

March 8, 2026

Second Sunday of the Great Fast Commemorating Saint Gregory Palamas

*On March 8th we commemorate:
Venerable Theophylactus, Bishop of Nicomedia.
Apostle Hermas of the Seventy.*



Icon of Saint Gregory Palamas

Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission

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Great Vespers, Saturday Evenings at 6:00 pm
Divine Liturgy, Sunday Mornings at 9:30 am (Hours at 9:05 am)
Paraklesis, Most Wednesday Evenings at 6:00 pm
Very Reverend Archpriest Luke Uhl, Retired, Interim Rector

*Holy Wisdom Orthodox Mission
is a Parish in the Diocese of the West
of the Orthodox Church in America
Under the Spiritual and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of
Bishop Vasily of San Francisco and the West*



SUNDAY EPISTLE AND GOSPEL READINGS 2

Epistle for the Second Sunday of the Fast, (304) Hebrews 1:10-2:3

“YOU, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.” But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

Epistle for Saint Gregory Palamas, (318) Hebrews 7:26-8:2

BRETHREN: For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people’s, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at 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 erected, and not man.

Gospel for the Second Sunday of the Fast, (7) Mark 2:1-12

AT THAT TIME: Jesus entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.” And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, “Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” Immediately he

Continued on page 3 ☞

3 SUNDAY EPISTLE & GOSPEL READINGS (CONTINUED)

Continued from page 2 ☞ arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”

Gospel for Saint Gregory Palamas, (36) John 10:9-16

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 does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

REFLECTION ON THE SECOND SUNDAY

Second Sunday of the Great Fast

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

“*Therefore, we must give more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.*” (Hebrews 2:1)

The parables our Lord spoke indicate *precisely* how we will be judged and found worthy to enter into, and to participate in, the Kingdom of Heaven.

As we heard on the Sunday of the Last Judgment (Meatfare Sunday), we will be judged by *how* we live out our lives in *action*. It is not that we are judged on our external works themselves, but on our *interior attitude and intent*. If these are Godly, coming from the Orthodox Phronema – more exactly, the Phronema of God – they indicate the possibility that we can live in heaven. If they come from a non-Godly Phronema, they simply indicate that we may not be able to enjoy the Kingdom of heaven.

Our whole being – body, soul, and spirit – must prepare *during this life* to live with God in eternity. There will be no opportunity for change or growth after this life, after we die. Our time on this earth exists only for this purpose: to be preparing to live with God in His Kingdom. Nothing else is important.

We learn from the many holy fathers that the key difference between God and man – and thus between life and death – is *change*. God is changeless, but we are changeable: we must change from our sinfulness – from failure to attain the glory of God for which we were

Continued on page 4 ☞

REFLECTION ON THE SECOND SUNDAY (CONTINUED) 4

Continued from page 3 ☞ created. We call this change *repentance*: change of heart, change of phrónema.

Saint Isaac of Syria writes, “*Every rational creature suffers changes without number, and every man is different from hour to hour.*” Since this is so, how are we changing? For better or worse? Toward God, or away from Him?

Saint John Cassian observes, “*There is nothing of itself enduring, nothing unchangeable, nothing good but God alone; every creature to obtain the blessing of eternity and immutability, aims at this not by its own nature, but by the participation of its Creator, and His Grace.*” In other words, change toward God can only come about with His help and through His grace.

Saint Augustine of Hippo notes, “*We are changeable, and we are changed for the better by becoming partakers of the Word (Jesus Christ): the Word is changeless and suffered no change for the worse when He became a partaker of the flesh.*” He became what He was not: uncreated God became created man. This is what I must do: become what I am not, become Godly. Am I becoming more other-focused rather than self-focused? More Christ-like? Or am I wanting things to go according to *my* will – not *Thy* will?

Christ became man, not diminishing His Godliness, but raising up our broken humanity to Himself. He offers the *possibility* to be raised up, but He does not impose it. Each person chooses to change so as to be able to accept this free gift of grace through humility. Otherwise, they remain unchanged: fallen, broken, self-willed, prideful, and incapable of accepting His grace.

