

April 7 Tuesday Благовещение / Annunciation
April 12 Sunday Вербное / Palm Sunday
April 13 – 17 Holy Week
April 18 Saturday Вел. Суббота / Holy Saturday
April 19 Sunday ПАСХА / Pascha

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Schedule for the Week of March 15 - 21, 2009

Святитель Григорий Палама

Sunday Mar 15	St. Gregory Palamas
Saturday Mar 21	5:30 PM Vigil
Sunday Mar 22	Sunday of the Cross / Крестопоклонная 8:30 AM Nocturns, Confessions 9:00 AM Liturgy / Литургия

Литургия Преждеосвященных Даров В Пятницу,
3 Апреля в 6 ч.в.

One more Presanctified Liturgy: Friday, April 3, 6 PM

О Страдании

После грехопадения жизнь человеческая наполнилась трудом, болезнями и страданиями. И поэтому добродетель терпения является совершенно необходимой христианину (понимая под совершенным терпением благодушное перенесение скорбей и страданий). Страдание имеет много видов, причин и целей: помимо страданий, посылаемых Богом, бывают и самопроизвольные страдания, и надо уметь разбираться в своих страданиях. Скорби и страдания могут поражать и тело, и душу, и дух. Тело они поражают болезнями, голодом, холодом, непосильным трудом и скудостью во всем необходимом. Душу они поражают печалью, сердечной тоской, страданием от заключения, от разлуки и т.п. Наконец, дух может страдать от мучений совести, состраданием горю близких, печалью за их трехи и т.д.

Есть много причин, по которым нам посылаются скорби и страдания. При этом никогда нельзя думать, что посылаемые страдания, несчастья и беды могут идти от людей: все кресты идут от Господа Бога, как беспредельно милостивого, так и беспредельно премудрого.

Одной из основных причин посылаемых нам страданий является наша греховность. В этом случае страдания посылаются нам как средство, противодействующее тому вреду, который приносится душе нашей грехом и наличием в ней страстей и пристрастий. (Н.Е.Пестов, *духовный писатель*).

Память святителя Григория Паламы, архиепископа Фессалонитского, особо совершается Церковью во второе воскресенье Великого поста.

Святитель Григорий известен как обличитель ереси Варлаама, калабрийского монаха, отвергавшего учение Православной Церкви о Благодатном Небесном свете, которым просиял Господь на горе Фавор при Преображении. Учение святителя Григория говорит нам о непознаваемости Божественной сущности и о прознаваемости Бога и Божественных энергиях. В 1341 году на Константинопольском соборе учение Варлаама было осуждено как еретическое.

Церковь прославляет святителя Григория Паламу за подвиг в утверждении православного учения и за святость его подвижнической жизни.

On this day we chant the service of our Father the glorious among saints, Gregory Palamas, the Archbishop of Thessalonica.

This divine Father was born in Asia and was brought up from infancy in the royal palace of Constantinople, where he acquired his religious and secular education. When he reached the age of youth he left the palace and gave himself up to asceticism in the holy mount Athos and in the monastery that is in Berea. There he moved to the city of Thessalonica. He also attended the two Councils held in Constantinople, the one in 1341 against Barlaam the Calabrian and the other in 1347 against Acyndinus who held Barlaam's doctrine, striving valiantly and defending the Eastern Orthodox doctrines of Christ. In 1349 he was elevated to be Archbishop of Thessalonica, tending its people in an apostolic fashion for a period of thirteen years, resting in the Lord at the age of 63, having written several books. His venerable bones rest in the Archbishopric of Thessalonica to this day. As for the songs chanted in the service for his feast, they were composed by Patriarch Philotheus in 1368, the year in which the celebration of his feast was renewed on this day. (*Triodion, from Nasser*)

Flowers for Plashchanitsa

From: _____
In Memory/Honor of: _____

THE SUNDAY OF ST GREGORY PALAMAS

*(Archpriest Andrew Phillips
<http://orthodoxengland.org.uk>)*

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Why do we fast? Why do we make sacrifices? Why do we stand at long services? Why do we pray? To those of us who are beginning to doubt and waver after only two weeks of the Fast, the Church brings us an answer today. This answer is in the person of St Gregory Palamas, the fourteenth-century Archbishop of Salonica in Greece to whom this Sunday is dedicated.

