

Sunday Bulletin  
March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Great Lent  
St. Gregory Palamas  
Jesus Heals the Paralytic in Capernaum



Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church  
1025 N Belle Vista Ave, Youngstown, Ohio 44509



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**Ministries:**

Altar Servers  
Church Choir  
Church School  
Adult Education  
St. Mary's Sisterhood  
Sts. Peter & Paul Brotherhood  
Senior UOL Chapter  
Junior UOL Chapter  
Youth Ministry  
Orphanage Mission Ministry  
Bingo Team  
Fr Mykola Zomchak - Editor

**Website:**

<http://www.stspeterpauluoc.org>



# STS Peter & Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church

*We invite you to a celebration of  
the Resurrection of Christ each week.*

March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024 –  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Great Lent.  
St. Gregory Palamas  
Jesus Heals the Paralytic in  
Capernaum



“SON, YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN YOU”

**Bulletin is dedicated in Memory of  
Steve and Helene Senediak  
in loving memory  
on their birthdays**

**Tone 2 Troparion (Resurrection)**

When You descended to death, O Life Immortal,  
You slew hell with the splendor of Your Godhead.  
And when from the depths You raised the dead,  
all the powers of heaven cried out://  
“O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

**Tone 8 Troparion (St. Gregory Palamas)**

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its  
confirmation, O ideal of monks and invincible champion  
of theologians, O wonderworking Gregory, glory of  
Thessalonica and preacher of grace, // always intercede  
before the Lord that our souls may be saved!

**Tone 4 Kontakion (from the Lenten Triodion)**

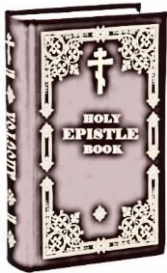
Now is the time for action! Judgment is at the doors!  
So let us rise and fast, offering alms with tears of  
compunction and crying: “Our sins are more in number

than the sands of the sea;but forgive us, O Master of all,//  
so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!”

### **Tone 5 Prokeimenon**

You, O Lord, shall protect us / and preserve us from this generation forever.

*V. Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly!*



### **The Reading is from the Letter of St Paul to Hebrews 1:10-2:3**

Brethren, and: “You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; like a cloak You will fold them up, and they will be changed. But You are the same, and Your years will not fail.” But to which of the angels has He ever said: “Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool”? Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation? Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him

### ***Alleluia and Verses Tone 5***

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the heavenly God.*

*He will say to the Lord: “My Protector and my Refuge; my God, in Whom I trust.”*

*The mouth of the righteous shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak of judgment.*

### **Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia**

### **The reading is from the Gospel according to St. Mark 2:1-12**

And again He entered Capernaum after some days, and it was heard that He was in the house. Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four men. And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.” And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, “Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins” – He said to the paralytic, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw anything like this!”



***(Instead of "It is truly meet...", we sing the following)***

**Hymn to the Theotokos**

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace: the assembly of angels and the race of men.  
O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins,  
from whom God was incarnate and became a Child – our God before the ages.  
He made your body into a throne, and your womb He made more spacious than the  
heavens. All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace. Glory to you!

**Communion Hymn**

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! *(Ps. 148:1)*

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous; praise befits the just! *(Ps. 32:1)*

***Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!***



**MEMORY ETERNAL**

**PLEASE PRAY FOR RESTING OF THE SOULS**

Mariah N. Andrews, George Fill III, Robert Meredith, Oleksander Dymtro, Mark Vuksanovich, Soldier Vladyslav Chudakorov, Anna Adamovich, Soldier Serhiy All Who died during the war in Ukraine.

