

ST. JACOB OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

802.485.9121 www.stjacobofalaska.org

March 15, 2009

Lives of the Saints

(from oca.org)

Fr. Caleb Abetti
Priest (603.219.1711)

Susanna Toolan
President

Saint Gregory Palamas

+ + + **Service Schedule** + + +

Sunday, March 15th

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT – Tone 6. St. Gregory Palamas. Martyrs Agapius, Publius (Pausis), Timolaus, Romulus, two named Dionysius, and two named Alexander, at Caesarea in Palestine (303). Hieromartyr Alexander of Side, in Pamphylia (270-275). Martyr Nicander of Egypt (ca. 302).

3rd and 6th Hours: 9:10 am.

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am.

Epistle: Heb. 1:10-2:3; Gospel: Mark 2:1-12.

Wednesday, March 18^h

Presanctified Liturgy, 6:00 pm.

Meal and Study Group following: St. John Climacus' Ladder of Divine Ascent. (Steps 11, 12, and 13).

Saturday, March 21st **Memorial Saturday**

3rd and 6th Hours: 9:10 am.

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am.

Epistle: Heb. 10:32-38; Gospel: Mark 2:14-17.

Great Vespers of the Resurrection: 5:00 pm.

Sunday, March 22nd

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT – Tone 7. Veneration of the Precious Cross. Hieromartyr Basil of Ancyra.

3rd and 6th Hours: 9:10 am.

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am.

Epistle: Heb. 4:14-5:6; Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1.



Lenten Reading

Now is a good time to visit the Bookstore to see some of the new books that have arrived.

Some suggestions for reading during this time of Lent:

Great Lent: Journey to Pascha, Alexander Schmemmann

The Prayers of Saint Isaac the Syrian

We Shall See Him As He Is, Archimandrite Sophrony

The Inner Kingdom, Bishop Kallistos Ware



“Insensibility of heart dulls the mind, and abundance of food dries the fountains of tears. Thirst and vigil afflict the heart, and when the heart is afflicted, the waters flow. The things we have said will seem cruel to epicures and incredible to the ondolent; but a man of action will readily test them, and he who has found them out by experience will smile at them. But he who is still seeking will become more gloomy.”

-The Ladder of Divine Ascent, (Step 6, Verse 13), Saint John Climacus

Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, was born in the year 1296 in Constantinople. St. 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 St. 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, St. Gregory spent eight years of spiritual struggle under the guidance of Elder Nicephorus, and after the latter's death, Gregory transferred to the Lavra of St. 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 St. Macarius of Egypt (January 19).

During his stay at Glossia the future hierarch Gregory became fully embued 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.

St. 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.

About the year 1330 the learned monk Barlaam had arrived in Constantinople from Calabria, in Italy. Saying that it was impossible to know the essence of God, he declared mental prayer a heretical error...He ridiculed the teachings of the monks about the methods of prayer and about the uncreated light seen by the hesychasts.

St. 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)...On May 27, 1341 the Constantinople Council accepted the position of St. 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.

St. Gregory performed many miracles in the three years before his death, healing those afflicted with illness. On the eve of his repose, St. John Chrysostom appeared to him in a vision. With the words “To the heights! To the heights!” St. Gregory Palamas fell asleep in the Lord on November 14, 1359. In 1368 he was canonized at a Constantinople Council.



Giving

Offerings for February 2009: \$4,072

Expenses for February 2009: \$5,087

Offerings for September 2008 – February 2009: \$25,503

Expenses for September 2008-February 2009: \$30,780