How do we humble ourselves and change unto holiness? We must learn, and practice, to love the many services of the Church. In these we enter into, and participate in, the Kingdom of heaven. If we do not love them and participate in them as much as possible, we simply do not learn to live in heaven and increase the likelihood that we will not enter heaven in the life to come.

We must read spiritual books, watch Orthodox videos., listen to Orthodox music; if we do not, we are not training ourselves to live in heaven. If we read trashy books, watch perverse videos, listen to anti-Christian music, we are preparing to live separated from God in the age to come.

We must live an other-focused life: we must not seek our way, we must not insist on things my way; we must seek to accommodate our brother, we must conform to the will of the Church, of its clergy, and of moral civil authority.

Am I doing these things? Am I preparing myself for heaven? Or not?

Amen.



Second Sunday of the Fast, the Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamás
In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

On the Second Sunday of the Great Fast, the Church commemorates Saint Gregory Palamás, the 14th-century bishop of Thessaloniki. His importance for the Church lies in his theological defense of the most-important Orthodox teaching, *Théosis*, and how to attain it.

The fundamental Orthodox understanding of salvation is that man is “saved” – “justified” or “reconciled” – through union with God. This “union” is initially accomplished through the Mystery of Baptism. This union, although indelible and indissoluble, yet remains to be perfected during the course of our life through constant *repentance*.

It is also the teaching of the Orthodox Church that man is “saved” only through the acquisition of the Holy Spirit. This “acquisition” is likewise initially accomplished through the Mystery of Chrismation. This acquisition can be lost and similarly must be perfected during the course of our life through *constant prayer, fasting, and almsgiving*.

(In the most-severe cases of apostasy, when the Holy Spirit has been rejected, it may be deemed necessary to again Chrismate the apostate.)

The deepest experience we have of salvation in this life, and the surest guarantee of redemption in the age to come, is the degree to which our union with God is ever being perfected. We are realizing this continuing, salvific union by participation in the services of the Church, by deeply contemplative prayer, by constant fasting, and by continuous generosity to our brother.

There is simply no other way to be happy in the next life, there is no other course that leads to heaven. There is absolutely no other way to be happy in this life, and to satisfy our deepest hungers. We have no alternative.

Astonishingly, this eternal truth, this unchangeable teaching, of the one, holy, catholic, and Apostolic Orthodox Church was rejected in the 14th century by certain Latin clergy. Sadly, this marked the led to the Protestant Reformation and the continuing dissolution of Western Christianity.

Their critical, central departure from Orthodox theology was to deny that man can be a *partaker of the divine nature*. This contradicts, of course, Holy Scripture which states that we “*may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust*” (2 Peter 1:4).

In response to this disruption, the Orthodox Church brought forth Saint Gregory Palamás (1296-1359). He was born at Constantinople of a distinguished family with ties to the imperial court and mastered the classical philosophies of antiquity at the imperial university. *Continued on page 6* ☩

Continued from page 5 ☩ In 1316 he renounced a political career and became a monastic at Vatpaïdi Monastery on Mount Athos. For 25 years he immersed himself in study and reflection on the sacred Scriptures and the writings of the Church Fathers.

Fleeing from Turkish raids, he came to Thessaloniki in 1325. He was ordained a priest in 1326 and to the episcopacy in 1347. In 1368 he was recognized (“canonized”) as a saint, a great father of the Orthodox Church, an Orthodox monastic, a theologian, and the foremost teacher of *Hésychasm*.

Hésychasm is nothing more and nothing less, than the *Orthodox Way* of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Hésychasm is the way of acquiring the Holy Spirit, and is acknowledged as a dogma of the Church, as the normative way of life for all Orthodox Christians.

The word hésychasm, *ἡσυχασμός*, derives from *ἡσυχία* meaning “stillness, rest, quiet, or silence.” The practice of Hésychasm is the contemplation of God in quiet, uninterrupted prayer. This is done specifically by constant repetition of the “Jesus Prayer,” *Lord, Jesus Christ, have mercy on me*.

Saint John Klímakos (AD 579-649), whom we will celebrate in two Sundays, writes, “*Let the remembrance of Jesus be present with each breath, and then you will know the value of the hesychía.*”

Hesychástic Prayer involves the entire human – soul, mind, and body – and is called “pure,” or “noetic,” prayer. It is nothing less than the continuing perfection of man’s union with God, the constant acquisition of the Holy Spirit, the ever-increasing and ever-more intimate union of man with God.