**PRAYER LIST**

**PLEASE PRAY FOR HEALING, COMFORT, AND SPIRITUAL PEACE**



Metropolitan Anthony, Archbishop Daniel, Ann & George Klein, David Spanja, Mr. Betty, Brittany, Matt, Judith Shonn, Stephen Shonn, Simeon, Selma, Thelma Zemko, Elaine Cartier, Artur Bohuslav, Bohdan, Lori Hayda, Shirley Duffy, Michele (Senediak) Caulder, Dobrodiyka Lilya, Sandy, Marilyn O'Leary, Dolly Mehalco, George, Alice Dobransky, Harold Owens, Dave Zylka, Marianne Carmack, Nicholas Yurchyk, Pauline Witkowsky, Eileen Maluk, Peter Anderson, Albert Auden, Michael Gino Maluk, Boris & Kathleen Vuksanovich, Mykola Prychodczenko, Kathy Zebel. People Suffering from any Illnesses. All Ukrainian people who are suffering from the war.



to our loved members of the parish,  
We pray that God blesses you with  
good health, happiness, and joy!

**Many Years!**

**MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

- |                             |                      |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Kathryn Walcowiec         | 20 Lindsay Anderson  |
| 3 Nadiya Lyubuska           | 25 Boris Vuksanovich |
| 7 Marcia Goodge             | 25 Katherine Zomchak |
| 7 Samuel Goodge             | 28 Gregory Battisti  |
| 10 Luba Medved              | 28 Alice Mae Gregory |
| 12 Ronald Kichton           | 30 Thomas Lane       |
| 12 Michael III<br>Woloschak | 30 Laura Zavadil     |
| 16 Karen Yuschak            | 31 Nicholas Inchak   |



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

May God warm your heart and grant peace upon you, not only on your birthday but for every single day of your life!

2 Mary Lou Senediak 3 Linda Pupa 5 Mary M. Lane 8 Karen Semchee 9 Ben Mischev 9 Steven Novicky 11 Jason Zets 14 Sam Rusnov 18 Joe Buzzelli 19 Anna Blair	22 Mark Ames 23 Michael Crown 26 Michael C Demetrius 27 Peter Anderson 27 Eileen Maluk 28 Michael Ace Maluk 28 Richard Yuschak 28 Samantha Moon 30 Wayne Tiedeman
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OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD AS OF		On March 24
General:		<b>\$ 1225.50</b>
Renovation:		<b>\$ 27.00</b>
Online Donations on Tithe.ly		<b>\$ 30.00</b>

- **\$ 10,800** was raised in the month of March towards the Humanitarian Fund for Ukraine.

### Humanitarian Aid for Ukraine – March 28, 2024

In the month of March our parish was holding extra bingos on Wednesdays where the profit would go towards the Humanitarian Aid for Ukraine. It was our 3<sup>rd</sup> year in-a-row fundraiser to support the efforts of our Ukrainian Orthodox Church helping the people in Ukraine humanitarianly.

Thanks to all the dedicated volunteers and all the kind people who have supported us in these efforts, including the bingo profits and the generous donations of individuals, **by the Grace of God our Sts. Peter & Paul UOC Parish was able to raise \$10,800 towards the Humanitarian Fund for Ukraine.**

May Our Lord continue to bestow His blessings on all of us and grant peace to the Ukrainian Nation!

