From The Ambon

St Michael Orthodox Church

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March 8th 2026 SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 6. St. Gregory Palamas. Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra. St. Theophylactus, Bishop of Nicomedia (842-845). Ven. Lazarus (1391) and Athanasius (15th c.), of Múrom. Apostle Hermes of the Seventy (1st c.). Hieromartyr Theodoretus of Antioch (4th c.). Ven. Dometius (363). The "KURSK-ROOT" Icon of theMother of God.

Birthdays & Anniversaries for March

Birthdays: Maura Elko (3/2); Matushka Emilia Shepherd (3/3); Tammy Wytovich (3/4); Marie Pasternak (3/7); Sophia Polzella (3/21)
Nameday:
Anniversary:
Travelers:
Prosphora Schedule: PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE HELP! We need families to start baking prosphora at home. Please sign up. *The Church has a prosphora kit if you would like to borrow it. THE CHURCH NEEDS YOUR HELP. THIS IS AN OFFERING FOR THE PEOPLE BY THE PEOPLE. Thank you Matushka for today's offering.*
Mar 15
Mar 22

Counting: HELP! Please sign up and count our donations. Please stay and help.
Mar 15
Mar 22

PLEASE SING ALONG! *Singing the hymns and responses to the litanies throughout the services is encouraged!*

Coffee Hour/Agape Meal: *Please stay and join us for a cup of coffee so we may break bread with each other. This will allow us to get to know each other and see how we can help each other.*

DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS: *A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting, and a recent (monthly) confession. If you have questions please ask Fr Michael! Visitors, if you did not introduce yourself to Fr Michael at Vespers, please refrain from Holy Communion.*

Service Schedule

WED, Mar 11th: @ Confession 4PM-5PM
5:00PM Presanctified Liturgy (Every Wednesday)

FRI, Mar 13th: 5:00 PM Great Vespers
SAT, Mar 14th: 9:00 AM - Hours and Liturgy
Third Saturday of Lent - Memorial Saturday. the

SAT, MAR 14th: 5:00 PM Great Vespers
SUN, MAR 15th: 9:10 AM - Hours and Liturgy
THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT - Tone 7. Veneration of Cross.

Please see calendar for the Lenten schedule

Parish Prayer List

NEWLY DEPARTED:
DEPARTED: *Stephen* Polanchik (3/3); *Joseph* Kuzmich (3/8); *Cheryl* Purvis (3/8); *Diane* Yacopchak 03/11); *Michael* Buday (3/18); *Michael* Brown (3/15);

Please remember in your prayers LIVING:
Ill-afflicted *Archpriest(s) John Nightingale,* & *Theodore* Orzolek

All those caring for the sick and suffering at this time throughout the world, especially our families and friends: *Edward* Sevensky, *Margaret* Pregmon, *Daniel* Jones, *Michae*l Sokol, *Michael* Krenitsky, *Bernie* Elko, *Nadia* Macheska, *The child of God Abigail, Helen* Wytovich, *Marie* Pasternak, *Eli & Paula* Stavisky, *Marie* Pozella

Servants of God: *Mark* Bezhuly, *David & Kathy* Barsigian, *Alexa* Barsigian & *Bobby* Wolfel, *Patricia* Jones, *Anne* Buday, *Emily* Krenitsky, *Gregory* Krenitsky, *Barbara* Sevensky, *Beverly* Elko, *Nicole* Earl, *Anna* Tyrpak, *Sandy & Danny* Pregmon, *Walter & Marie* Pritchyk, *Michael & Euphemia* Keklak, *Justin & Elisabeth* Kane, *Maria & Vitaliy* Rakovsky, *Ekaterina & Anna*, *George, Natasha, Rosa, & Lucia* Coyoy, *Mat. Emilia, Reader Blaise, Maximus, Rodion, Savina* Shepherd, *Joseph, Emilia, Judah, Nadezda, & Silas* Hart, *Tammy* Wytovich, *Paulette* Ezbiansky, *Uriel* Vo *& Maura* Elko, *Mary* Krevko, *Elisabeth, Jacob, & Juliette* Halford, *Tammy, Justin, Niko, & Katya* Williams, *Paul* Dunay, *Anastasia, Sophia, & Luke, Darlene* Shaffer, *Sophia, & Anastasia* Polzella, *David* Jadick, *Sandra* Condone, *Holly* Granville, *Maxim* Granville, *Christopher* Yeisley, and *Gabrie*l, Mother *Katherine*, *Diane, Mitch, Christina, & James*

