



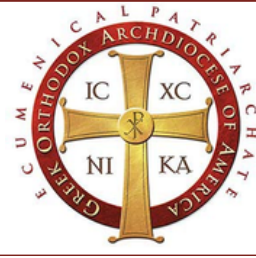
# ARCHANGEL MICHAEL CHURCH

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## SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2024

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT. St. Gregory Palamas the Archbishop of Thessaloniki. Mode 2. Eothinon 10.

### ON KNOWING GOD AS WHOLE PERSONS

Whenever we face major challenges, it can be tempting to give up and run away. Some have even tried to make Christianity a way to escape the problems of the world and the limitations of our bodies. A problem with that way of thinking is that Jesus Christ has become part of our world with a body every bit as human as ours. By doing so, He has made it possible for us to participate in His salvation as whole persons. We do not need to escape our humanity in order to experience eternal life.

Today we commemorate St. Gregory Palamas, a great bishop, monastic, and theologian of the 14th century. He is known especially for defending the experience of hesychast monks who, through deep prayer of the heart and asceticism, were enabled to see the Uncreated Light of God that the Apostles beheld at the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor. Against those who denied that human beings could ever experience and know God in such direct and tangible ways, St. Gregory taught that we may truly participate in the divine energies as whole persons. He proclaimed that knowing God does not mean merely having ideas about Him, but being united personally with Him by grace. It is to become radiant with the divine glory like an iron left in the fire in ways that permeate a person's body, soul, and spirit. To share in God's life is not an escape from the world or our humanity, but instead their glorious fulfillment.

If that all seems a bit abstract, think about the paralyzed man in today's gospel text. Christ not only forgave his sins, but healed his bodily paralysis and instructed him to rise, take up his bed, and walk. His encounter with the Lord was not limited to thoughts or symbols. No, the Lord transformed that fellow's entire life— body, soul, and spirit.

During the season of Lent, we want Him to transform our lives also. That is why we pray, fast, show generosity to the needy, forgive our enemies, confess our sins, and otherwise reorient ourselves toward God in practical, tangible ways. If done with integrity, these actions involve every dimension of who we are; we certainly cannot do them without using our bodies. They are not an escape from reality, but ways in which we come to participate more fully by grace in the eternal life of our Lord. They are disciplines through which we may know and experience God in every aspect of our being.

Through them, our Lord strengthens us to rise, take up our beds, and move forward into a life of holiness, the life for which He created us in the first place. Christ calls us to experience and know His salvation in practical, tangible ways that extend from the depths of our hearts to how we treat our neighbors every day. He even nourishes us with His own Body and Blood such that His life becomes ours as we live and breathe in the world as we know it. The Lenten journey prepares us to follow Christ to His Passion, through which He tramples down death by death. Because we are weakened and paralyzed by our sins, we need these weeks to help us find the healing necessary to embrace the new life that He has brought to the world through His resurrection.

We need the practices of Lent because, in contrast with the glory to which He calls us, we all remain too much like the paralyzed man before his healing. Our weakness before our habitual sins and passions often seems more real to us than do the gracious divine energies that alone bring healing. Perhaps that is because we have far more experience of our own brokenness than of deep personal union with God. The good news, however, is that true personal knowledge of the Lord is available to us all by calling on Him in humility from our hearts. No matter how busy our lives or how noisy the world around us, we may pray the Jesus Prayer in inner silence, even as we fight our passions and reorient our lives to Him through repentance. If we do so, we will open ourselves to His grace as whole persons. We will not abandon or escape the world, but instead know in our own lives the joy of its salvation. Indeed, we will know Him. Surely, that is God's will for each and every one of us in the remaining weeks of this blessed season.