In Christ's Love,

Sts. Peter & Paul UOC Board

+ Fr. Mykola Zomchak

**God bless each and every one abundantly who contributed towards this fundraiser by their time or treasure.**



# Liturgical Schedule & Feast Days

Please contact Fr Mykola to schedule Prayer Services - 330-799-3830

## SERVICE AND FEAST DAY SCHEDULE

- Sunday, March 31, 9:30AM – **Divine Liturgy, 2nd Sunday of the Great Lent - Sunday of St. Gregory Palamas.** *Mk. 2:1-12. Panahyda*
  - Sunday March 31, 5:00 PM - **Sunday Lenten Vespers -St. Gregory Palamas Holy Trinity Romanian Orthodox Church** 626 Wick Ave Youngstown, OH
- Friday, April 5, 6:00 PM – **Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts.**
- Sunday, April 7, 9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy, 3rd Sunday of Great Lent, Adoration of Cross. THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS.** *Panahyda Pysanka (EASTER EGG) workshop - after the Liturgy*
  - Sunday April 7, 5:00 PM - **Sunday Lenten Vespers -St. John the Forerunner Greek Orthodox Church** 4955 Glenwood Avenue, Boardman, OH
- Friday, April 12, 6:00 PM – **Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts.**
- Sunday, April 14, 9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy, 4th Sunday of Great Lent, Venerable John Listvychnyk.** *Panahyda*
  - Sunday April 14, 5:00 PM -**Sunday Lenten Vespers - St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church** 2220 Reeves Road NE, Warren, OH
- Friday, April 19, 6:00 PM – **Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts.**
- Sunday, April 21, 9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy, 5th Sunday of Great Lent, Venerable Mary of Egypt.** *Panahyda*
  - Sunday April 21, 5:00 PM - **Sunday Lenten Vespers - St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church** 220 North Walnut Street, Youngstown, OH 44503
- Sunday, April 28, 9:30 AM – **Divine Liturgy, 6th Sunday of Great Lent, PALM SUNDAY. THE ENTRY OF THE LORD INTO JERUSALEM.**  
*Parish Picture for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book (April 28 after Liturgy on the church steps)*

## Upcoming dates & events

- **Adult study & Fellowship** at 6pm: April 9
- Mar 18 – May 4 \*\* **The Great Lent** \*\*
- Every Friday at 6pm during Great Lent - **Liturgy of Presanctified gifts. Potluck Dinner after.**
- Apr 7 – **Pysanka (Easter Eggs) workshop.** Free admission. Please sign up in the back of the church or call 330-799-3830
- Apr 20 – **UOL Pan-Orthodox Lenten Retreat (OHIO / WESTERN PA)** Saturday April 20

- Apr 28 – **Parish Picture for the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Book.** Will take a group picture of all the people of our church on the steps of the church after the service (*on April 28 - Palm Sunday*)
- Sep 13-15 - **100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY of Sts. Peter & Paul Parish CELEBRATION**

## Church School Calendar

- Sunday, March 31, **Church School**
- Sunday, April 7, **Church School**

### Bulletin Dedication *(in memory or in honor)*

Sun Apr 7 <b><u>Dedicated</u></b>	Sun Apr 14 <b><u>Dedicated</u></b>	Sun Apr 21 <b><u>Dedicated</u></b>	Sun Apr 28 <b><u>Dedicated</u></b>
Sun May 5 <b><u>Available</u></b>	Sun May 12 <b><u>Available</u></b>	Sun May 19 <b><u>Available</u></b>	Sun May 26 <b><u>Available</u></b>

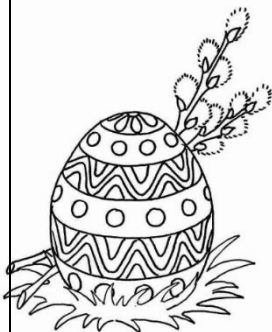
For bulletin dedication please call – 330-799-3830,  
leave a voicemail if Fr Mykola is not near the phone.

### GREETINGS:

We send our greetings to our brothers  
and sisters who celebrate the  
Solemnity of Easter according to the  
Gregorian calendar.



## PYSANKA WORKSHOP



**(EASTER EGG) with Zenia Goodge**

**Sunday, April 7 at noon**  
(right after the Divine Liturgy)

**FREE ADMISSION ~ Please sign up!**

Everything you'll need to make a Pysanka will be provided!

**GREAT WAY TO LEARN THE BEAUTIFUL TECHNIQUE**

Potluck lunch will be right after the service and then we will start the workshop. Please consider bringing something for the Potluck.

The Church will provide pizza, drinks, plates, napkins, and utensils.