Hesychástic Prayer is the fulfilling of the Scriptural injunction, to “*pray without ceasing, in everything giving thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you*” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Hesychástic Prayer is the act of being “*partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust*” (2 Peter 1:4). Hesychástic Prayer is the daily, normative, practice of all who are being saved; it is not solely a “monastic practice.” There is no alternative for any.

Salvation is occurring as we are becoming partakers of the Divine Nature, living no longer the created life of the world but the uncreated life of God. Simply stated, this is the mystery of salvation that we call *Théosis*, the deification which occurs in our union with God.

But *Théosis* can only begin to occur after two preliminary stages: purification and illumination. In the Sunday morning Gospel, we read that our salvation in Christ begins with the forgiveness of our sins. Sin is crippling, devastating both our soul and body. Christ’s forgiveness of sins and His destruction of sin by His death on the Cross purifies us. *Continued on page 7* ☩

Continued from page 6 ☞ In Baptism we are cleansed and purified of sin, being united to His death and resurrection. In Baptism and Chrismation we are illumined, as the light of Christ begins to shine within us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

But what if we sin during this ongoing perfection throughout the course of our life? Sin is separation from God. Sin is “missing the mark,” failing to attain the glory, or likeness, of God. Sin is self-will, self-centeredness, self-justification. Sin is doing our “own thing” and not the will of God. Sin is deviating from the path of constantly perfecting our salvation.

The answer is simple – hard to do, but very simple: we come to the Mystery of Repentance, to Holy Confession; we take up once more the daily struggle of prayer, fasting and almsgiving; and we recite “The Prayer” unceasingly.

Note: The teachings of Saint Gregory Palamas were confirmed by the Orthodox Church at a series of councils held in Constantinople in 1341, 1347, and 1351.

*By the intercessions of our holy father and Hierarch, Gregory,
O Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen*

PATRISTIC SAYINGS OF SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS

- Through Christ we have obtained immortality and have been called up to heaven, and our nature is enthroned on the right hand of majesty in heaven far above every principality and power (*Ephesians 1:21*).
- When you receive into your mind... words of the Spirit’s teaching, meditate upon them and prefer them in your soul’s reasoning to every other passionate and worldly thought, ordering your life according to them for the sake of your salvation, then you... will have verity and judgment as your work, speaking the truth in your heart.
- Let no one out of laziness or continuous worldly occupations miss the Holy Divine Liturgies, which God Himself handed down to us, lest he be justly abandoned by God and be denied the Kingdom of heaven. If you are detained and do not attend on one occasion, make up for it the very next time, bringing yourself to Christ’s Church. Otherwise, you may remain uncured, suffering from unbelief in your soul because of deeds or words, and failing to approach Christ’s surgery to receive holy healing.
- If each of us sets aside our continuous, troublesome, worldly cares and the works associated with them, and sits listening to the Spirit’s teaching, firstly we will be praised by the Lord, Who did not approve of Martha because she was troubled by many cares, even though her efforts were for His sake. On the other hand, He said that Mary, who sat listening at His feet, had “Chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from her” (*Luke 10:41-42*).

Tone 6, Troparion (*Resurrection*)

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 Hades not being tempted by it. • Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life. • O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, • glory to Thee.

Tone 8, Troparion of the Temple (*Of the Midfeast of Pentecost*)

O Savior at the Middle of the Feast, • fill my thirsting soul with the waters of piety, as Thou didst cry to all: • “If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink.” • O Christ God, Fountain of our life, glory to Thee.

Tone 8, Troparion (*St. Gregory Palamas*)

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.

Tone 4, Kontakion of the Temple (*Of the Midfeast of Pentecost*)

Christ God, the Creator and Master of all, • cried to all in the midst of the feast of the law: “Come and draw the water of immortality.” • We fall before Thee and faithfully cry: • “Grant us Thy mercies for Thou art the Fountain of our life.”

Tone 8, Kontakion (*St. Gregory Palamas*)

Glory... 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, preacher of grace.”

Tone 4, Kontakion (*from the Lenten Triodion*)

Both... 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.”

