



## Parish Information Bulletin

### Program for 15—21 March

#### SUNDAY 15 MARCH

2nd Sunday of Lent, St Gregory Palamas, Mark 2: 1-12

- 7.30— 11.00am  
Orthros and Divine Liturgy

#### 2020 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES have begun

(A free voluntary program organised by the Church)

Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at the time of Holy Communion until Church dismissal. We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment. Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.

#### MONDAY 16 MARCH

- 8.45am  
Service of Holy Unction
- 10.00am  
Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall.
- 5.00pm  
Service of Great Compline

#### TUESDAY 17 MARCH

- 5.00pm  
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.

#### WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH

- 8.00am  
Service of Presanctified Liturgy
- 5.00pm  
Service of Great Compline

#### THURSDAY 19 MARCH

- 5.00pm  
Service of Great Compline
- 7.30—8.30pm  
➡ **TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP**  
**ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME !**  
Join the group and learn about your faith, make friends, enjoy games,  
In a friendly, relaxing environment.  
: In Church Hall, upstairs behind the Church
- 7.30pm  
Young Adults and Married Couples Bible Study Group at St. Vasilios,  
in the Church Coffee Room.

#### FRIDAY 20 MARCH

- 6.30pm  
Service of Akathist Hymn to The Theotokos— Third Salutations to the Theotokos

#### SUNDAY 22 MARCH

GOSPEL READING: Mark 8: 34-38, 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.

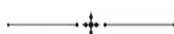
If a man listens  
to God,  
then God listens  
to him.



Abba Moses

No good thing can be brought to completion by our own efforts,  
but by the power and will of God.  
However, God demands effort on our part to conform to His will.

Saints Barsanuphius and John



Someone asked “Where is God?” – “Where you have left Him.”  
If we turn to Him and follow Him He is with us and in us.

+ Bishop Paulos, Satista

### Overcoming Paralysis Through Humble Repentance

Imagine how you would react if you went to the doctor to be cured of a disease and were told in response "Your sins are forgiven." You would probably look for another physician pretty quickly. We seek medical care in order to regain our health, not to be forgiven for wrongs we have done. How sad, then, when we approach Christ wanting only forgiveness without the healing of our souls.

Jesus Christ's deliverance of the paralysed man demonstrates that we should not ask of Him only forgiveness in the sense of being let off the hook for breaking a law. The Saviour did not come to settle a legal account with fallen humanity, but to restore us as the unique persons He created us to be in His image and likeness. He came mercifully to release us from bondage to our own idolatrous self-centeredness and all its corrosive effects. To accept His healing, however, we must open our weak souls to His healing strength. We must accept through humble repentance the grace by which He enables us to rise up from the comfortable bed of our passions to walk forward in holiness.

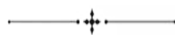
If we had only a written law or a set of expectations for how God wanted us to live, perhaps it would make sense to want only forgiveness for how we had not met those standards. But since our Lord is the God-Man in Whom humanity and divinity are united in one Person, He enables us to participate personally, in every dimension of our existence, in His salvation. Though we are by nature human beings and not God, His gracious divine energies enable us to share in His eternal life in ways that heal, restore, and fulfil us as those called to become like Him in holiness. That, of course, is what it means to become fully human.

Today we commemorate St. Gregory Palamas, a great bishop, monastic, and theologian of the 14th century. He defended the experience of *hesychast* monks who, through deep prayer of the heart and asceticism, were able to see the Uncreated Light of God that the Apostles beheld at the Transfiguration of the Lord on Mount Tabor. St. Gregory taught that we know God by participating in His gracious divine energies as we are transformed in holiness in every aspect of our existence. The point is not simply to have ideas or feelings about God, but to experience true personal union with the Lord.

If we have pursued the Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and forgiveness with any seriousness at all, we will have learned something about our own weakness. These practices reveal how hard it is to control our own thoughts, words, and deeds. Struggles with physical health, family relationships, and life circumstances also show us that we are much like the paralysed man in our inability to overcome so many of the problems that we encounter. The ultimate paralysis, of course, is death itself, which our Lord conquered in His glorious resurrection on the third day. As we prepare to follow our Saviour to His Passion, we must know our own weakness in order to receive His glorious strength.

Christ calls us, like the paralysed man, to rise, take up our bed, and walk forward in a life of holiness; that is how we accept His merciful healing. There no way to find deliverance from all the maladies that keep us enslaved to sin and death other than to receive His grace by confessing our sins and doing what is necessary to reorient lives toward Him. If we do not obey His command, we will remain stuck in the comfortable bed of weakness and only become more paralysed. In the remaining weeks of Lent, let us all embrace the Lord's strength by pressing forward in repentance as we open even the weakest, darkest dimensions of our lives to His healing light. That is how we will find not only forgiveness, but also our fulfilment as unique persons in the process of becoming radiant with the holiness of God by grace. That is what it means to be healed and to become truly human in His image and likeness.

Fr. Philip LeMasters



"But I say to you," the Lord says, "love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute you." Why did he command these things? So that he might free you from hatred, sadness, anger and grudges, and might grant you the greatest possession of all, perfect love, which is impossible to possess except by the one who loves all equally in imitation of God.

—St. Maximus the Confessor