We also need to know how many people will attend. Please put your name and how many people on the sheet in the back of the church or call 330-799-3830

# PYROHIES SALE SCHEDULE

FOR ORDERS CALL OR TEXT – (234) 247-1534 Anna



**April**      Order by:      Monday, April 8  
Pick-up on:      Friday, **April 12**, from 9:00 am – noon  
Order by:      Monday, April 22  
Pick-up on:      Friday, **April 26**, from 9:00 am – noon

**May**      Order by:      Monday, May 20  
Pick-up on:      Friday, **May 24**, from 9:00 am – noon



Potato & Cheese, Potato Onion, Kraut, or Potato & Kraut \$8.00 a dozen

## PYROHY WORK SCHEDULE

<b>April</b> Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> & Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> & Thursday 25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>May</b> Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> & Thursday 23 <sup>rd</sup>
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## Church Potluck



Join us EVERY FRIDAY during the Great Lent for the **Potluck Dinner** following the Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts at 6PM

The church is not a gathering of saints,  
but a crowd of repentant sinners.

- St. Ephraim the Syrian

## Sts. Peter & Paul Parish HISTORY FACTS

Father Paul Korsunowsky our second parish priest, went to the St. Paul, MN area after

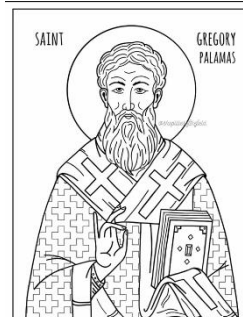
leaving our parish. He died in 1949 at the age of 65 and was laid to rest in Taft, California.





# St Gregory Palamas 1296-1359

In my years of working with terminally ill patients as a hospice chaplain, the saddest situations I sometimes face is individuals who had laid out a vision for their lives: a retirement of traveling, leisure, a boat and house in Florida only to have these visions dashed by the scourge of a devastating illness. These people often scrimped and saved and endured difficult jobs for years in order to reach their vision of living “the good life”.



Everyone has a vision of what their idea of “the good life” for themselves: I’m waiting for the day when..... I’m looking forward to the day when..... We often fail to realize that God has a vision for our lives, He has a deep desire for each of us as our loving Father. St. Gregory Palamas is one of the greatest saints of our Church because he clearly described and explained God’s vision for our life: to know Him, to experience Him, to share His life, to become one with Him.

## HIS LIFE

St. Gregory was born in Constantinople in the year 1296 to a wealthy family, his father a member of the senate of the Byzantine empire. St. Gregory was personally known by the Emperor Andronikos II Paleologos who admired the youth’s intelligence and talents and hoped to use his service in the imperial court. Gregory, however, like Mary the sister of Lazarus who sat at the Lord’s feet, was searching for “the one thing needful” (Luke 10:42) , that is, the one thing that is eternal and will truly satisfy a man’s heart. Gregory set off to the monasteries of Mount Athos, Greece to seek a deeper relationship with God. There Gregory became a disciple of experienced spiritual guides who taught him what is called the Prayer of the Heart or the Jesus Prayer which is based on Luke 18:38: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner. Gregory learned to combine this prayer with solitude and silence combined with physical exercises and breathing methods. This practice of prayer is known as hesychasm from the Greek word hesychos meaning inner stillness, peace or silence. Through this practice of prayer Gregory and his fellow monks fulfilled the command of the Holy Apostle Paul to “pray without ceasing”. (1 Thessalonians 5:17) From this experience of prayer, along with repentance, fasting, struggle against the passions and service to their brethren, the monks experienced God’s vision for their lives: to know Him, experience Him, share His life, to become one with Him.

In the year 1326 with the threat of a Turkish invasion hanging over Mount Athos, Gregory moved to the city of Thessalonica where he was ordained as a priest. There he divided his time between his practice of hesychasm and service to the people of the city. He later returned to Mount Athos, serving for a time as the abbot of Esphigmenou Monastery. He was eventually consecrated as the

metropolitan of Thessalonica in 1347. In 1354 a ship he was sailing on was captured by Turkish pirates, he was beaten, imprisoned and eventually ransomed. He died on November 14, 1359 with his dying words "To the heights! To the heights!" He was canonized by the Church in 1368. His teachings are so important that the Church honors his memory twice a year: November 14/27 and on the second Sunday of Great Lent.

