

On the Second Sunday of Great Lent, we celebrate the memory of St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica. On this day, the Holy Church speaks to us about the mystery of light, which we must come to know, if we want to behold the Resurrection of Christ. St. Gregory of Thessalonica and the theological arguments of the fourteenth century connected with his name taught that the light of the Transfiguration is uncreated light. Refuting the heresies of the western theologians, this teaching reminded Christians of the words of the Scripture stating that God is light. By confessing God the Father and God the Son, Light from Light, true God of true God, we believe that God the Light created another light—the one described in the book of Genesis: “God said, let there be light.”

These dogmatic questions were not abstract or removed from the life of the Church. They should not be removed from us, either. It is wrong to look at them as simple theological or scholarly discussions that have no relation to our life. That would mean only one thing: that the light about which God speaks to us—the light in which there is no darkness—will remain unseen to us, and we do not regret or repent that we remain in darkness. All the problems in the Church are, in the final analysis, bound up with the fact that certain mysteries of faith become abstract. They cease to be living, essential questions that decide our fate; and we lose the depth of faith, and the fullness of our Christian calling, which we should be realizing in the Church.

Archpriest Alexander Shargunov  
Translated by [OrthoChristian.com](http://OrthoChristian.com)

“‘To every thing there is a season’, according to Solomon, “and a time to every purpose” (Eccles 3:1). If anyone is looking for the right reason to practice virtue, it is now, in these forty days. Our whole life is intended as a suitable means of attaining salvation, but this season of fasting is more especially so. Christ, the author and giver of our salvation, began by fasting. During the period, the devil, the inventor of the passions, attacked Him in all kinds of ways, but He overthrew him and put him to shame (Mt 4:1-11, Mk 1:13, cf. Lk 4:1-13). Just as failing to restrain the stomach destroys the virtues and is the mother of passionateness, so self-control destroys the stains caused by self-indulgence and is the mother of dispassion. If it is the case that self-indulgence has given rise both now and in the past to passions which were not yet within us, it will without doubt increase and strengthen any that are there already, whereas fasting weakens them and makes them disappear. Fasting and self-control are yoked together, though at different times one or the other may be more advantageous to those who pursue them with understanding.”

-St Gregory Palamas, from the sermon “On the Second Sunday of Lent”

## St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Orthodox Christian Church

108 East Main Street

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### Scripture Readings

Hebrews 1:10-2:3

Mark 2:1-12

### Commemorations

Gregory Palamas. Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra. Ven. Theophanes the Confessor, of Sigrane (818). Righteous Phineas, grandson of Aaron (ca. 1500 B.C.). St. Gregory Dialogus, Pope of Rome (604). Ven. Simeon the New Theologian (1021).

### Information

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### Welcome to our Guests

We welcome all visitors to our Divine Liturgy and services. While Holy Communion may only be received by prepared Orthodox Christians, our non-Orthodox guests are welcome to participate in our prayers and hymns and to join us in venerating the Cross and receiving blessed bread at the conclusion of the Liturgy. Please sign our guest card and join us for refreshments and fellowship after the services.

Feel free to ask questions before or after the services. Any member of our Council or Congregation are glad to assist you. Literature about the Orthodox faith and this parish can be found in the narthex (back of the Church).

Our Parish Council Representatives are:

President - Susan Hayes  
Vice President - Deborah Bray  
Secretary - SubDeacon Joseph Brubaker  
Treasurer - Susan Egan  
Member at Large - James Pepitone  
Member at Large - Demetra Tolis



## Please continue to pray for...

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Robert, Olga, Daria, Daria, Dori, John, Evelyn, Alla, June, Nina, Joan, John, Alex, Alan, Luke, Kathryn, Veronica, Darlyne, Irene, Nancy, Dionysian, Elena, Jevon, Ivan and Joscean.

and for... John, Jennifer, Nicholas, Isabel, Elizabeth, John, Jordan, Michael, Lee, Eva, Neil, Gina, Joey, Michael, Madelyn, Sofie, Katrina, Olena, and Valeriy.

and for our catechumens; Kyle Hollis and Stephen Wexell.

Please keep Anastasia Elliott and Malcolm Littlefield in your prayers as they travel to the Israel.

## This week we celebrate...

Matthew Kuziak on the occasion of his birthday.

## *This week's services and events*

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

8:30a - Lenten Matins followed  
by Bible Study  
6:00p - Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday, March 15, 2017

4:30p - Open Doors  
6:30p - Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

Thursday, March 16, 2017

8:30a - Daily Matins  
7:00p - Bible Study

Friday, March 17, 2017

8:30a - Akathist to St Patrick  
6:30p - Little Compline

Saturday, March 18, 2017

9:30a - Liturgy celebrated at St Nicholas,  
in Norwich  
5:30p - Great Vespers

Sunday, March 19, 2017

9:30a - Divine Liturgy  
4:00p - Lenten Vespers at St Nicholas,  
in Bridgeport CT

## *Announcements*

Thank you to everyone who will be helping and participating in this afternoon's hospitality for Lenten Vespers: it is much appreciated.

Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

Paralytic man

Sunday 14 July 1985

In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

A man was brought to the Lord Jesus Christ, paralysed, by four of his friends. And Christ, seeing their faith, said to him that he could be healed.

There are two things in this story which I would like you to think about. The one is that this man was ill, he was in need; perhaps he was unable either to express his need, or to express the faith that he had in the possibility of healing; but his friends had faith: faith in Christ, faith in His power to heal, to make whole. And they took this man and brought him to the Lord.

But their faith would not have been sufficient; many were paralysed, many were sick who did not find friends who would bring them to the healer. It is not only their faith in Christ; it is also their love to their friend that prompted them to act. And again, it is because this man, in the years when he was whole, was able to call out love, friendship, devotion, faithfulness in their hearts that in the hour of need they came to his rescue. Here are two lessons for us. The one is that we can bring forth the needs of people - physical, spiritual and other needs; we can bring forth their needs to God if we have faith in His healing power, and our faith can open the gates of salvation for those who perhaps have not enough faith, who might not even be able to say, 'I believe, Lord, help my unbelief - those who doubt, those who hesitate, those who are uncertain that we can bring them to the Lord. But this is possible only if the person in need has created in us, called out in us love; a love so personal, so faithful that we prove capable of acting. Or perhaps, if our life in Christ is deep enough that God has sawn into our hearts so much of His own compassion, of His own love that we can turn to the unknown, turn to whom we have never heard of, prompted by nothing but by his or her need, and bring him or her to God unto salvation, unto healing.

We must remember both the necessity for us to become capable of love and capable of calling out love around us. And also we must learn to have the daring of faith when we see need around us, and bring it to the Only One Who can resolve it, Who can heal, Who can make whole not only bodies, and minds, and souls, but the complex relationship between people.

Here is a calling, here is a vocation for us; let us pay attention to what God says to us in this Gospel, in this Good News of the power of love, divine and human, and the power of faith to which God's love and mercy responds. Amen.