

Parish Prayer List (Living)

(Parish)

Evangelos	Carolyn	Robert	Sharon
John	Maria	Anamay	Ron
Lawrence	Dianna	Seraphim	Evdokia
Anthony	Pauline	Nadja	Jerry
Beverly	David	Michael	Anastasia
Nina	Walter	Nathan	Mary
Joseph	Duncan	Thecla	Michael
Reader Mark	Tatiana	Travis	Jason
Susan Mary	Clint	John	George
Magdalini	Connie	Emil	Sophia
Barbara	Yevgeniya	Roman	Ilija
Olga	Marina	Efthalia	Denny

(non-Parish)

Alexandra	Rachael	Jessilyn	Amanda
Christopher	Fr. Michael	Paige	Sean
James	Nicholas B.	Karin	Grant
Michael	Helen	Susan K	Blake
Anna	Brian	Kathy Tanner	Salvatore
Josephine	Travis, Jr.	Alma	Constance
Peter	Maria	Michael	Timothy
Petrese	Genevieve	Carla and family	Michael C.

Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)

Olga Specian (+2/19)

Lorraine Solinko (+2/27)

Laura Crikis (+3/17)

Pauline LoGalbo (+2/22)

Metropolitan Nicholas (+3/13)

Michael Baker (+3/26)

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Thoughts from the Fathers

Do not be surprised that you fall every day, do not give up, but stand your ground courageously. And assuredly, the angel who guards you will honor your patience. While a wound is still fresh and warm, it is easy to heal; but old, neglected and festering ones are hard to cure, and require for their care much treatment, cutting, plastering and cauterization. Many from long neglect become incurable, but with God all things are possible.

Saint John Climacus

Repentance has been given to humankind as a grace beyond grace. Repentance is a second birth from God, of which we have received an earnest in baptism; we receive it as a gift by

means of repentance. Repentance is the gateway to mercy which is open for all who seek it. By way of this gate we enter into the divine mercy, and apart from this entrance one cannot find mercy. For all have sinned, according to Divine Scripture, and are justified freely by grace. Repentance is the second grace and is born in the heart as a result of faith and fear.

Saint Isaac of Syria

Abba Mios was asked by a soldier, ‘Father, God then accepts the repentance of the sinner?’ The Elder, after counseling him with many instructive words, suddenly asked him: ‘Tell me, my beloved, when you tear your uniform, do you throw it away?’ ‘No,’ the soldier answered, ‘I sew it and use it anew.’ Then Abba Mios also thoughtfully told him: ‘If you take pity on your clothing, will not God take pity on His own creation?’
From “The Gerontikon,” in The Evergetinos

The Saints are those ‘who are born of God by the Word through grace in the Spirit and who keep the likeness of God, their Father....’”

Saint Gregory Palamas

Someone who has purified his body by self-control, someone who by divine love has made his wilfulness and his desires a means of virtue, someone who presents to God a nous purified by prayer, acquires and sees in himself the grace promised to those whose hearts are pure.

Saint Gregory Palamas

The holy elders talk about ‘blindness’ and ‘contamination’ as two related illnesses of the heart. When the heart suffers from hardness it is incapable of distinguishing between good and evil and is consequently rendered unable to recognize the presence of God. It is blind. Sometimes unbelievers ask, ‘Where is God? Why can’t I see Him? Why doesn’t He manifest Himself so that I may believe?’ But how can anybody do that for someone who lacks sight? Their case is similar to a blind man who does not believe that there are chandeliers. He just does not have the eyes to see them. But

those with eyes to see know from experience that all of reality is permeated with God. And you know what a sweet feeling it is to have that experience? To be within creation and to feel everywhere God's presence? Then life becomes intensely joyous. Everything is blessed. When you don't have this experiential understand of God's Grace, then with the slightest provocation you become critical, constantly blaming others, constantly finding fault with them. When you are in that state of mind, the holy elders teach that you should consider it axiomatic that the problem is actually you. Look at the saints...the people who have gotten to know God. You will never hear them complain against anybody. They are critical of no one, often not even of the devil himself, believe it or not....But that is what it means to be God-realized.

Metropolitan Athanasios of Limassol, Cyprus

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St. Gregory Palamas and the Second Sunday of Great Lent

By Sergei V. Bulgakov

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".