



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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GREAT LENT—THE GREAT FAST

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Bishop Robert, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Cuthbert Jack, Father Elias Warnke, Father Nestor Kowal, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John Nakonachny, Deacon Dennis Lapushanski, Protopresbyter Peter Hotrovich, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Joshua Agosto and his family, Mike Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Michael Miller, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, George & Mika Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Doris Artman, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Jean Stutchell, Charles & Esther Holupka, Wanda Mefford, Lynn (Bush) Gill, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Betty O'Masta, Julie Eiler, Vince Ferro, Michael Pawlyshyn, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—21-year-old with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Woloschak, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Pete Niederberger, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Diane McDaniel, Loretta,

Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl & Margaret Reed, Theodore Demopoulos, Jillian Bowman, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Doug Smith [Millie Kerr's son-in-law], Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], Mel & Charlotte Malik, Paula Pasquinelli, David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Helen Bozo, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Juliana Leis, Susan "Billie" Mason, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, LuAnne [Mike Horvath's daughter], Donald Griffey, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Stroz [child with cerebral palsy], Thomas Stutzman, Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Richard Dunst, Michelle, Jamie Gardner, Patrick, Linda Morris, Howard Simpson, Ronald Graham [Evelyn's nephew], Chris, Pastor Ed Bowen, David Hiles, Karen Johnson, Jennifer, Ann Quinn—knee surgery, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Susan Bertram, Rita McConnell, Millie Kerr, Stancy Popichak [Fr. Bob's mom], and Daria Masur ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, and Homer Paul Kline. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to our April babies: Robert Chicka on the 13th; Alexander Popichak on the 15th; Matthew Popichak on the 18th; Kim Shirley on the 18th; and John Sheliga on the 24th. May God Grant them all Many Happy, Healthy, Prosperous, and Blessed Years! M'Nohaya Lita!

PRAYER LIST: Please help update our prayer list. If you or someone you know no longer needs to be on the prayer list or if there is someone who needs to be on the list please let Father Bob know. Remember—Prayers are ALWAYS FREE! Thank you!

Please remember ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American service men and women—and bring them all home safely!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR "BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION" AND CAMPBELL'S SOUP LABELS TO CHURCH. There is a shoebox in the basement for Debbie Paouncic's class. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP!

REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please ask Father Bob.

AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY, APRIL 7 **Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great** **10:30 AM**
THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT—ADORATION OF THE MOST HOLY CROSS; THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS; MARTYR VICTORIA

Tone 3

Hebrews 4:14-5:6, Hebrews 2:11-18

Mark 8:34-9:1, Luke 1:24-38

Parastas in Blessed Memory of John Cherepko, Rose Lopushanski, Michael Brittan, Frank & Ollie Pendlyshok, & Vladimir Hanczar—Fr. Bob

SUNDAY, APRIL 14 **Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great** **10:30 AM**
FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT—SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS—JOHN OF THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT; SAINT MARY OF EGYPT; MARTYRS GERONCIUS & BASILIDES; RIGHTEOUS AHAZ; SAINT MACARIUS-ABBOT OF PELECETE; SAINT GERONTIUS THE YOUTH-CANONARCH OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA

Tone 4

Ephesians 5:9-19

Matthew 4:25-5:12

Parastas in Blessed Memory of Walter, Victor, Jacob, Katarina, & Baby Jacob Burlack—Evelyn Burlack

SUNDAY, APRIL 21 **Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great** **10:30 AM**
FIFTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT—VENERABLE MARY OF EGYPT; HOLY APOSTLES OF THE 70-ERODION, AGABUS, ASYNCRITUS, RUFUS, PHLEGON, HERMES, AND THOSE WITH THEM; MARTYR PAUSILIPPUS OF HERACLEA IN THRACE; SAINT CELESTINE-POPE OF ROME; SAINT RUFUS THE OBEDIENT OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA

Tone 5

Hebrews 9:11-14

Mark 10:32-45

Litany in Blessed Memory of Charles Holupka—40 days—Mike Holupka
Parastas in Blessed Memory of Nicholas & Catherine Behun—Behun Family

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 07 APRIL 2013
THIRD SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT—ADORATION OF THE MOST
HOLY CROSS; THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE MOST HOLY
THEOTOKOS; MARTYR VICTORIA

TROPARION—TONE 1

O Lord, save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance.
Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians, over their adversaries;
And, by virtue of Thy cross, preserve Thy habitation.