To many of you Salonica may seem far away. Not to me, because exactly twenty-five years ago I lived and worked there for a year. And as regards St Gregory Palamas, I saw two things.

Firstly, I noticed how the feast of St Gregory is still celebrated there today, with his relics taken through the city in procession, escorted by sailors and policemen. We may wonder why his earthly remains are still held in such honour.

Secondly, I went to visit a place up in the hills behind the town of Kavalla near Salonica. There you can still see a cave in the rocks - this was the home of Gregory Palamas before he was consecrated Archbishop. It was in that cave that he spent years in fasting and prayer. And there, not caring for his body, and instead cultivating and caring for the purity of his heart and therefore his mind, he received gifts of the Holy Spirit, he came to know God.

Now at the same time as St Gregory was living in extreme fasting and prayer, there lived a clever philosopher, also a Greek, a Hellenist, whose name was Barlaam. He said that, logically, it was impossible to know God, indeed God was by definition unknowable and inaccessible to the human mind. On hearing and studying Barlaam's philosophy. St Gregory recognized in the so-called logic of Barlaam a blasphemy, a heresy. He recognized that Barlaam lacked purity of heart and therefore mind and that his logic was the logic of the godless who only trusted in his own mental powers and imagination, the mental powers of the created, not of the Creator.

For if Barlaam were right, then all of Christ's work for us, from His Conception and Birth as a man, His Circumcision, His Presentation in the Temple, His Baptism, His Crucifixion, His Resurrection, His Ascension, to His Sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, are futile, they are all in vain. Unlike Barlaam, St Gregory said that since Christ the Creator had become man and part of creation, He had made human nature potentially holy - like His own human

nature. By sending down the Holy Spirit, He had given us all access in our human nature to holiness. Just as the Sun is known to us through its energies of heat and light, so God can be known to us through the uncreated energies of the Holy Spirit.

Quite simply, if we reject the teaching of St Gregory on this, we reject all the work of Christ and therefore also reject the coming of the Holy Spirit. Barlaam's philosophy would mean that we cannot know God, that there is no purpose in fasting and prayer. In fact, Barlaam's philosophy was a denial of God and therefore the foundation-stone of the last century's atheism and disbelief with all its massacres and genocides with their hundreds of millions of victims. Indeed, Barlaam's philosophy is the basis of all those recent ideas which said that there is no God, that man stands alone and lonely at the head of the Universe, for there is nothing greater than man - that he quite magically created himself in an empty and godless Universe.

St Gregory asserted the opposite to Barlaam. He affirmed that man carries in himself two tendencies, one for good, the other for evil. However, the tendency for good can only be developed in man through acquiring the grace of God, the divine energy sent to us from God, accessible insofar as our hearts and minds are pure enough to receive that grace. But this grace which enlightens and brightens us can only come to us if we repent, if we accept the process of fasting and prayer, tears and self-sacrifice.

It is vital for us to understand that the thoughts of St Gregory, expressed in detail in his writings, are not just thoughts, not just another philosophy like Barlaam's, but they were based on his experience, they were divinely inspired. He was not talking about an idea, but about the reality which he had experienced as an ascetic in that cave which you can still visit today. And the fact is that it is the wonder-working relics of St Gregory which go in procession through the streets of Salonica today, not the graceless dust of the bones of Barlaam.

This is the reality of the Church, this is the grace of the energies of God, this is holiness, the experience and knowledge of God, not imagined, not the fruit of fantasy and the studies of the mind, but the reality of God known to and experienced by those who are pure in heart and mind. For as it is written: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God'. And this precisely is the aim of all true Christian hearts and minds.

Holy Father Gregory, pray to God for us!