A Sermon for the Second Sunday of Great Lent  
Fr. Phillip LeMasters

### Ἦχος β'

Ὅτε κατήλθες πρὸς τὸν θάνατον, ἢ ζωὴ ἢ ἀθάνατος, τότε τὸν ἄδην ἐνέκρωσας, τῆ ἀστραπῇ τῆς θεότητος· ὅτε δεῖ καὶ τοὺς τεθνεῶτας, ἐκ τῶν καταχθονίων ἀνέστησας, πᾶσαι αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν ἐπουρανίων ἐκραύγαζον· Ζωοδότα Χριστέ, ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν δόξα σοι.

### Ἦχος πλ. δ'

Ὁρθοδοξίας ὁ φωστήρ, Ἐκκλησίας τὸ στήριγμα καὶ διδάσκαλε, τῶν μοναστῶν ἢ καλλονῇ, τῶν θεολόγων ὑπέρμαχος ἀπροσμάχητος· Γρηγόριε θαυματουργε Θεσσαλονίκης τὸ καύχημα κήρυξ τῆς χάριτος· ἰκέτευε διαπαντός, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.

### Ἦχος πλ. δ'

Μνήσθητι Κύριε, ὡς ἀγαθὸς τῶν δούλων σου, καὶ ὅσα ἐν βίῳ ἡμάρτον συγχώρησον· οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀναμάρτητος, εἰ μὴ Σὺ ὁ δυνάμενος, καὶ τοῖς μεταστᾶσι δοῦναι τὴν ἀνάπαυσιν.

### Ἦχος δ'

Τῶν οὐρανίων στρατιῶν Ἀρχιστράτηγοι, δυσωποῦμεν ὑμᾶς ἡμεῖς οἱ ἀνάξιοι, ἵνα τὰς ὑμῶν δεήσεις, τειχίσῃτε ἡμᾶς, σκέπη τῶν πτερύγων, τῆς αὐτοῦ ὑμῶν δόξης, φρουροῦντες ἡμᾶς προσπίπτοντας, ἐκτενῶς καὶ βοῶντας· Ἐκ τῶν κινδύνων λυτρώσασθε ἡμᾶς, ὡς Ταξιάρχαι τῶν ἄνω Δυνάμεων.

### Ἦχος πλ. δ'.

Τῆ ὑπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ τα νικητήρια, Ὡς λυτρωθεῖσα τῶν δεινῶν εὐχαριστήρια, Ἀναγράφω σοι ἡ Πόλις σου Θεοτόκε. Ἄλλ' ὡς ἔχουσα τὸ κράτος ἀπροσμάχητον, Ἐκ παντοίων με κινδύνων ἐλευθέρωσον, Ἴνα κράζω σοι· Χαῖρε νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

### Εβρ 1:10-14, 2:1-3

Κατ' ἀρχὰς σὺ, Κύριε, τὴν γῆν ἐθεμελίωσας, καὶ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου εἰσιν οἱ οὐρανοί· αὐτοὶ ἀπολοῦνται, σὺ δὲ διαμένεις· καὶ πάντες ὡς ἱμάτιον παλαιωθήσονται, καὶ ὡσεὶ περιβόλαιον ἐλίξεις αὐτούς, καὶ ἀλλαγῆσονται· σὺ δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς εἶ, καὶ τὰ ἔτη σου οὐκ ἐκλείψουσι. πρὸς τίνα δε τῶν ἀγγέλων εἶρηκέ ποτε· κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου; οὐχὶ πάντες εἰσι λειτουργικὰ πνεύματα εἰς διακονίαν ἀποστελλόμενα δια τοὺς μέλλοντας κληρονομεῖν σωτηρίαν; Δια τοῦτο δεῖ περισσοτέρως ἡμᾶς προσέχειν τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσι, μὴ ποτε παραρρῶμεν. εἰ γὰρ ὁ δι' ἀγγέλων λαληθεὶς λόγος ἐγένετο βέβαιος, καὶ πᾶσα παράβασις καὶ παρακοῆ ἔλαβεν ἔνδικον μισθαποδοσίαν, πῶς ἡμεῖς ἐκφευξόμεθα τηλικαύτης ἀμελήσαντες σωτηρίας; ἦτις ἀρχὴν λαβοῦσα λαλεῖσθαι δια τοῦ Κυρίου, ὑπο τῶν ἀκουσάντων εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐβεβαιώθη.