## **EXPERIENCING GOD**

What is most important about St. Gregory Palamas is not the details of his life but his clear explanation of the Orthodox Faith: the Orthodox teaching about God's vision for our lives. Gregory taught that we cannot experience God through education, philosophy, intellectual discussion and debates. God is a person with whom we are to be in a relationship, not a topic to be discussed or facts to memorize. He taught that God desires us to know Him, to experience Him, to share His life, to become one with Him. Even today, there exists a tendency in some non-Orthodox Churches to focus on knowing about God and these churches resemble lecture halls in which pastors deliver lengthy sermons which are the focus of the Sunday worship. The center of these churches is a man in a pulpit rather than the presence of God on the holy altar. The emphasis seems to be learning about God more than experiencing God. Gregory studied the Holy Scriptures, read the early Church Fathers and learned from his own experience on Mount Athos that it was possible to know and experience God in this life. This is what our Lord prayed for in His final prayer before His passion and death, that we share His life and become one with Him:

May they all be one, as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, so also may they be in Us. (John 17:21)  
The Holy Apostle Peter says we are destined and called to "partake of the divine nature". (2 Peter 1:4)

St. Gregory was vehemently opposed by other theologians among them a man named Barlaam who taught that education and learning are more valuable than hesychastic prayer. Barlaam said it was heresy to claim that one could know God, as a prayer of the Divine Liturgy says: "You are God, ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, incomprehensible..." Gregory agreed that God was unknowable and beyond human approach. But he drew a distinction between knowing God in His essence and knowing God in His energies or actions, the means by which He acts. St. Gregory knew the teaching of the early Church, especially the fourth century St. Basil the Great who taught: We know our God from His energies, but we do not claim that we can draw near to His essence. For His energies come down to us, but His essence remains unapproachable. (Letter 234)

St. Gregory used the image of the sun: it is impossible to approach the essence or the center of the sun but it is possible to experience the energy of the sun: its light and warmth. Gregory said that through hesychasm, men and women can experience the light of God just as the apostles experienced the light of God streaming through the Body of Jesus at His Transfiguration.

## FOR ME?

Essence....engeries....hesychasm....what does this have to say to my life? My life consists of work, mortgage, bills, family. In the midst of our busy lives we need to remember and keep in focus the meaning and purpose of life. Do all the things I experience each day have a higher meaning and purpose? Is there a goal to my life? Another hospice patient that I once visited had a large poster hanging over his bed. The poster pictured a mansion on a hill overlooking the ocean. In the open garage doors were several expensive cars such as a Mercedes, BMW, Lamborghini. The caption on the poster read: "Justification for a Higher Education". This seemed to be the man's motivation and goal in life: to accumulate "stuff". Unfortunately he was dying of cancer and never obtained the house and the cars he was striving for. What he did accumulate was all being left behind. God's desire for us is something better than an expensive piece of machinery....He wants to know Him, to share His very life, to become one with Him in a relationship that will have no end. This is what St. Gregory Palamas reminds us. This is the purpose of our prayer, liturgical services, fasting, struggling against our sinful passions.

For us priests, the life and teachings of St. Gregory offer another challenge. How do we become good priest and servants of Christ? The temptation is to seek more education and advanced degrees: Masters degrees, Doctoral degrees. While clergy do need a solid theological education along with education in the arts and sciences, the teaching of St. Gregory Palamas reminds us that fruitful, worthy priestly ministry is measured by the time spent on our knees rather than sitting in a classroom. The teaching of St. Gregory reminds us that the study of theology is not an academic exercise but a tool in coming to know God, to experience Him, to enter into communion with Him.