Catechumens: *Marley* Connolly, *Neva* Yeisely, *Zachary* Nikl,
Seekers: *Vincent* Bonello, *Rebecca* Burns, *Ken* Nikl

Treasury "... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal." Jesus Christ

How Much is my tithe

Weekly	2%	4%	5%	10%
$200	$4	$8	$10	$20
$500	$10	$20	$25	$50
$750	$15	$30	$37	$75
$1000	$20	$40	$50	$100
$1500	$30	$60	$75	$150

WEEKLY GIVING UPDATE: We thank you for your continued giving in gratitude for all that our loving God does for each of us, for His Holy Church, **and** all the blessings we receive through her.
MAR Income: $7,628.97

Words of Wisdom

From the Saints & Teachers

Today Readings

Epistles: (304) Hebrews 1:10-2:3
(318) Hebrews 7:26-8:2 (St. Gregory)
Gospels: (7) Mark 2:1-12
(36) John 10:9-16 (St. Gregory)

EPISTLE
Deacon: Let us attend!
Priest: Peace be unto all!
Reader: And to thy spirit.
Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The Prokeimenon in the 5th Tone, a Psalm of David: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.
Choir: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.
Reader: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly.
Choir: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever.
Reader: In the 1st Tone: My mouth shall speak wisdom, the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.
Choir: My mouth shall speak wisdom, the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.
Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The reading from the Epistle of the Holy Apostle Paul to the Hebrews.
Deacon: Let us attend!

[(304) Hebrews 1:10-2:3] "Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands; * they shall perish, but Thou remainest; they shall all grow old like a garment, * like a mantle Thou shalt roll them up, and they shall be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall never end." * But to what angel has He ever said, "Sit at My right hand, till I make Thine enemies a stool for Thy feet"? * Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation? * Therefore we must pay the closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. * For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, * how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard Him.

[(318) Hebrews 7:26-8:2] Brethren: It was fitting that we should have such a High Priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. * He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for His own sins and then for those of the people; He did this once for all when He offered up Himself. * Indeed, the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son Who has been made perfect for ever. * Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a High Priest, One Who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, * a Minister in the Sanctuary and the true Tabernacle which is set up not by man but by the Lord.

Priest: Peace be unto thee, Reader.
Reader: And to thy spirit.

ALLELUIA
Deacon: Wisdom!
Reader: The Alleluia in the 6th Tone: He that dwells in the aid of the Most High shall abide under the protection of the God of heaven.
Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!
Reader: He shall say to the Lord: Thou art my protector and my refuge, my God. In Him will I trust!
Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!
Reader: In the 2nd Tone: The mouth of the righteous shall meditate wisdom and his tongue shall speak of judgment.
Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

GOSPELS

[(7) Mark 2:1-12] At that time, when Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that He was at home. * And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and He was preaching the word to them. * And they came, bringing to Him a paralytic carried by four men. * And when they could not get near Him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. * And when Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "My son, thy sins are forgiven." * Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, * "Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" * And immediately Jesus, perceiving in His Spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? * Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Thy sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up thy pallet and walk'? * But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" -- He said to the paralytic -- * "I say to thee, rise, take up thy pallet and go home." * And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

[(36) John 10:9-16] The Lord said to the Jews that came to Him: I am the door; if any one enters by Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture. * The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. * I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. * He who is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. * He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. * I am the good shepherd; I know My own and My own know Me, * as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. * And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd.

Hebrews 1:11–13 ***They Perish but You Remain*** **THE WORKS OF HEAVEN WILL BE RENEWED.** ST EPHREM THE SYRIAN: Paul also said, “They will perish,” and all the other things, and again the apostle took up the same words of David. But if all the works of creation perish completely, then paradise, which is not perishable, will also perish. In truth, because of paradise, which does not cease, it is evident that all the works of creation will be renewed for us, as some assert, and they will not perish, as others have said. COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. Heen, E. M., & Krey, P. D. W., eds. (2005). *Hebrews* (p. 27). InterVarsity Press.

