



*Welcome to St. Olympia Orthodox Church,
a young and, God willing, growing community of worshippers.*

*Our priest is Fr. Paul Fedoroff, Priest-in-Charge.
You may reach him at priestpaulfedoroff@gmail.com or 518-573-7987 (cell)*

*Please join us for prayer and fellowship.***

Upcoming Services:
At the Norwood Church
March 28, April 4
Hours: 9:10am
Divine Liturgy: 9:30am
March 27, April 3
Vespers: 5pm
Panikhida: 4:30 on March 27

**Confessions: Saturday after
Vespers, Sunday before Liturgy,
otherwise by appointment.**

**Coffee after Liturgy! **Social
Distancing guidelines must be
observed.**

St. Olympia Orthodox Church
34 North Main Street
Norwood, NY, 13668

Mailing Address:
St. Olympia Orthodox Church
PO Box 122
Canton, NY 13617

The Second Sunday of Great Lent: Saint Gregory Palamas



Holy and divine instrument of wisdom, joyful trumpet of theology, together we sing your praises, O God-inspired Gregory. Since you now stand before the Original Mind, guide our minds to Him, O Father, so that we may sing to you:
“Rejoice, preacher of grace.”
Kontakion of Saint Gregory Palamas

Now is the time for action! Judgment is at the doors! So let us rise and fast, offering alms with tears of compunction and crying: “Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea; but forgive us, O Master of All, so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns.”
Kontakion of Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas

**Weekday Services during Great Lent
6 PM every Wednesday**

**Reader's Vespers
March 31, April 14**

**Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
April 7 with Father Paul
April 21 with Vladyka Michael**



**Food Drive
for our local food pantry
(housed in our church basement)**

**Bring *Canned Soup*
for the next two Sundays**

The Church in the Fourteenth Century: Saint Gregory Palamas

The 14th century was the time of the Palamite controversy in the Eastern Church. St Gregory Palamas (1296–1359), a monk of Mount Athos, was a practitioner of the method of prayer called hesychasm (*hesychia* means ‘silence’). This method of prayer is centered in the continuous repetition of the name of Jesus, usually in the form of the Jesus Prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” And a rigorous bodily discipline—emphasizing certain sitting postures and breathing techniques—is employed in order to help unite the mind and heart in God. Through the use of this method of prayer, the hesychast monks claimed to experience genuine communion with God, including sometimes a vision of the Uncreated Light of Divinity such as that seen by Moses on Mount Sinai, and by the Apostles Peter, James, and John at the Transfiguration of Christ on Mount Tabor.

In 1330 Barlaam the Calabrian, an Italo-Greek monk raised in an Orthodox family in southern Italy but educated in the Scholastic spirit prevailing in Western Europe at that time, came to Constantinople and accepted a chair in philosophy at the University of Constantinople. Barlaam, along with a number of other Byzantine humanists who were highly influenced by Western philosophical and theological ideas, ridiculed the practice of hesychastic prayer. They denied the possibility for human beings to be in direct, genuine communion with God.

Essence and Energies

In 1337 Gregory Palamas confronted Barlaam’s position and began his defense of hesychasm and the various contemplative practices of the Athonite monks. He confirmed the Orthodox doctrine that man can truly know God and can enter into living communion and relationship with Him through Christ and the Holy Spirit in the Church. He explained that the Essence (or Super-Essence) of God is utterly unknowable and incomprehensible, while at the same time, the actions, operations, or Energies of God, which are also uncreated and fully divine (such as the Divine Light), are communicated to people by divine grace and are open to human knowledge and experience. This is what is meant when Christians are said to become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet 1.4).

A local council held in 1341 in Constantinople upheld Gregory’s teaching. Amid ten more years of political turmoil and theological controversy, local councils held in 1347 and in 1351 reaffirmed Gregory’s position as that of the Bible and the whole Tradition of the Orthodox Church. From that time this crucial theological distinction between the divine Super-Essence and the divine Energies became an official part of the doctrine of the Orthodox Church.

From the Church History section of the OCA website