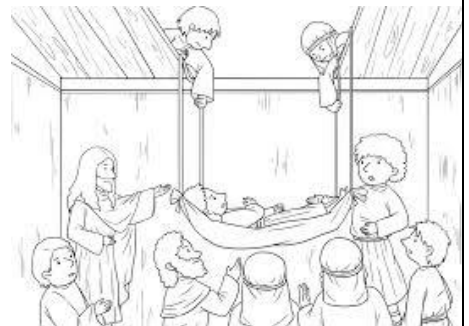
*Your tongue, watchful in teaching, rings in the ears of our heart and awakens the souls of the slothful. Your words, inspired by God are a ladder leading us from earth to heaven. O Gregory, wonder of Thessalonica, pray to Christ without ceasing, that we who honor you may be illumined with the divine light.* -from Vespers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent

- by Father Edward Pehanich

# On the Healing of the Paralytic

Mark (2:1-12) 2nd Sunday of Great Lent | Sunday of St. Gregory of Palamas

This Sunday, the biblical reading tells us about the healing of the paralytic of Capernaum. After the Lord Jesus called His first disciples on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, He entered Capernaum, and there, on a Saturday, He cast out the unclean spirit from a man. Afterwards, He entered Peter's house and healed Peter's mother-in-law also (Mark 1: 21-30). He also healed many of the sick who had various



diseases and He cast out many demons (1:34).

The reading begins when Jesus “*returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that He was at home*”. What is this home? It’s not just any house, but a well-known home. Most likely the home of Simon and Andrew mentioned in the previous chapter who was previously visited by Jesus. And when the crowd heard that Jesus was “at the home”, many gathered together to witness miracles that He performed in Capernaum. Jesus was also preaching the Word to them. For Jesus, it was insufficient to just perform miracles without also preaching the Word, the life-giving Word of God, about which the Apostle Paul says: “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,” (Hebrews 4:12). The Evangelist Mark uses the term “The Word” to refer to the good news of the Gospel (look to the parable of sower Mark 14:14).

And while He was preaching the Word: “*they came, bringing to Jesus a paralytic carried by four men*”. After hearing that Christ was in this house, the paralytic was brought to Him, carried by his friends, encountering clashes with the large crowd that had gathered and was blocking the entry to see Jesus. Moved by the power of faith, this paralytic and his friends devised an astonishing idea to overcome these obstacles, “*And when they could not get near Jesus 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*”. St. Mark the Ascetic wrote: “The paralytic let down through the roof signifies a sinner reprov'd in God’s name by the faithful and receiving forgiveness because of their faith,” (The Philokalia).

Here we see that Christ does not just hear about faith in words, but he looks for and sees faith through the actions of the faithful. He saw the effort and struggle to overcome obstacles in order to be in His presence. He saw the faith of the sick man himself since he would not have allowed himself to be carried unless he had had faith to be healed. Many times, the Lord healed the unbelieving sick on account of the faith of those who brought them. Similarly, He often healed the one brought to Him because of that man’s faith, despite the unbelief of those who brought him, like the healing of the servant of the centurion (Matthew 8: 5-13) and the healing of Jairus’s daughter (Mark 5: 22-24) and others.

Jesus took the first initiative and said to the paralysed man: “*Son, your sins are forgiven.*” First, He forgives the sins of the paralytic, and then He cures the disease, since the most severe illnesses occur, for the most part, as a result of sin, bringing us to the issue of the association between physical sickness and sin. Christ forgives the soul its sin, making it healthy and clean from the source of its sickness and weakness.

