficent Providence of God brought him to a certain desert-dweller filled with grace and wisdom. Lifting the burden from him, the desert-dweller suggested that James remain with him. But James would not remain with the Elder, though encouraged and given hope by him, and he secluded himself in a cave and there for ten years offered repentance to God, weeping and wailing, and asking forgiveness for the sin he committed. The Lord heard the prayers of the penitent monk and granted him His mercy. James reacquired his gift of wonderworking. He remained in the cave until the time of his death. He was also buried there.





### ***Right-believing Prince Wenceslaus of the Czech Lands***

The Translation of the Relics of the Right-Believing Prince Saint Wenceslaus (Vyacheslav) of the Czech Lands.

On September 28, 935, when Saint Wenceslaus went to Matins, he was wickedly murdered at the doors of the church by his own brother and his brother's servants. His body was stabbed and discarded without burial.

The mother, hearing of the murder of her son, found and placed his body in a recently consecrated church at the princely court. They were not able to wash off the blood splashed on the church doors, but after three days it disappeared by itself.

After repenting of his sin, the murderer transferred the relics of Saint Wenceslaus Prague, where they were placed in the church of Saint Vitus, which the martyr himself had constructed. The memory of Prince Wenceslaus is honored from of old in the

to Russian Orthodox Church.

Saint Wenceslaus is also commemorated on September 28.

### ***St. Gregory the Bishop of Constantius in Cyprus & Martyr Vyacheslav (Leontiev), the Priest***

No information available at this time.

## **GOSPEL AND EPISTLE READINGS**

### **Prokeimenon, Tone 5:**

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever. (*Psalm 11:8*)  
vs. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly! (*Psalm 11:2*)

### **Prokeimenon, Tone 1 (for St Gregory):**

My mouth shall speak wisdom, the meditation of my heart shall be understanding. (*Psalm 11:8*)

### **Epistle Reading**

#### **The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Hebrews 10-2:3:**

**Brethren,** "You O Lord, in the beginning, 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.

#### **Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (St Gregory Palamas)**

**Brethren,** it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself. Indeed, the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect for ever. Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set up not by man but by the Lord.

**Alleluia, Tone 6:**

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God. (*Psalm 90:1*)  
vs. He will say to the Lord: "My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in Whom I trust." (*Psalm 90:2*)

**Alleluia, Tone 2 (St Gregory):**

The mouth of the righteous shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak of judgment. (*Psalm 36:30*)

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**Gospel Reading**

**The Reading is from Mark 2:1-12**

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 (St Gregory Palamas)**

The Lord said, I am the door; if anyone 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.

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**Communion Hymn:**

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest!  
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings.  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

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**PARISH NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

[The Sisterhood of the Protection of the Mother of God will have a meeting today, March 4<sup>th</sup>.](#) All members are encouraged to attend.

The Sisterhood is holding a raffle for 3 Paschal baskets. Tickets for the raffle are \$1 each and all church members are asked to sell ten tickets. Please see Lore Stefy for tickets and information.

Two children's baskets will be raffled off. Children earn tickets for these baskets by their attendance at church school. The better your attendance, the better your chance of winning a basket.

[Next Council Meeting: Sunday, March 25, 2018 \(St. Mary Of Egypt,](#) following Divine Liturgy.

[Annual Clean-up is on Saturday, March 31, 2018.](#) Volunteers are needed; there is a sign-up sheet downstairs.

Today Sunday March 4 — Orthodox of the Holy Cross in Medford NJ will be hosting the Lenten Deanery Vespers at 4:00. The guest homilist will be Fr. Joseph Gall.

