

SUNDAY, MARCH 20, 2022
SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS

This Sunday is often referred to as a 2nd Triumph of Orthodoxy. St Gregory affirmed that ascetical effort and prayer are the outcome of the mystery of Redemption and are the way for each person to make the grace given at Baptism blossom within himself. He also defended the authenticity of the methods which Hesychastic monastics used to fix the intellect in the heart; for since the Incarnation we seek the grace of the Holy Spirit in our bodies, which are sanctified by the Sacraments and grafted by the Eucharist into the Body of Christ. This uncreated grace is the very glory of God which, as it sprang forth from the body of Christ on the day of the Transfiguration, overwhelmed the disciples (Matthew 17). Shining now in the heart purified from the passions, it truly unites us to God, illumines us, deifies us and gives us a pledge of that same glory which will shine on the bodies of the Saints after the general Resurrection.

In thus affirming the full reality of deification, Gregory was far from denying the absolute transcendence and unknowableness of God in His essence. Following the ancient Fathers, but in a more precise manner, he made a distinction between God's non-participable essence and the eternal, creative and providential energies by which the Lord enables created beings to participate in His being, His life and His light without, however, introducing any division into the unity of the divine Nature. God is not a philosophical concept for Saint Gregory: He is Love, He is Living Person and consuming fire, as Scripture teaches (Deuteronomy 4:24), Who does everything to make us godlike.

Saint Gregory's description was first accepted by the authorities of Mount Athos in the Hagiorite Tome and then adopted by the Church, during the course of two Councils in 1341.

GREAT VESPERS

***LORD I CALL** Six stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 6 (spiral bound vespers book), followed by three stikhera of the Triodion*

Triodion, tone 2:

What hymns of praise shall we sing to honor the holy bishop?
He is the trumpet of theology, the flaming mouthpiece of grace,
the chosen vessel of the Spirit, the unshakeable pillar of the Church,
the great joy of the inhabited earth,
the river of wisdom, the candlestick of the Light,//
the shining star that has made all creation bright.

What garlands of song shall we weave for the holy bishop?
He is the champion of true worship, the foe of ungodliness,
the fervent defender of the faith,
the great guide and teacher, the well-tuned harp of the Spirit,
the golden tongue, the fountain flowing with healing for the
faithful//
the great and wonderful Gregory.

How shall we who dwell on earth praise the holy bishop?
He is the Church's teacher, the herald of the Uncreated Light,
the initiate of the Trinity's heavenly mysteries,
the adornment of the monastic life,
renowned alike in action and contemplation//
Gregory, the pride of Thessalonica;

GLORY... Triodion tone 6:

O thrice-blessed saint, most holy father,
good shepherd, disciple of Christ the Chief Shepherd.
Like Him you gave your life for your sheep.
By your intercessions, O God-bearing Father Gregory//

may great mercy be granted to our souls!

NOW AND EVER...Dogmatikon in tone 6 (spiral bound vespers book)

APOSTIKHA: All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 6 (spiral bound vespers book)

GLORY... Triodion, tone 8:

Your tongue, watchful in teaching,
rings in the ears of our hearts,
and awakens the souls of the slothful.
Your words are inspired by God;
they are a ladder leading us from earth to heaven.
O Gregory, pride of Thessalonica,
do not cease to intercede before Christ our God//
to illumine with His Divine Light those who honor you!

NOW & EVER... Resurrection Theotokion in tone 8 (spiral bound vespers book)

TROPARIA

Resurrection, tone 6

The Angelic Powers were at Your tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Your grave,
seeking Your most pure body.
You captured hell, not being tempted by it.
You came to the Virgin, granting life.
O Lord, Who rose from the dead,//
glory to You.

Saint Gregory, tone 8

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation,
O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians,
O wonderworking Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of
grace,//

always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved!

Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, tone 8

For our sake You were born of the Virgin
and endured crucifixion, O Good One, destroying death by death.
Revealing the Resurrection as God, do not despise the work of Your
hand!

Reveal Your love for man, O Merciful One, and accept the
Theotokos praying for us,//
and save the despairing people, O our Savior!

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