We read that the paralytic was carried by four men. The number four is very symbolic. It refers to the four Evangelists who represent the universe in its four diagonals. They carry every paralysed soul by sin and bring it into the presence of the Lord Jesus for the soul to be healed through forgiveness and by the power of the Word. When the Lord said that He could forgive sins, the Pharisees falsely accused Him of blasphemy, saying: “*Why does this man speak thus? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?*” But the Lord gives yet more evidence that He is God,

by revealing what was in their hearts. God alone knows what is in the heart of each, for, as the prophets say, "thou alone know the hearts of the sons of men," (2 Chron. 6:30). And God alone can forgive sins: "I, even I, am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins," (Isaiah 43:25). St. Irenaeus wrote, "How can sins be rightly remitted unless the very One against whom one has sinned grants the pardon?" (Against Heresies)

Although the Lord had revealed their innermost thoughts, the Pharisees remained senseless, not conceding that He who knew their hearts, could heal their sins as well. By healing the body, the Lord makes credible and certain the healing of the soul as well, confirming the invisible by means of the visible, and the more difficult by what was easier, though it did not appear so to the Pharisees. For the Pharisees thought it was more difficult to heal the body because it was something visible.

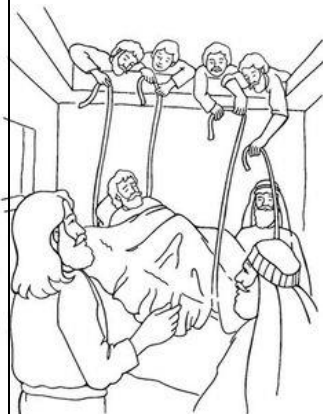
After Jesus healed the disease of the soul, that is sin, He said to the paralytic: "*Rise, take up your pallet and go home. And he arose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all*".

The word "immediately" has particular symbolism and is of particular interest according to St. Mark. It refers to the power and efficacy of the word of God who commands to be obeyed and asks the sick to fulfil the request. "Take up your bed," to prove the greater certainty of the miracle, showing that it is not a mere illusion, and at the same time to show that He not only healed but gave strength. So that what was the proof of his sickness (the bed) may now give testimony to his soundness. The bed of pain becomes the sign of healing, its very weight the measure of the strength that has been restored to the sick.

This miracle caused astonishment in the hearts of those present and was a cause of glorification to God. "*So that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, we never saw anything like this!*" Acting as a double miracle, this healing act of Christ not only pertained to the body but also to the soul. It did not only heal what is visible but also what is invisible.

On this Sunday, the second Sunday of the Great Lent, we also commemorate St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica. The first Sunday celebrates the restoration of the Holy Icons therefore known as the "Sunday of Orthodoxy" or the "Triumph of Orthodoxy". The act that St Gregory's feast follows on the second Sunday implies that his teaching and his victory over his adversaries were recognized as a continuation of the previous Sunday's celebration. As nothing

less than a second Triumph of Orthodoxy. Saint Gregory was one of the great defenders of the authentic spirituality of the Orthodox Church and its Hesychastic way. He wrote about the Divine Light, the uncreated light, the light which the disciples were able to see on the mountain of Tabor. He also wrote about the role of divine grace and the importance of noetic prayer; the prayer of the heart to achieve Theosis, that is union with God, which is the utmost goal of our Christian life. Every askesis we practice, all prayer and fasting, and any asceticism we observe are merely instruments and tools to assist us in achieving this purpose, our deification through the uncreated divine grace. Amen.



*By Metropolitan Basilios*

## **UOC of the USA Continues to Provide Humanitarian Aid to Ukraine - *March 23, 2024***

In the wake of the ongoing crisis caused by the Russian invasion in Ukraine, the plight of the affected populace has become increasingly dire. With over two years of relentless conflict, the country has seen its infrastructure shattered, homes destroyed, and families torn apart. Recent airstrikes have only exacerbated the suffering, leaving communities reeling from power outages, loss of basic amenities, and the constant threat of violence looming overhead. In the midst of this chaos, it is the generosity and compassion of individuals who donate funds to purchase hygiene products, clothing, and other essentials that provide a glimmer of hope for those grappling with adversity.

The impact of such donations cannot be overstated. For families struggling to survive amidst the rubble of their once-thriving neighborhoods, these contributions offer more than just material aid—they symbolize solidarity and support from individuals across the globe. From the elderly to the disabled, from mothers with children to those who have lost everything, each donation represents a lifeline in their time of greatest need.