Mark 2:7 ***It Is Blasphemy!*** **THE SCRIBES' ENTANGLEMENT.** ST CHRYSOSTOM: They persecuted Jesus not only because he broke the Sabbath but also because he said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God, which is a far more drastic declaration. He confirmed this through his own actions.… The scribes themselves had devised this definition. They themselves had introduced the precept. They themselves had interpreted the law. But he proceeded to entangle them in their own words. In effect he said: It is you yourselves who have confessed that forgiveness of sins is given to God alone. THE PARALYTIC LET DOWN THROUGH THE ROOF 6. Oden, T. C., & Hall, C. A., eds. (1998). *Mark (Revised)* (p. 26). InterVarsity Press.

Announcements - Upcoming Parish & Diocesan Events

Church Attendance

Feb 28, Saturday Vespers 31
Mar 1st Liturgy 47
Communed 24

Silent Prayers and Confession: Every Wednesday 11:00AM - 1:30PM or you can make an appt for confession.

Catechumen/Inquirers/Continuing ED Class: Every Saturday after Vespers. Catechumens - If you will not be there please let Fr Michael know.

Parish Council Meeting/Annual Meeting: Next one is Mar 15th. ***ALL ARE INVITED***.

Remember that at the Great Entrance after each petition the priest will say "may the Lord God remember thee in His Kingdom……," the people should respond with "Amen." And at the end of the petitions, the priest will raise the chalice and say "You and all Orthodox Christians, may the Lord God remember thee in His Kingdom…… the people respond with "And to thy Holy Priesthood (Episcopacy), may the Lord God remember thee in His Kingdom always now and ever unto ages of ages." This is dialogue, a prayer if you will, between the concelebrant and the people.

Choir practice: Saturday's @ 4pm prior to vespers. If you would like to sing in the choir please make every effort to be at the practice.

WISH LIST! Please consider purchasing from our wish list as this will reduce our cost of expenses and will allow us to increase and focus our giving in other vital areas needed. Currently we are looking for small wooden boxes that we can dedicate at reliquaries. https://www.myregistry.com/giftlist/stmichaelsorthodoxchurcholdforgewishlist

St. Michael's Greeters Ministry *"I was a stranger, and you welcomed me."* Matthew 25:35 Our objective is to welcome visitors to the Parish, help them "feel at home" during the worship service, provide them with information about Orthodoxy and the Parish, invite them to Parish activities, introduce them to people of like interests, invite them back, follow-up to thank them for visiting us, and identifying whether we can help them in the future. Most people leave a church once they enter because no one greeted them. Please sign up to greet people.

STOMC Mens Group! New details coming!

Please sign up for coffee hour! There are sign up sheets downstairs by the offering basket. Also, please donate at coffee hour. Donate what you would spend on a cup of coffee. This is to replenish our plastic wear and supplies for coffee hour.

CONFESSION: It is important that every Orthodox Christian continues to receive the Mystery of Confession on a monthly basis and especially during the Lenten season. In the coming weeks, Fr. Michael will be available for Confession after the Liturgy of the Presanctified, after Great Vespers (Sat), or by appointment. If you wish to come before these services, please let him know ahead of time. Please, note that Friday, April 3rd (the day before Lazarus Saturday) is the last day when Fr. Michael will hear Confessions before Pascha. When we enter Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, our focus must be exclusively on walking with our Lord through His passion.

Pascha Flowers: Donations towards adorning the church this Lenten season and Pascha are being accepted so that our parish will be beautifully adorned for all of the feasts. General Donations for Palm Sunday may be given to Jason Hart. Please write "Flowers for Lent" in the memo. If you would like to honor a loved one by making a donation for Holy Pascha flowers "In Memory of" or "For the Health of" a loved one, please sign up in the Church Vestibule/Narthex. Please leave donations at the candle stand, mail them to the Church, OR drop it in the rectory mailbox attention Jason Hart. As always, your loved ones will be remembered in our services in prayer. Envelopes can be picked at the candle stand.

