



Parish Information Bulletin

Program for 21—27 January 2024

SUNDAY 21 JANUARY	12TH SUNDAY OF LUKE, Luke 17: 12-19 • 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
THURSDAY 25 JANUARY <i>St Gregory the Theologian</i>	• 7.30am Orthros and Divine Liturgy
SUNDAY 28 JANUARY	GOSPEL READING: Luke 19: 1-10 EPISTLE READING: 1Timothy 4: 9-15

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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.

Healing the Ten Lepers: The One Who Sees is Thankful

Then as He entered a certain village, there met Him ten men who were lepers, who stood afar off.

They were lepers

They were respectful, they were obedient, they were humble

And they lifted up their voices and said, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!"

They were reverent, faithful, pathetic, needy, helpless, desperate

So when He saw them, He said to them, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And so it was that as they went, they were cleansed.

Jesus was commanding, directing, ready to achieve, filled with power. He orders them to act as if they are already cleansed. They have been but don't yet realize it!

They were obedient

And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, returned

They were self centred, unobservant and self absorbed – they were self-satisfied, they got what they wanted. Were the others not happy? Were they not amazed at God? At their healing? Only one in ten could see. They were blind not just leprous, only one saw that!

and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks. And he was a Samaritan.

He was happy, he was grateful, he was a foreigner, he was a stranger

So Jesus answered and said, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"

Was God unhappy with the foreigner's thanks? Would God not listen to it? Or is this a miraculous sign, God's love is not limited to Jews. God loves other people, including the diseased and disfigured, and foreigners.

"Were there not any found who returned to give glory to God except this foreigner?"

Jesus was dismayed. Had his word proved powerless and empty? Or did the healed lepers not connect their healing to Jesus? He had spoken to them as if they were already cleansed. Only one clearly understood Jesus command for them to go was what healed them. Only one recognized Jesus as having the power of God. The others had experienced the power of God, but in their blind obedience, in their literalistic thinking, they failed to see what had transpired – they failed to understand that the healing meant they had encountered God in Christ.

And He said to him, "Arise, go your way. Your faith has made you well."

He was healing. The other was healed, and enlightened. He was immersed in Christ and resurrected.

- Fr Ted Bobosh



St Gregory the Theologian

Our father among the saints Gregory the Theologian, also known as Gregory of Nazianzus (though that name more appropriately refers to his father) and Gregory the Younger, was a great father and teacher of the Church. His feast day is celebrated on January 25 and that of the translation of his relics on January 19. With Sts. Basil the Great and John Chrysostom, he is numbered among the Three Holy Hierarchs, whose feast day is celebrated on January 30. St. Gregory is also known as one of the Cappadocian Fathers.

He was born in 329 in Arianzus, a village of the second district of Cappadocia, not far from Nazianzus. His father, who later became Bishop of Nazianzus, was named Gregory (commemorated Jan. 1), and his mother was named Nonna (Aug. 5); both are among the saints, and so are his brother Caesarius (Mar. 9) and his sister Gorgonia (Feb. 23).

At first he studied in Caesarea of Palestine, then in Alexandria, and finally in Athens. As he was sailing from Alexandria to Athens, a violent sea storm put in peril not only his life but also his salvation, since he had not yet been baptized. With tears and fervour he besought God to spare him, vowing to dedicate his whole self to Him, and the tempest gave way to calm. At Athens St. Gregory was later joined by St. Basil the Great, whom he already knew, but now their acquaintance grew into a lifelong brotherly love. Another fellow student of theirs in Athens was the young Prince Julian, who later as emperor was called the Apostate because he denied Christ and did all in his power to restore paganism. Even in Athens, before Julian had thrown off the mask of piety, St. Gregory saw what an unsettled mind he had, and said, "What an evil the Roman State is nourishing" (Orat. V, 24, PG 35:693).

After their studies at Athens, Gregory became Basil's fellow ascetic, living the monastic life together with him for a time in the hermitages of Pontus. His father ordained him presbyter of the Church of Nazianzus, and St. Basil consecrated him Bishop of Sasima (or Zansima), which was in the archdiocese of Caesarea. This consecration was a source of great sorrow to Gregory and a cause of misunderstanding between him and Basil, but his love for Basil remained unchanged, as can be plainly seen from his *Funeral Oration on Saint Basil* (Orat. XLIII).

About the year 379, St. Gregory came to the assistance of the Church of Constantinople, which had already been troubled for forty years by the Arians; by his supremely wise words and many labours he freed it from the corruption of heresy. He was elected archbishop of that city by the Second Ecumenical Council, which assembled there in 381, and condemned Macedonius, Archbishop of Constantinople, as an enemy of the Holy Spirit. When St. Gregory came to Constantinople, the Arians had taken all the churches, and he was forced to serve in a house chapel dedicated to St. Anastasia the Martyr. From there he began to preach his famous five sermons on the Trinity, called the *Triadica*. When he left Constantinople two years later, the Arians did not have one church left to them in the city. St. Meletius of Antioch (see Feb. 12), who was presiding over the Second Ecumenical Council, died in the course of it, and St. Gregory was chosen in his stead; there he distinguished himself in his expositions of dogmatic theology.

Having governed the Church until 382, he delivered his farewell speech- the *Syntacterion*, in which he demonstrated the Divinity of the Son—before 150 bishops and the Emperor Theodosius the Great. Also in this speech he requested, and received from all, permission to retire from the See of Constantinople. He returned to Nazianzus, where he lived to the end of his life. He reposed in the Lord in 391, having lived some sixty-two years.

His extant writings, both prose and poems in every type of meter, demonstrate his lofty eloquence and his wondrous breadth of learning. In the beauty of his writings, he is considered to have surpassed the Greek writers of antiquity, and because of his God-inspired theological thought, he received the surname "Theologian." Although he is sometimes called Gregory of Nazianzus, this title belongs properly to his father; he himself is known by the Church only as Gregory the Theologian. He is especially called "Trinitarian Theologian," since in virtually every homily he refers to the Trinity and the one essence and nature of the Godhead. Hence, Alexius Anthorus dedicated the following verses to him:

Like an unwandering star beaming with splendour,
Thou bringest us by mystic teachings, O Father,
To the Trinity's sunlike illumination,
O mouth breathing with fire, Gregory most mighty.