Prokeimena

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

My mouth shall speak wisdom; • the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.



Евангелие

Через несколько дней опять пришёл Он в Капернаум; и слышно стало, что Он в доме. Тотчас собрались многие, так что уже и у дверей не было места; и Он говорил им слово. И пришли к Нему с расслабленным, которого несли четверо; и, не имея возможности приблизиться к Нему за многолюдством, раскрыли кровлю дома, где Он находился, и, прокопав её, спустили постель, на которой лежал расслабленный. Иисус, видя веру их, говорит расслабленному: чадо! прощаются тебе грехи твои. Тут сидели некоторые из книжников и помышляли в сердцах своих: что Он так богохульствует? кто может прощать грехи, кроме одного Бога? Иисус, тотчас узнав духом Своим, что они так помышляют в себе, сказал им: для чего так помышляете в сердцах ваших? Что легче? сказать ли расслабленному: прощаются тебе грехи? или сказать: встань, возьми свою постель и ходи? Но чтобы вы знали, что Сын Человеческий имеет власть на земле прощать грехи,- говорит расслабленному: тебе говорю: встань, возьми постель твою и иди в дом твой. Он тотчас встал и, взяв постель, вышел перед всеми, так что все изумлялись и прославляли Бога, говоря: никогда ничего такого мы не видали (Мк. 2, 1-12).

Митрополит Антоний (Храповицкий)

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.



Прошрое воскресенье называется Неделей Торжества Православия и мы уже говорили о великом откровении, сделанном Спасителем людям через Нафанаила. Внешней причиной установления Праздника Торжества Православия было изгнание царем Михаилом еретиков иконоборцев, и мы празднуем победу над еретиками, которых истина «боязливыми убегателями сотвори».

Однако можно ли так обращаться с еретиками, может быть искренно верующими в свою правоту? **Никогда не надо идеализировать** ☞ 2

1 ☞ еретиков, надо всегда помнить, что в основе их отступления от истины лежит не добродетель, а страсти и грехи гордости, упрямства или злобы. Суровое обращение с еретиками полезно не только для охранения людей от их влияния, но и для них самих. Поэтому, после ста лет борьбы с ними, давшей весьма мало результатов, Церковь решила установить анафематствование, т.е. изгнание из Церкви, что и производится в Неделю Торжества Православия.

Теперь не анафематствуют и это не лучше, а хуже, ибо теперь труднее провести понятную и ясную для всех грань между Церковью и ересью. Зная эту грань, легче не переступить ее, а перейдя, легче покаяться и вернуться в Церковь.

Сегодня во вторую неделю четыредесятницы, Церковь прославляет память Св. Григория Фессалонийского, который боролся против ереси, не менее, если не более опасной, чем отступление от догматов. Его противники говорили, что Православие постигается умом, логикой и расчетом. Св. Григорий говорил, что нужна благодатная помощь для уразумения Христианства. Его называли свободомыслящим и хотели отлучить. Но Господь этого не допустил. Он же «одних молитвами вразумил», «других Православным Царям предал». Последнего не любят слушать полуверы. Но «проповедник благодати» только упорных еретиков, для обращения которых годны только грубые средства, отлучал, других же, менее упорных, он настойчиво и с терпением призывал к покаянию.

Его мощи, самые цельные, почивают в Солуни. Но, увы, прославление его там меркнет и с этим меркнет вера, но мы не последуем за этим забвением, и будем благодарить его, что он потрудился над сохранением чистоты Православия.

Аминь.

Святой праведный Иоанн Кронштадтский

Во имя Отца и Сына и Святого Духа.



Расслабленный был принесен к Иисусу Христу очевидно для исцеления от державшей его болезни расслабления. А Иисус Христос врачует сперва душу его от грехов, и потом уже тело от болезни. *Чудо*, говорит Он расслабленному, *опущаются тебе грехи твои*, а после отпущения грехов сказал ему, *востани, и возьми одр твой, и иди в дом твой (Мк 2,11)*. Что значит такой способ врачевания? Значит то, что **постигающие нас болезни суть следствия грехов** ☞ 3

8 марта 2025 г.