## LITURGICAL SCHEDULE

### Sunday, March 4<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am: No Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. Basil the Great  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K - Grade 3

### Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts

### Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Vespers

### Sunday, March 11<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. Basil the Great  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K - Grade 3

### Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts

### Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup>

6:30 pm: Vespers

### Sunday, March 18<sup>th</sup>

9:30 am: Sunday School  
9:40 am: Hours  
10:00 am: Liturgy of St. Basil the Great  
After Communion: Sunday School pre-K - Grade 3

**Request & Bulletin Sponsor:** Use the sign-up sheet at the candle stand for the health of, eternal memory of or a Pannikhida for a loved one or friend will be remembered during Divine Liturgy for the day/week that you signed up for.

**Memorial Candles:** Candles can be purchased at the candle stand, suggested donation of \$10 for a large one.

**Private Confessions:** Can be heard a half hour before any service. See Father Matthew for other times.

**General Confession:** Will be at 9:45 am on the first Sunday of the month.

**Receiving Holy Communion:** Holy Communion is offered to those baptized Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves for the reception of the Sacrament by prayer and fasting. Blessed Bread is available for all our visitors at the very end of the Divine Liturgy.

**Pannikhida Service:** The third Sunday of each month there will be a Pannikhida after Divine Liturgy. If you would like your loved ones to be remembered please give a list of names to Father Matthew before that Sunday for those to be remembered in the month.

**Special Announcements** for the bulletin can be submitted by E-Mail: [OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com](mailto:OrthodoxChurchMotherOfGod@outlook.com)

**The Living Clean Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.

**The Grey Book Step Meeting Group** of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.



### Daily Inspirations by Abbott Tryphon

#### Repentance

*The struggle for repentance*



In our struggle on the path to God, repentance must be the central theme. Only in repentance will we find the true meaning of life, for only in repentance can one enter into communion with God. This life has been given to us for one purpose, that we might be deified, and be united with God, as was His purpose from the very beginning. In our fallen state, our brokenness keeps us separated from God, for our darkened nous

cannot see clearly. Repentance changes our nous, clearing the way for complete union with Christ, and making us whole.

“Ask for repentance in your prayer and nothing else, neither for divine lights, nor miracles, nor prophecies, nor spiritual gifts—nothing but repentance. Repentance will bring you humility, humility will bring you the Grace of God, and God will have in His Grace everything you need for your salvation, or anything you might need to help another soul (Elder Paisios of Mount Athos).”



### *Daily Reflection* **Patience**

*“But give rather the spirit of whole-mindedness (σωφροσύνης), humility, patience (ὕπομονης), and love to Your servant.” (Lenten Prayer of St. Ephrem, Part 2)*



As the end of the second week of Lent draws to an end, I am grateful to be reminded of God’s Spirit of “patience” or “hypo-mone” in Greek (from “ὑπό” meaning “behind,” and “μένω” meaning “to remain”), which is a “remaining behind” and waiting things out, even when the going gets rough. “Behind” what? Behind the secure borders of “the God-zone,” if I can put it that way. When things change, or don’t go as I expected, in the Spirit of “patience” I am reminded that time is a blessing, not a curse.

Patience is a gift one often neglects in our culture of instant gratification; of fast information, fast food, and fast relationships, when it’s enough to “swipe right” to get “hooked up” as one desires in the moment. But the many-week-long “wellness program” of Lent, with the grace of its daily discipline of prayer and fasting, helps me to re-discover “the power to wait” that is patience. Let me be slowed down today, and embrace God’s good will for me, which brings me good things in His good time. “But give rather the spirit of whole-mindedness, humility, patience, and love to Your servant.”

### *Orthodox Quote of the Day*

It is a wonderful thing that, no matter how much we trouble about our health, however much care we take of ourselves, whatever wholesome and pleasant food we eat, whatever wholesome drinks we drink, however much we walk in the fresh air, notwithstanding all this, in the end we are subjected to maladies and corruption; whilst the saints, who despised their flesh, and mortified it by continual abstinence and fasting, by lying bare on the earth, by watchfulness, labours, unceasing prayer, have made both their souls and bodies immortal.

**St. John of Kronstadt**  
**My Life in Christ 286**