



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA
PARISH OF ST. VASILIOS, BRUNSWICK, VICTORIA

SUNDAY
4 MARCH 2018
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PARISH INFORMATION BULLETIN

PROGRAM FOR 4—10 MARCH 2018



SUNDAY 4 MARCH	2nd Sunday of Lent, St Gregory Palamas, Mark 2: 1-12 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.30– 11.00am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
Parishes of St Vasilios and the Presentation of our Lord, Coburg Youth Group meetings have begun for 2018. The group meetings alternate between Coburg and Brunswick every Tuesday beginning at 7.00pm for ages between 16—20yrs. Youth are invited to attend, and in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere take part in discussion and learn about many contemporary issues that are informative and beneficial for both body and soul.	
MONDAY 5 MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 9.00am Service of Holy Unction• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall.• 6.00pm Service of Great Compline
TUESDAY 6 MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6.00pm Service of Great Compline• 7.00pm Parishes of St Vasilios and the Presentation of our Lord, Coburg Youth Group will meet in our Church Hall. The meeting will begin with the Compline Service in English.
WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8.00– 9.30am Service of Presanctified Liturgy• 6.00pm Service of Great Compline
THURSDAY 8 MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 6.00pm Service of Great Compline
FRIDAY 9 MARCH 40 Martyrs of Sebaste	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 7.00– 9.30am Orthos and Service of Presanctified Liturgy• 7.00pm Service of Akathist Hymn to The Theotokos— Third Salutations to the Theotokos
SATURDAY 10 MARCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3.45pm Service of Vespers
SUNDAY 11 MARCH	GOSPEL READING: Mark 8: 34-9:1 EPISTLE READING: Hebrews 4: 14-16, 5:1-6

Telephone Contact Numbers

St Vasilios Church
9387 7693

Fr Athanasios
9383 4151

Fr Ephraim
0490 378 215

Website:
stvasiliosbrunswick.com

Fr. Athanasios
and
Fr. Ephraim

are available
at the Church

every Monday to Friday
between
4.00 and 6.00pm

for Holy Confession and
any spiritual need.

WORDS FROM THE CHURCH FATHERS

We know that prayer in and of itself cannot save us, but carrying it out before God can.
For when the Lord's eyes are upon us He sanctifies us,
as the sun warms everything upon which it shines.

St Gregory Palamas

**Overcoming Paralysis Through Humility: Homily for the Second Sunday of Lent
in the Orthodox Church**

If we were not aware already that we have much in common with the paralysed man in today's gospel reading, the first two weeks of Lent have surely opened our eyes a bit to that truth. The struggle to embrace spiritual disciplines quickly shows us that we typically do not control ourselves very well at all. We find it so hard to turn away from our usual self-centred habits when we seek to give more attention to prayer, fasting, and generosity. We are so weak in our ability to stay focused in opening our hearts to the Lord and guarding them from evil thoughts. We have so little strength to resist our addiction to our stomachs and taste buds, and basically to indulging our desires for pleasure in whatever form we want it. We often feel powerless in our struggle to forgive others and mend broken relationships. Taking even small steps to reorient our lives to God through spiritual disciplines should open our eyes to the paralysis of our souls.

If that is the case for you today, then give thanks that the Lord has shown you a truth that is necessary for your healing. Jesus Christ said "It is not the healthy who need a physician, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mark 2:17) We must know our own disease in order to receive His healing. We must know our own weakness in order to find His strength. The disciplines of Lent are tools for helping us see that we do not simply need a new set of rules or a list of things to do or believe. No, we need to be restored, to be transformed, to be enabled to rise up from our slavery to decay in order to walk, to move forward in a blessed life of holiness from the depths of our souls.

The salvation to which Christ calls us is not simply a matter of having ideas or feelings about Him, but of participating personally in the divine nature by grace. 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 ways, St. Gregory taught that we may truly participate in the divine energies as whole persons. He proclaimed that knowing God means 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.

That is precisely what we see in the healing of the paralysed man. Christ raised him up from weakness and misery, enabling Him to move forward in a life of holiness, a life in which he had the strength to live as one created in God's image and likeness. Today we celebrate that the Saviour does precisely the same thing for each of us. Through His glorious resurrection, He raises us all from slavery to sin and death. Left to our own devices, we would always be servants of our own corruption. But when we confess from our hearts our own brokenness and take the steps necessary to open ourselves to His healing, He mercifully raises us up to participate personally in the blessed life that He came to bring to sinners like you and me.

The more that we truly humble ourselves before the Lord this Lent, the more open our hearts will be to the infinite healing power of His grace. He does not rest content with forgiving us in a legal sense, but calls us to be permeated by His divine energies, to radiate His holiness as we live and breathe in this world. He strengthens and commands us to manifest His victory over sin and death in our own lives. Perhaps that is just another way of saying that He calls us to "rise, take up your pallet and go home." There is no way to receive His merciful healing without true humility. And there is no way to acquire true humility other than to learn to see ourselves in that paralysed man whose only hope is in Jesus Christ. Let us use the remaining weeks of Lent to embrace this deep truth through prayer, fasting, generosity, and repentance. That is how we will unite ourselves more fully with the Lord Who came to raise us up with Him into eternal life. That is how we too will be healed.

- Fr. Philip LeMasters



"And though every day a man lives may rightly be a day of repentance, yet is it in these days more becoming, more appropriate, to confess our sins, to fast, and to give alms to the poor; since in these days you may wash clean the sins of the whole year."

- St. John Chrysostom - *"The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers"*