3

2 ☞ наших и, что невозможно совершенно избавиться от болезней, не очистившись прежде от грехов, как нельзя уничтожить следствия, не уничтоживши причины. Так как и теперь часто бывает между нами много больных, которые ищут средств от болезни: то для общего назидания и пользы, **побеседуем ныне о тесной связи наших грехов с болезнями телесными.**

На самом ли деле между грехами и телесными болезнями и страданиями находится такая тесная связь, что болезни тела, более или менее сильные и продолжительные, суть следствия грехов? Подлинно, **между болезнями и грехами существует такая связь: грех губительный для души, вместе с тем разрушителен и для тела.**

Святой апостол говорит о грехе: *оброцы бо греха, - смерть (Рим 6,23)*, т. е., грех, как жестокий тиран, собирает дань с людей, работающих ему, а ему все работают. Эта дань есть смерть. Итак, **смерть есть необходимая дань наша греху, а смерти предшествуют почти всегда болезни, более или менее продолжительные.** Отсюда явно, что между грехом и болезнями существует самая тесная связь. **Когда не будет греха: тогда не будет болезней и смерти. Потому-то в будущем веке нет болезней. Смерти не будет никому, ни плача, ни вопля, ни болезни (Откр 21,4)**, свидетельствует тайновидец Иоанн, в божественном откровении.

Часто за грехи человеческие Сам Бог непосредственно посылает болезни, например, предает сатане на измождение плоти (*1 Кор 5,5*), как это было с упоминаемым в послании апостола Павла к Коринфянам кровосмесником, или лишает употребления известных чувств и членов, или подвергает другим различным болезням.

В этом случае болезни суть дело благодати Господа, Который не хочет вечной смерти грешника, но *еже обратится нечестивому от пути своего, и живу быти ему (Иез 33,11)*. Люди крайне прельщаются временною сладостью греха и погибают, но Бог по благодати Своей не хочет вечной нашей гибели, а хочет сделать всех участниками блаженства.

Но как это сделать, когда человек не хочет и внимания обращать на будущее блаженство или вечные мучения, и когда он всем существом своим предан развлечениям и удовольствиям земным?

Он чувствует в себе полноту сил и думает, что надобно жить здесь как хочется, пока живется. Как заставить его подумать о Боге, о жизни вечной, для которой он создан, как заставить его прибегнуть к вере и добродетели так, чтобы они обратились в жизнь его сердца? Болезни и страдания в этом случае - самое лучшее средство.

☞ 4

8 марта 2025 г.

4

3 ☞ Стоит только посмотреть на больного или подверженного какому-нибудь другому несчастью, чтобы убедиться, как благотворны иногда здесь для нас болезни и несчастья. Человек одумывается при этом посещении Божиим, входит в самого себя, видит, что он *ничтожен и скоропреходящ, как трава, как цветок полевой (Ис 40,6)*, что все земное - прах и суета, что только Бог и добродетель вечны, что **человеку необходимо в этой жизни служить Богу духом и истиною, и запастись добрыми делами для жизни вечной.**

Братия! мы все бываем больны или несчастны чем-нибудь, и все желаем, по естественному закону самосохранения, быть здоровыми и благополучными. **Будем помнить, что болезни наши, будучи часто плодом наших беззаконий, собственной нашей неосторожности или невоздержной жизни по своему началу, весьма часто бывают наказанием Божиим по своей силе и продолжительности за наши грехи.** Если мы хотим быть свободны от болезней, нам надобно прежде уничтожить внутреннюю причину их - грехи: тогда внешнее несчастье пройдет само собою.

Будем помнить, что болезни и смерти не было бы в роде человеческого, если бы через первого человека не вошел в мир грех. Пусть другие представляют, какие хотят причины болезней; но если они глубже вникнут в существо дела, то в объяснении своем придут к той же главной причине их, именно - что телесная природа человека когда-то сильно повреждена и теперь повреждается какою-то внутреннею, враждебною силою, и потому то она так чувствительна к малейшим стихийным переменам, потому-то она стала так слаба и удобообразуема.

Теперь время душевной цельбы. Будем же удаляться от грехов, которыми душа болезненно страдает, и *исцеления наши скоро возсияют (Ис 58,8)*.

Аминь.



