



## Parish Information Bulletin

### Program for 12—18 March 2023

<b>SUNDAY 12 MARCH</b>	<b>2nd Sunday of Lent, St Gregory Palamas, Mark 2: 1-12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy</li><li>• 6.30pm Lenten Vespers Holy Monastery Axion Esti, Northcote</li></ul>
<b>2023 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES - 2023</b> (A free voluntary program organised by the Church) <b>Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am until Church dismissal.</b> 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.	
<b>MONDAY 13 MARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 9.00am Service of Holy Unction</li><li>• 10.00am Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall</li><li>• 5.00pm Service of Great Compline</li></ul>
<b>TUESDAY 14 MARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5.00pm Service of Great Compline</li></ul>
<b>WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8.00am Service of Pre-sanctified Liturgy</li><li>• 5.00pm Service of Great Compline</li></ul>
<b>THURSDAY 16 MARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5.00pm Service of Great Compline</li><li>• 8.00—9.00pm ➡ <b>TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP 2023</b> <b>ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME</b> Join the group and learn about your faith, make friends, enjoy refreshments, in a friendly, relaxing environment. * In Church Hall, upstairs behind the Church</li></ul>
<b>FRIDAY 17 MARCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 6.00pm Service of Akathist Hymn to The Theotokos— 3rd Salutations to the Theotokos</li></ul>
<b>SUNDAY 19 MARCH</b>	<b>GOSPEL READING: Mark 8: 34-38, 9:1</b> <b>EPISTLE READING: Hebrews 4: 14-16, 5: 1-6</b>

### 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 you put something fragrant on to burning coals, you motivate those who approach to come back again and to stay near, but if instead you put on something with an unpleasant, oppressive smell, you repel them and drive them away.*

*It is the same with the mind. If your attention is occupied with what is holy, you make yourself worthy of being visited by God, since this is the sweet savour which God catches scent of.*

*On the other hand, if you nurture evil, foul and earthly thoughts within you, you remove yourself from God's supervision and unfortunately make yourself worthy of His aversion.*



*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

Mark 2:1-12 - healing of a paralysed man

In those days, Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, and it was reported that He was at home. So many gathered around that there was no longer room for them, not even in front of the door, and Jesus was speaking the word to them. Then some people came, bringing to Him a paralysed man, carried by four of them. And when they could not bring him to Jesus because of the crowd, they removed the roof above Him, and after having dug through it, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" At once Jesus perceived in His spirit that they were discussing these questions among themselves, and He said to them, "Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and take your mat and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" - He said to the paralysed man - "I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home." And he stood up, and immediately took the mat and went out before all of them, so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

As you read and contemplate this reading, notice a things:

1. Notice who brought the paralysed man to Jesus? Obviously he could not move on his own, so he needed help. He was "carried by four of them." These four must have been his friends because they did everything to ensure that their paralysed friend gets an audience with the Lord.

2. After destroying someone's roof (this part always gets me - they actually took the roof apart. Yes, the roofs in those days were flat, still, they had to drag their friend up there and then break the roof!) they lowered the mat with their friend, and two unexpected things happened - "Jesus saw their faith," meaning the faith of the four, and He forgave the sins of the paralysed man.

These two points are very important because it shows that through *our* faith, *our* good works, God helps and heals those around us. Isn't it amazing? Have faith, practice it, work on it. And, pray that God send you the same friends as the four, who would make every effort to help you.

Jesus did not heal the paralysed man right away. The four friends went through all the trouble, breaking someone's roof only to hear, "Your sins are forgiven you." What?! Sins?! He's paralysed, make him walk again! The general Christian teaching and understanding is that our sins (and we all have them) are not the direct cause for our physical ailments. Just like physical illness does not necessarily mean that we are spiritually sick, that is sinful. There is no direct connection, but there is *some* connection nonetheless. If we neglect our spiritual life, if we abandon prayer, fasting, confession, daily examination of our soul, and most importantly communion with Christ, it will have affect on us physically. In the same way, if we don't take care of our God-given physical bodies we will unavoidably damage our spirit. Fasting is a great way to maintain both body and soul. Any dietician will tell you that abstaining from some foods, like meat and dairy, at least on some regular basis helps your body to recharge and cleanse. But fasting is about more than just food, fasting also involves an intensified prayer life. By intensified I mean doing slightly more than you usually do, in hopes of maintaining it and building on it. It does not mean going from having little to no personal prayer rule to going to church every day for 2-3 weeks. You'll just crash and burn like that. It does mean increasing your prayer rule a bit. For example, if you have specific prayers that you say daily, add to them a chapter from the Bible. If you already read the Bible, add another chapter. The point is to have something that is doable and still remains a prayer.

3. "Which is easier to say...?" This is a great question. In the time when people did not throw around words like we tend to today, a spoken word meant something, contracts were agreed upon a spoken word. In our time, when even written, notarized, and sealed contracts can be broken, a word has very little value. So, it is easier to say anything we want. But the question becomes - can we follow up on it? Can we talk the talk and walk the walk? Do not throw your words around. Hold to these two main principles - speak the truth and mean what you say.

Father Aleksey



**St Antony teaches ....**

St Antony teaches about ceaseless abiding with God: *'Let your soul be with God at all times, and your body be as some statue on earth. Stand always straight before the face of God. Have the fear of God always before your eyes, as also the remembrance of death and withdrawal from all worldly things. Die daily, that you may live; for he who fears God will live for ever. Be always alert, that you fall not into laziness and idleness. Hate all that is of this world and flee from self, for otherwise it will separate you from God. Hate all that brings harm to your soul.'*

*Do not depart from God for the sake of transient things. Do not take the example of him that is weaker than you, but that of him who is more perfect.*

*Be attentive to the example of those who have loved the Lord with all their hearts and performed good works. Above all, pour forth constant prayer and give God grateful thanks for all that happens to you. Fulfil all that is commanded, and you will receive the inheritance which "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man" (1 Cor. 2:9).'*