### Mode 2

When You descended unto Death, O Lord, You who are immortal Life put Hades to death, by the lightning of Your divinity. And when You raised the dead from the netherworld, all the hosts of heaven sang aloud to You, "O Christ God, Giver of life, glory to You!"

### Mode Plagal 4

Beacon of Orthodox belief, the strong support of the Church and her teacher inspired by God, you are the ornament of monks, the unassailable champion of theologians, O Gregory the Wonder-worker and the boast of Thessalonica, the messenger of grace. Forever earnestly entreat for the salvation of our souls.

### Mode Plagal 4

Remember, Lord, as the Good One, your servants, and forgive them in whatever they have sinned in life. No one is without sin, except for you the Mighty One, and show rest to the departed.

### Mode 4

O Chief Commanders of the heavenly armies, we the unworthy now entreat you in earnest, to fortify us by your supplications to the Lord, and shelter us beneath the wings of your spiritual glory, guarding us who run to you and fervently entreat you: As the Commanders of the hosts on high, rescue us faithful from dangers of every kind.

### Mode Plagal 4

O Champion General, I your City now inscribe to you Triumphant anthems as the tokens of my gratitude, Being rescued from the terrors, O Theotokos. Inasmuch as you have power unassailable, From all kinds of perils free me, so that unto you I may cry aloud: Rejoice, O unwedded Bride.

### Heb. 1:10-14; 2:1-3

"In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end." But to what angel has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your 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 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.

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, εἰσῆλθε ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς Καπερναοῦμ δι' ἡμερῶν καὶ ἠκούσθη ὅτι εἰς οἶκόν ἐστι. καὶ εὐθέως συνήχθησαν πολλοί, ὥστε μηκέτι χωρεῖν μηδεὶ ταῖς πρὸς τὴν θύραν· καὶ ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον. καὶ ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτὸν παραλυτικὸν φέροντες, αἰρόμενον ὑπὸ τεσσάρων· καὶ μὴ δυνάμενοι προσεγγίσει αὐτῷ διατὸν ὄχλον, ἀπεστέγασαν τὴν στέγην ὅπου ἦν, καὶ ἐξορύξαντες χαλῶσι τὸν κράβαττον, ἐφ' ᾧ ὁ παραλυτικὸς κατέκειτο. ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὴν πίστιν αὐτῶν λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ· τέκνον, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι σου. ἦσαν δὲ τινες τῶν γραμματέων ἐκεῖ καθήμενοι καὶ διαλογιζόμενοι ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν· τί οὗτος οὕτω λαλεῖ βλασφημίας; τίς δύναται ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ Θεός; καὶ εὐθέως ἐπιγνοῦς ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῷ πνεύματι αὐτοῦ ὅτι οὕτως αὐτοὶ διαλογίζονται ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τί ταῦτα διαλογίζεσθε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν; τί ἐστιν εὐκοπώτερον, εἰπεῖν τῷ παραλυτικῷ, ἀφέωνταί σοι αἱ ἁμαρτίαι, ἢ εἰπεῖν, ἔγειρε καὶ ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ περιπάτει; ἵνα δεῖ εἰδῆτε ὅτι ἐξουσίαν ἔχει ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀφιέναι ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἁμαρτίας — λέγει τῷ παραλυτικῷ· σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε καὶ ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ ὑπάγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου. καὶ ἠγέρθη εὐθέως, καὶ ἄρας τὸν κράβαττον ἐξῆλθεν ἐναντίον πάντων, ὥστε ἐξίστασθαι πάντας καὶ δοξάζειν τὸν Θεὸν λέγοντας ὅτι οὐδέποτε οὕτως εἶδομεν.