The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

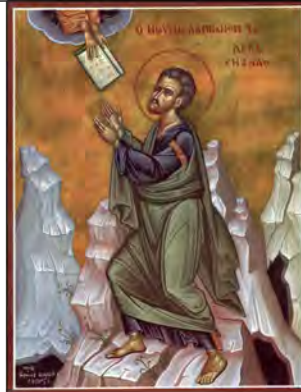
Sunday, March 1, 2026

Volume 14, Issue 9

Choose God first!

If you had a choice, would you choose to be a prince or would you choose to be close to God? Would you choose to have lots of riches, or would you choose to do what God wanted from you?

Did you know that Moses had that choice? Do you remember how the Pharaoh's daughter found baby Moses in a basket and she took care of him? If he had wanted to, Moses could have been a prince!



But the epistle reading today tells us, "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God." Moses was faithful to God, and he knew that God wanted his help. God wanted Moses to be close to Him, and God wanted Moses to help His people. The Bible tells us that Moses gave up being a prince so that he could be close to God.

Today, on this great Sunday of Orthodoxy, our Church reminds us to always choose to be close to God first. Lots and lots of saints gave up lots of things, just so they could be close to God, so they could do what God wanted them to do, and so they could have the reward that wanted to give them—joy and peace and life with Him!

WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

Baptize
Bravery
Cherson
Eugene
Faith
Martyrs
Mission
Moses
Orthodoxy
Preach

B	S	L	M	F	M	I	S	S	I	O	N	F	B	E
H	A	T	T	A	Q	R	W	B	K	N	M	R	I	N
O	N	P	D	O	R	T	H	E	N	A	A	Q	Q	E
N	S	D	T	S	Y	Y	N	N	U	V	U	S	C	G
I	Q	L	R	I	C	H	T	S	E	U	L	O	H	U
J	D	T	C	E	Z	G	T	R	E	Q	R	X	E	E
D	M	I	R	Y	H	E	Y	T	S	S	C	Z	R	K
X	Q	W	D	C	X	R	E	Z	K	P	O	Z	S	Q
T	K	V	A	K	U	B	Q	T	Y	D	T	M	O	T
J	I	E	O	G	E	P	Z	I	H	P	X	T	N	V
V	R	Y	H	X	T	H	X	J	I	O	C	S	N	T
P	E	H	P	F	F	P	M	N	Q	U	V	R	E	C
F	H	T	O	R	T	H	O	D	O	X	Y	O	S	V
R	K	W	G	R	Z	E	Z	K	Q	H	T	I	A	F
A	E	M	D	D	T	D	G	H	P	I	Y	V	C	P

WHAT'S IN THE ICON?

This is one of the saints of Cherson we celebrate this week. It is Saint Eugene. St. Eugene went off to preach the good news of Jesus Christ to people who had never heard the good news.

He carries his greatest tool with him...the Bible. This is our greatest tool too!



7 HERO HIEROMARTYRS OF CHERSON

What kind of person is

brave? A fireman fearlessly running into a burning building? A policeman chasing a dangerous criminal?

These seven saints were some of the bravest you'll find. They are brave because they knew they had a dangerous job, but they happily did it anyway!

God called His disciples to "make disciples of all nations." God wants us to spread the good news about Jesus Christ to the whole world. In the 300's (1700 years ago), the bishop of Jerusalem sent bishops to spread the good news in Cherson (on the Black Sea— now in Ukraine). But the problem was that people were not so happy to hear the good news. The first two, Bishop Basil and Bishop Ephraim were killed. Then three more bishops were sent. They too were martyred (killed for their Christian faith). Then two more were sent. Finally, being a Christian was legal now, so they should have been safe, but one of these was still killed for being a Christian.

These seven men knew they had a dangerous job to do. But they knew it was an important one—a job that God had given them. That's why they bravely and joyfully did it.



Saints Basil, Ephraim, Eugene, Elpidus, Agathadorus, Aetherius, and Capiton

We celebrate these special saints on Saturday, March 7th (OC: March 20th).

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Sunday of Orthodoxy



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian kids. Copyright 2026 Alexandra Houck. Email is orthodoxchildrensword (at) gmail.com. Find it each week at orthodoxchildrensword.org.