Third Saturday of Lent — Memorial Saturday. Please email the names of those who have departed for Fr Michael to remember during Liturgy

BBQ Tickets - Tammy & Sandy plan to start handing out the tickets for the BBQ. Everyone will get two; if you need more please see them.

The Second Sunday of Great Lent: St. Gregory Palamas and the Light of Christ

The journey of Great Lent is a path of repentance, prayer, and spiritual renewal. Each Sunday of the Fast carries a special significance, guiding us deeper into the life of Christ and His Church. The Second Sunday of Great Lent is dedicated to St. Gregory Palamas, a 14th-century Archbishop of Thessalonica and one of the great defenders of Orthodox spirituality.

Who Was St. Gregory Palamas?

St. Gregory Palamas (1296–1359) was a monk of Mount Athos, a theologian, and later a bishop. He is best known for his defense of *hesychasm*, a tradition of inner stillness and unceasing prayer that leads to the vision of God's uncreated light. This light, according to Orthodox teaching, is the same light that shone from Christ at His Transfiguration on Mount Tabor. During his lifetime, St. Gregory defended the Orthodox understanding of salvation against the teachings of a philosopher named Barlaam of Calabria, who argued that God could only be known through intellectual reasoning. In contrast, St. Gregory taught that true knowledge of God comes through purification of the heart, prayer, and participation in God's divine energies. His teachings affirm that through ascetic struggle, repentance, and the grace of the Holy Spirit, we can experience the presence of God—not as an abstract idea, but as a living reality. This theology was confirmed by the Church in the *Palamite Councils of the 14th century*, and St. Gregory was canonized just a few years after his repose.

The Meaning of This Sunday in Great Lent

The placement of St. Gregory Palamas' commemoration on the Second Sunday of Great Lent is significant. On the first Sunday, the Sunday of Orthodoxy, we celebrate the victory of truth over heresy, particularly regarding the veneration of icons. The following Sunday, the Church presents us with St. Gregory's teaching, which confirms that our faith is not only about correct doctrine but also about experiencing God directly through prayer and purification of the heart. His message reminds us that *Lent is not simply about external fasting but about inner transformation.* It is a time to seek the light of Christ, turning away from worldly distractions and focusing on prayer, humility, and love.

The Gospel Reading: Christ Heals the Paralytic

On this Sunday, the Church reads from Mark 2:1-12, the story of the healing of the paralytic. In this passage, a group of friends lower a paralyzed man through the roof of a house so that he can be brought to Christ. Seeing their faith, Jesus not only heals the man physically but also forgives his sins. This reading is deeply connected to the message of St. Gregory Palamas. Just as the paralytic needed both spiritual and physical healing, so too do we need healing of both soul and body. Our Lenten struggle—through fasting, prayer, and repentance—is aimed at bringing us closer to Christ, who alone can heal us completely.

How Can We Apply This to Our Lives?

1. *Commit to Deeper Prayer* – St. Gregory emphasized the power of inner prayer, particularly the Jesus Prayer: ***"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."*** During Lent, we can strive to pray more attentively and seek moments of stillness with God.

2. *Seek Purification of the Heart* – Lent is a time to examine ourselves honestly, confess our sins, and struggle against passions that darken our souls. St. Gregory reminds us that holiness is possible for all who seek it through humility and repentance.

3. *Support One Another in Faith* – The Gospel reading of the paralytic shows the importance of community in our journey toward Christ. Just as the friends carried the man to Jesus, we are called to lift one another up in prayer, encouragement, and acts of love.

A Reminder of the Goal of Lent

The Second Sunday of Great Lent reminds us that our fasting and efforts are not ends in themselves but are meant to *draw us closer to the light of Christ*. St. Gregory Palamas teaches us that salvation is not just about knowing about God—it is about truly *encountering Him* in prayer and being transformed by His grace. As we continue through Great Lent, may we seek this encounter with Christ, opening our hearts to His mercy and striving to become vessels of His divine light.

"O Light of Orthodoxy, Teacher of the Church, its confirmation, O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians, O wonder-working Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace, always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved." (Troparion of St. Gregory Palamas)