## ΚΑΤΗΧΗΤΙΚΟΣ ΛΟΓΟΣ

Σήμερα διαβάζουμε το Ευαγγέλιο που διηγείται τη θαυματουργική θεραπεία του παραλυτικού στην Καπερναοῦμ. Θέλει να μας ξαναθυμίσει το γεγονός της αμαρτίας του ανθρώπου, που έφερε στον κόσμο τον πόνο, τη λύπη, τις αρρώστιες, το θάνατο. Συνάμα η Εκκλησία μας διδάσκει πως ο Χριστός μας λυτρώνει από την αμαρτία και μας σώζει απ' όλα τα βάσανα και τις συμφορές.

Όλοι ήθελαν να ακούσουν τα θεϊκά και σωτήρια λόγια του Κυρίου και να παραβρεθούν στα θαύματα που επιτελούσε. Αυτό το κήρυγμα του Ιησού το συνεχίζει και σήμερα η αγία Εκκλησία μας, που πολλές φορές με τη δύναμη του Κυρίου θαυματουργεί στις γιορτές της Παναγίας και των Αγίων. Είναι απαραίτητο ο άνθρωπος να τρέφεται από τη μικρή του ηλικία με το λόγο του Κυρίου. Μόνον έτσι ο άνθρωπος γίνεται σωστός, ενάρετος και ευεργετικός στην κοινωνία. Αυτή την ευλογία του Χριστού παίρνει το παιδί, όταν εκκλησιάζεται τακτικά και με βαθιά τη συναίσθηση ότι βρίσκεται στον οίκο του Θεού.

Οι τέσσερις άνθρωποι, που σήκωναν τον παραλυτικό είχαν στην καρδιά τους μεγάλη αγάπη και πίστη. Ήθελαν να φέρουν με κάθε τρόπο τον παράλυτο κοντά στο Χριστό για να θεραπευθεί. Η αγάπη τους βοήθησε να ξεπεράσουν όλες τις δυσκολίες και τα εμπόδια που είχαν παρουσιαστεί μπροστά τους. Άνοιξαν τη στέγη και κατέβασαν τον παράλυτο μπροστά στο Χριστό. Η πίστη των ανθρώπων αυτών έγινε αφορμή, ώστε ο Κύριος να συγχωρέσει τις αμαρτίες του παραλυτικού. Ήθελε να δείξει σε όλους μας ότι η αμαρτία οδηγεί τον άνθρωπο σε φοβερές και άσχημες καταστάσεις. Η μόνη λύτρωση του ανθρώπου βρίσκεται στον Ιησού Χριστό, που έχει απόλυτη εξουσία ως Θεός να συγχωρεί την αμαρτία.

Οι Γραμματεῖς όμως στο σημερινό Ευαγγέλιο θύμωσαν, πᾶν ἀκούγαν τὸν Κύριο νὰ συγχωρεῖ τὶς αμαρτίες τοῦ παραλυτικοῦ. Δὲν εἶχαν ὅμως τὸ θάρρος νὰ τοῦ το πουν. Ὁ Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὡς Θεὸς παντογνώστης, εἶχε γνωρίσει τὶς σκέψεις τοῦς καὶ τοῦς εἶπε: «Τὶ βάζετε τέτοιους διαλογισμοὺς στὸ μυαλό σας; Γὶα νὰ δεῖτε δε πὼς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔχει ἐξουσία νὰ συγχωρεῖ ἰδὼ στὴ γῆ αμαρτίες, λέγει στὸν παραλυτικό: Σήκω ἐπάνω, πάρε τὸ κρεβάτι σου στὸν ὄμο καὶ πήγαινε στὸ σπίτι σου».