TROPARION—TONE 4

Today is the beginning of our salvation,
The revelation of the eternal mystery!
The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin
As Gabriel announces the coming of Grace.
Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos:
Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

KONTAKION—TONE 8

O victorious leader of triumphant hosts!
We, your servants, delivered from evil,
Sing our grateful thanks to you, O Theotokos!
As you possess invincible might
Set us free from every calamity so that we may sing:
Rejoice, O unwedded Bride!

Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

KONTAKION—TONE 7

Now the flaming sword no longer guards the gates of paradise;
It has been mysteriously quenched by the wood of the Cross!
The sting of death and the victory of hell have been vanquished;
For Thou, O my Savior, didst come and cry to those in hell:
Enter again into Paradise.

INSTEAD OF "O HOLY GOD"

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify Thee.

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Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

And Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify Thee.

Before Thy Cross, we bow down in worship, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection, we glorify Thee.

PROKEIMENON—TONE 7

READER: Extol the Lord our God; worship at His footstool, for it is Holy!

PEOPLE: **Extol the Lord our God; worship at His footstool, for it is Holy!**

READER: The Lord reigns; let the peoples tremble!

PEOPLE: **Extol the Lord our God; worship at His footstool, for it is Holy!**

READER: Extol the Lord our God.

PEOPLE: **Worship at His footstool, for it is Holy!**

ALLELUIA VERSES

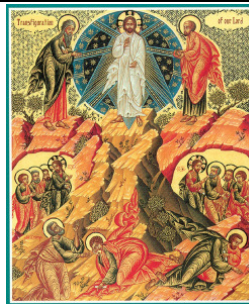
Remember Thy congregation which Thou hast gotten of old.

God is our King before the ages; He has worked salvation in the middle of the earth.



[To Understand the Cure We Must also Understand the Illness](#)

by [orthdoxtampabay](#)



An unfortunate consequence of our fallen state is characterized by our desire to be healed without an awareness or appreciation of the severity of our illness. We view distractions during prayer as ordinary obstacles to be overcome rather than as symptoms of our spiritual illness and alienation

from God, which call for more zealous and wholehearted repentance. We seek easy and even painless solutions to problems that vex us, rather than cultivating stillness and asking God for mercy with a readiness for self-sacrifice out of love for Him Who sacrificed all for us. We desire rational, logical, and all too superficial solutions to existential, ontological, spiritual problems that can only be healed by a radical openness to God's holy love, uncreated light, and divine grace, an openness to a process not devised by the human mind, but revealed by God Himself.

In an [earlier post concerning "image and likeness"](#) I wrote, "According to the Holy Scriptures, we were created in the image and likeness of God. For the Church Fathers, this means that there is an unbreakable relationship between God and humanity inherent in man's very being, that humanity and God are forever distinct as creature and Creator, and that a dynamic movement towards perfection, a movement from the image to the likeness, is an inherent part of the spiritually healthy life. The Fall, like an ontological sickness, weakened man's relationship with God and derailed the upward movement from the image to the likeness. This derailment, which meant erratic movements in every other direction except that of our ultimate goal, would affect the entirety of human life. Remaining unreceptive to the Divine Energies that should guide thought and action, forsaking the innate human drive of the image towards divine perfection in the likeness, man relies solely on the fruit of the tree of knowledge, meaning a static knowledge of created reality apart from God, apart from life, which ultimately causes man to misjudge reality. In other words, when we are ignorant of the meaning of the image of God in us, when we fail to base our thoughts and actions on it, and when we fail to strive to move towards the likeness, which comprises the infinite perfections of God in His goodness, simplicity, holiness, purity, blessedness, and other qualities, we are left to our own devices and predilections, we make catastrophic errors in judgment. We mistake falsehood for truth, vice for virtue, and pride for humility."