Hygiene products, in particular, play a crucial role in maintaining health and dignity in the face of unimaginable circumstances. In a war-torn landscape where access to clean water and sanitation facilities is often limited, basic hygiene items such as soap, toothpaste, and sanitary items become precious commodities. By providing these essentials, donors not only alleviate physical discomfort but also help prevent the spread of disease, offering a semblance of normalcy amidst the chaos.

Similarly, clothing serves as more than just protection from the elements—it is a means of preserving dignity and self-respect. As temperatures plummet and cities overflow with displaced families, the simple act of providing warm clothing can make all the difference. Whether it's a coat to ward off the biting cold or a pair of shoes to replace those lost in the rubble, each garment represents a tangible expression of care and compassion.

In times of crisis, it is easy to feel overwhelmed by the scale of suffering and destruction. Yet, amidst the chaos, there are always individuals who refuse to turn a blind eye to the plight of their fellow human beings.

With the prayers and blessing of Metropolitan Antony of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora, Archbishop Daniel, Ruling Hierarch of the Western Eparchy of the UOC of the USA and Consistory President, recently provided resources collected by the Church to aid Ukrainians in their hour of need. Funds are distributed in the Donetsk and Mariupol Eparchy (under the leadership of Metropolitan Serhiy), through the service of Rev. Fr. Kostyantyn Kuznetsov, who along with his wife Natalia and team of volunteers, oversees the daily delivery and distribution of the donated food and logistical items to the refugees and the men and women of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, assuring the suffering people of Ukraine of continuing prayers on their behalf, and expressing love and concern through the provision of much needed supplies.

Through your generosity, they are able to provide not only material support but also a powerful message of hope—that even in the darkest of times, kindness and solidarity prevail. Just the other



week Fr. Kostyantyn was able to acquire a much-needed charging station for the military. With renewed airstrikes in Chasiv Yar, Bakhmut and Avdiivka, supplies are in dire need, therefore he along with his wife, set out daily to deliver food, clothing, medical supplies and other necessities of life.

As we extend our gratitude to those who have already donated funds in support of the suffering people of Ukraine, we ask that you consider donating again, for the need is great. The elderly, the disabled, the widows, the orphans, those hiding in demolished homes, those fighting in the frigid cold, those battling from within flooded trenches, the newly born, the frightened, the hungry, the thirsty... ARE ALL DEPENDING ON YOU FOR HELP.

During this prayerful and introspective time of Great Lent, please donate generously to the UOC of the USA Ukrainian Humanitarian fund, for by showing concern, aiding, and caring for these suffering individuals, you are showing your love for Christ Himself, and working out your own salvation.

*"For I was hungry, and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me." Matthew 25:35*

- The Consistory of the UOC of USA

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS OF OUR UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN UKRAINE – PLEASE VISIT THE WEBSITE - [https://uocofusa.org/news\\_220504\\_2](https://uocofusa.org/news_220504_2)**

# Lenten Challenge

*PRAY \* FAST \* GIVE*



**3rd** week of Great Lent:

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>Practice Self Control</b>	Abstain from Social Media (Facebook, Instragram, Snapchat, etc.)	Do not watch TikTok, Facebook, or YouTube reels	... Be on time to work, school, appointments, and early to bed	Leave early and do not speed or rush	Do not use foul language or mean words	Go through your closet and donate three items
<b>Thank for</b>	Sence of smell	memories	transportation	Corner store	shoes	clothing



**IN MEMORY OF**

**STEVE & HELENE  
SENEDIK**

**“THEIR MEMORY BE  
FROM GENERATION TO  
GENERATION”**

**IN LOVING MEMORY  
ON THEIR BIRTHDAYS**

**STEVE 03-31-1924  
HELENE 04-05-1934**



**MEMORY ETERNAL**

**LOVINGLY REMEMBERED BY  
KEN, MICHELE, MEL, STEPHEN,  
DAVID, DARLENE AND FAMILY**