Ὁ Κύριος ἔδειξε τὴ θεϊκὴ ἐξουσία τοῦ καὶ με τὸ θαῦμα τοῦ παραλυτικοῦ καὶ με τὴ δύναμη ποὺ ἔχει νὰ βλέπει τὶς ἐπιθυμίες καὶ τοῦς διαλογισμοὺς μας. Καὶ εμεῖς πρέπει νὰ σκεφτόμαστε ἀπὸ τὴ μικρὴ μας ηλικία αὐτὴ τὴν ἀλήθεια. Ὅλες οἱ αμαρτίες μας μένουν μπροστὰ στα μάτια τοῦ Θεοῦ. Καὶ ἀν δὲν τὶς ξέρουν οἱ ἀνθρώποι, τὶς ξέρει ὅμως ὁ Θεός. Δὲν μπορούμε νὰ τὶς ἀρνηθοῦμε, οὔτε καὶ νὰ τὶς κρύβουμε. Χρειαζέται λοιπὸν νὰ ομολογούμε τὶς αμαρτίες μας στὴν ἱερὴ ἐξομολόγησι καὶ μάλιστα στὴ διάρκεια τῆς Μεγάλῃς Σαρακοστής. Με τὴν ἐξομολόγησι ἀνοίγουμε τὴν ψυχὴ μας καὶ μπαίνει μέσα τῆς ἡ δροσιά τοῦ Ἁγίου ἰ Πνεύματος. Μας φωτίζει, μας καθοδηγεῖ καὶ μας κάνει πραγματικὰ παιδιὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ. Αἰσθανόμαστε τὸν Κύριο πολὺ κοντὰ μας καὶ μάλιστα σὲ δύσκολες στιγμές, ὅπως εἶναι ἡ θλίψη, ἡ ἀρρώστια, ἡ φτώχεια καὶ ὁ θάνατος ἐνός συγγενικοῦ μας προσώπου. Με τὶς ευχές τῆς Εκκλησίας λυτρώνεται ὁ ἀνθρώπος ἀπὸ τὰ βάσανα καὶ τὶς συμφορές.

At that time, Jesus entered Capernaum and 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, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak thus? It is a 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, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your 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 you, rise, take up your 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!"

# SYNAXARION

- April 1st** - St. Mary of Egypt  
**April 2nd** - St. Titus the Wonderworker  
**April 3rd** - St. Nicetas the Confessor  
**April 4th** - St. George of Maleon  
**April 5th** - St. Theodora of Thessaloniki  
**April 6th** - St. Eutychius, Pat. of Constantinople  
**April 7th** - Sts. Calliopus & Akylina, Martyrs

St. Mary of Egypt repented for 47 years in the desert.

**We also honor her on the 5th Sunday of Lent.**



# MEMORIALS

2

Leonidas Tsampas - 2 years  
Aspasia Tsampas - 10 years  
Panagiota Raftis - 12 years

May their memory be eternal!

Today's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by  
the Tsampas & Sakoulis Families

## LITURGIES

**Monday, April 1st**

Great Compline 4PM

**Tuesday, April 2nd**

Great Compline 4 PM

**Wednesday, April 3rd**

Presanctified Liturgy and Dialogues of Faith 6:45 PM

**Thursday, April 4th**

Bible Study 11 AM | Vespers & Bible Study 7 PM

**Friday, April 5th**

Presanctified Liturgy 9 AM | 3rd Salutations 7 PM

**Sunday, April 7th**

**Sunday of the Holy Cross**

Orthros & Liturgy 8:00 AM

## EVENTS

Registration has begun for our second summer of **Camp Hellas** at AMC. Please sign up your children via Realm. There is a limited amount of space and seats are quickly filling!

The AMC Lenten Retreat will be on April 6th & 7th. Please join us for a missionary presentation from Fr. John Chakos, a missionary to Guatemala. Retreat begins on Saturday evening and ends after Divine Liturgy on Sunday.

The parish will be making a **pilgrimage to St. Nektarios Monastery** in Roscoe, NY on Saturday, April 13th. Registration is now open on Realm. There are only 10 seats left for the bus!