Our real problems have an existential, ontological, and spiritual depth that call for radical measures on our part and on God's. This the second Sunday of Great Lent we commemorate our father among the saints, [Saint Gregory Palamas](#) whose life and teachings illustrate so perfectly what God offers us and what we are to offer God, so that we might become what we were ultimately meant to be. Saint Gregory defended the perennial patristic ascetical praxis of prayer and fasting as a pathway of Light to Light in which the faithful see Light. When the psalmist and the fathers chant "In Thy Light we shall see light," they are not referring to the light of the sun, or the moon, or the morning star, but that Light which is beyond light and darkness, before time and space, in the very ruling power of God that

makes the image of God in man radiant with the splendor of Mount Tabor upon which Christ was once transfigured in Glory. According to Saint Gregory, what Peter, James and John experienced on Mount Tabor *after praying long with the Master, after being perfectly obedient to Him, after forsaking all, every thought and desire, to follow Him*, was the Uncreated Light—God revealing Himself in His energies. This Uncreated Light that the Saints behold in them and around them in a manner beyond sight and sense can only purify, heal, and ultimately divinize those who seek God with their whole heart, which means seeking Him, precisely as the Holy Apostles did. For those who do not seek God and refuse His love, the [Uncreated Light](#) is experienced as a blazing, all-consuming fire. A prayer of St. Simeon the Translator reminds us of this: "...Thou who art a fire consuming the unworthy, consume me not, O my Creator, but rather pass through all my body parts, into all my joints, my reins, my heart. Burn Thou the thorns of all my transgressions. Cleanse my soul and hallow Thou my thoughts ...that from me... every evil deed and every passion may flee as from fire".

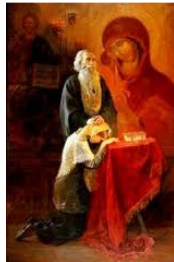
As Saint Gregory Palamas and the ancient fathers as far back as Saint Ignatius of Antioch taught, the ascetical practices of the church—constant prayer, vigilance, fasting, confession, and communion—are indispensable if one is to experience the Uncreated Light as a loving, healing power. As Peter Chopelas has described, "It means being healed, purified, illumined and transformed by God by His Divine Energy into a similitude of God [Jas 4:9], which will bring us into union with Him. It is the process in which humans are completed or "perfected" [see Heb 10:14 among others], "divinizing" us, making us "Christ-like" or more accurately "assimilated to God", through the Energization of His Power. When we are in perfect harmony with God [in the Gr. "synergy"--1Cor 3:9 'for we are God's synergisers'], the Holy Spirit energizes within us, transforming us, and then we too radiate this Uncreated Light."

Topics such as distractions during prayer and suffering are fine in so far as they lead to the real work of ascetical practice in daily life. The struggle to control our thoughts, restrain our tongues, and curb our natural appetites can only take place in the context of the constant remembrance of God which is made possible through much fasting, persistent prayer, and devout reception of the Church's mysteries. No philosophical treatise or theological speculation can replace the efficacy of the purifying fire of lived repentance.

In Homily Six "To Encourage Fasting", Saint Gregory Palamas, the theologian of the Uncreated Light and unceasing prayer reminds us, "*Sensual pleasure causes ungodliness as well as sin, but fasting and self-control result in the fear of God as well as virtue. Fasting must be*

accompanied by self-control. Why? Because eating our fill, even of humble foods, is a hindrance to the purifying mourning, godly sorrow and contrition in our souls, which bring about unswerving repentance leading to salvation. For without a contrite heart we cannot really lay hold of repentance. It is the restriction of self-indulgence, sleep and the senses according to God's will that crushes our hearts and makes us mourn for our sins. When that rich man in the Gospel said to himself, 'Eat, drink and be merry' (Luke 12:19), the wretch made himself fit for the eternal flames and unfit for this present life. Let us, on the contrary, brethren, tell ourselves to be temperate, to fast, to keep watch, to be restrained, to be humble and to suffer hardship for our salvation. Then we shall finish this present life in a good way pleasing to God and inherit the blessed life without end. May we all attain to this by the grace and love towards mankind of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory, might, honour and worship, together with His Father without beginning and the life-giving Spirit, now and for ever and unto ages of ages. Amen."

Why Do We Need to Go to Confession?



By Metropolitan Kallistos Ware

"Why do we need to go to confession? Is it not enough to confess our sins with sincerity in our private prayers each evening, will not God forgive us from the very moment that we confess our sins? Yes, as soon as we turn to God in true repentance He forgives us. God is always more ready to forgive than we to repent. Even the slightest turning of our heart will be blessed by God. Why then are we taught also to go to the sacrament of confession?"

First: there are no private sins, all sins affect our brothers and sisters in Christ. All of our sins, however secret, have an effect on the community. If I feel in my heart anger towards someone else, even if I do not show it by word or action, that evil disposition in my heart has a destructive effect on others around. Every sin is a sin against the community; every sin however secret is a stumbling block for others and makes it harder for them to serve Christ. In the early Church confession was public. After the fourth century, with the growth of the Christian community, that gave scandal and so confession assumed its present form, as an opening of the heart before the priest alone, under conditions of

secrecy. But let us remember that during confession the priest is there, among other things, as the representative of the community, of the people. The fact that we confess not just to God, but in the presence of a fellow man, shows that we acknowledge the communal social dimension of all our sins. In confessing in his presence we are also asking forgiveness from the community.

Once before the Divine Liturgy St. John of San Francisco was hearing the confession of a man, and the man said: "Yes I know that what I have done is a sin, I ask God's forgiveness, but my heart is like a stone, I do not feel any sorrow for my sin, it is all just in my brain." So St. John said to him: "Go out into the center of the church in front of the people and make a prostration before them and then come back to me." As the man did this and knelt to ask forgiveness from the people before him, something broke inside his heart and it came alive again. Suddenly he felt real compunction for what he had done. He said "now it is different," and the Archbishop gave him forgiveness. That was the moment of turning for him because he acknowledged that his sin was a sin against the community and he asked their forgiveness. So in our confession let us first of all recall that dimension. We are also asking for forgiveness of our brothers and sisters for what we have done. That is one reason to go to confession, because sin is social.

Second: The spoken word, the uttered word has great force. This applies in two ways. First of all we listen to the spoken word of the priest, the council that he gives, and it may be that what he says if written down and put in a book would not seem so striking. It may be that it wouldn't seem so remarkable. But in confession the priest is praying and we are praying for the light of the Holy Spirit, and he is addressing those words under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to each one of us, to each penitent personally. The words which looked at in the abstract might seem obvious, common place, can prove words of fire when we realize that they are being said to me personally here and now under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

At the Russian convent in London many years ago there was a priest, Fr. John, who didn't much like hearing confessions, he didn't much like giving sermons either. He was a person of few words and very humble, and didn't feel he really had the authority to offer council in confession, but he was blessed by the bishop to hear confessions so he did so. On one occasion a woman was telling him at immense length of her quarrels with her husband: "I said this and he said this and I told him he was wrong and told him this" and so it went on "and I told him this and this." When she had finally stopped all Fr. John did was to turn to her and say "And did it help?" and then he gave her absolution. That came as a sudden revelation to her, the futility of the endless arguments she had with her husband, of

her endless desire to prove that she was right and that he was wrong. Suddenly she saw that there was no point to all this, it was quite simply unnecessary and she stopped from that moment.

So the uttered word can have great power and that applies also to what you or I utter when we make our confession. Yes we can confess our sins secretly in our evening prayers and we should do so, but when we come before the holy icons in church, when we have listened to the prayers and speak in the presence of the priest, when we have to say these things aloud, often then it becomes powerful, immediate, personally significant in a way it was not before.

The uttered word has great force and we find ourselves in confession, by God's grace, saying things that we never said in our private prayers. Suddenly we are able to understand more deeply and to express it more openly. Therein lies much of the grace of confession. The desert fathers say that a thought which is concealed has great power over us, but if we can find a way to bring it into the open and to speak of it, it loses its power. That is also what the modern psychiatrists tell us, but the desert fathers said it first! So, the uttered word that we bring in confession can have a sacramental force and a healing grace which will surprise us.

But then there is a third thing, not just what the priest does when he offers advice, not just what we do when we try to speak the truth in Christ. There is also what Christ does. Confession is a mystery of the Church that confers sacramental grace, there is power within it, Divine power. When the priest lays his hand upon our head in Confession, it is Christ who lays his hand upon us, Christ who forgives and that is certainly the deepest and most profound reason why we should go to Confession. When such grace and such healing is offered to us, who among us dare refuse to accept such an opportunity."

Son, obedient servant of the Lord, do not be so fooled by the spirit of conceit that you confess your sins to your spiritual father as though they were someone else's. Lay bare your wound to the healer. Only through shame can you be freed from shame. Tell him, and do not be ashamed, "This is my wound, Father; this is my injury. It happened because of my negligence and not from any other cause. No one is to blame for this, no man, spirit or body or anything else. It is all through my negligence." He who exposes every serpent shows the reality of his faith, while he who hides them still walks the trackless wastes. *St. John Climacus, The Ladder of Divine Ascent*

By accepting a suspicion against the neighbor, by saying, 'What does it matter if I put in a word about my suspicion? What does it matter if I find out what my brother is saying or what a guest is doing?' the mind begins to forget about its own sins and to talk idly about his neighbor, speaking evil against him, despising him, and from this he falls into the very thing he condemns. Because we become careless about our own faults and do not lament our own death, we lose the power to correct ourselves and we are always at work on our neighbor. *St. Dorotheos of Gaza, Discourses and Sayings*, Cistercian Publications, pg. 131

A person who, knowing what faults he has committed, willingly and with due thankfulness endures the trials painfully inflicted on him as a consequence of these faults, is not exiled from grace or from his state of virtue; for he submits willingly and pays off his debts by accepting the trials. In this way, while remaining in a state of grace and virtue, he pays tribute not only with his enforced sufferings, which have arisen out of the impassioned side of his nature, but also with his mental assent to these sufferings, accepting them as his due on account of his former offenses. Through true worship, by which I mean a humble disposition, he offers to God the correction of his offenses. *St. Maximos the Confessor, The Philokalia, Volume 2, Faber and Faber, pg. 285*

When the devil looks at a man who sincerely desires not to sin, he is not so unintelligent as to suggest to him (as he would to a hardened sinner) that he go and commit fornication or go and steal. He knows we do not want that and he does not set out to tell us something we do not want to hear; but he finds out that little bit of self-will or self-righteousness and through that, with the appearance of well doing, he will do us harm. *St. Dorotheos of Gaza, Discourses and Sayings*

What is the essence of Orthodoxy? It is the God-man Christ. Everything that is Orthodox has a divine-human character: knowledge, the senses, the will, the mind, mortality, dogma, philosophy, and life. Divine humanity is the only category in which all the manifestations of Orthodoxy are received and fully operate. In all creation, God occupies the first place, man the second. God leads while man is led; God acts and man cooperates. God does not act transcendently, He is not the abstract God of deism, but rather the God of the most immediate historic reality, the God of revelation, the God who became man and lived within the categories of our human existence while appearing everywhere as absolute holiness, goodness, wisdom, justice and truth. *St. Justin Popovich*