

ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH
 901 Sherman Drive, Utica, New York 13501
 Phone 315.732.4662 Email stbasilsutica@gmail.com
 Website www.stbasilutica.org



ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

St. Gregory Palamas: Born in Constantinople in 1296 into a family of some standing at the imperial court. Despite the emperor's attempt to groom him for imperial service, Gregory went to Mount Athos and became a monk. After spending ten years on the Holy Mountain, Gregory and the other monks of his skate withdrew to Thessaloniki, because of the threat of Turkish invasion. He continued in his monastic calling there and in Berea before returning to Athos in the 1330s.

It was upon his return to Mount Athos that Gregory first encountered Barlaam of Calabria, an Italo-Greek monk and humanist who was head of the Monastery of Our Savior in Constantinople. Barlaam was involved in several diplomatic missions for the emperor as well as in discussions with the legates of Pope John XXII aimed at the reunion of the Greek and Latin Churches.

Barlaam had written 21 treatises critical of Latin theology, particularly the Filioque and the doctrine of papal primacy which came to the attention of Gregory Palamas. While Barlaam had upheld the traditional Byzantine thinking on these issues, Palamas criticized him for teaching that the Filioque was wrong because it is impossible to determine from whom the Holy Spirit proceeds, since God is ultimately unknowable. Thus began a rivalry that would affect the Church in both East and West until our own day.

What Is Hesychasm? The Filioque controversy was simply the preliminary. The "Main Event" concerned the practice of Hesychasm, a style of contemplative prayer observed in many Greek monasteries of the day. Inspired by the Lord's words, "*When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you*" (Mt 6:6), Eastern monastics had long seen the heart as the "inner chamber" to which we must go for prayer. Communion with God becomes possible when the mind, with its memories, concerns and plans for the future, is subjected to the heart that loves God above all. The Jesus Prayer had become the means for silencing the mind and thus entering this inner chamber of the heart. To this the Hesychasts added certain psycho-physical techniques such as rhythmic breathing and a way of sitting. Barlaam objected to these methods, calling the Hesychast monks he met "navel gazers." The heads of the Athonite monasteries asked Gregory Palamas to respond to Barlaam's critique, which he did in a series of treatises. The controversy soon centered on the theological basis of Hesychasm, the possibility of experiencing the Uncreated Light of God as the apostles did at the Holy Transfiguration of Christ. Hesychasts believed that through ever deepening prayer the monk could experience this Light which they believed to be a divine energy. Barlaam, an intellectual trained in Aristotelian scholasticism, attacked this teaching as heretical and the entire Hesychast method as anti-intellectual, holding that philosophy was the true means of attaining the knowledge of God.

The controversy so affected the Byzantine Church that several local councils were held in Constantinople between 1341 and 1351 to discuss the issues raised by Barlaam and Gregory. They ultimately affirmed the teachings of St Gregory Palamas, namely that:

1. The light which shone at Tabor, during the Transfiguration of the Savior, is declared to be neither a creature nor the essence of God, but His energy: the uncreated and natural grace springing eternally from the divine essence itself;
2. There are in God two inseparable things: His essence and the natural and substantial energies flowing from His essence in line with the relationship of cause and effect. We cannot enter into His essence but we can participate in His energies. Both the one and the other are uncreated and eternal;
3. This real distinction between essence and energies or operations does not destroy the simplicity of God...;
4. The word θεότης (godly) does not apply solely to the divine essence, but is said also of its operation...;
5. The light of Tabor is the ineffable and eternal glory of the Son of God, the kingdom of heaven promised to the saints, the splendor in which He shall appear on the last day to judge all mankind. (*MarchLeaflets2019*)

SUNDAY OF THE HOLY CROSS
 Saturday, March 23 & Sunday, March 24, 2019

SEASON OF LENT - WEEKLY SERVICES

Daily Liturgy: Monday-Friday at 8:30AM
Holy Liturgy: Saturday at 4:30PM, Sunday at 11:00AM
Matins/Orthos: Every Sunday at 9:00AM
Great Compline: Wednesday at 6:00PM
Holy Confession: Every Monday at 4-6PM
Vespers: Every Saturday at 3:00PM
Holy Rosary: Every Sunday at 10:30AM
Akathistos: Friday at 6:00PM

SPEEDY RECOVERY

Please continue to pray for our convalescing friends, including Maggy Attalah, Nadia Casab, Nancy Gazzal, Rose Pawlinga, , and Jean Benoit. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

WEEKLY OFFERINGS: THANK YOU!

Weekly Collection March 16/17: \$ 498.00 Fuel Collection: \$ 20.00
 Memorial Offering: \$ 00.00 Cheese Sale: \$20.00
 Oneida Mission Donation: \$ 141.00

† MEMORIAL MASSES †

THIS SATURDAY, MARCH 16

† William Chanatry, By Fr. Saba & Family
 † Dr. Todd L. Biegler, By Jeanette Raya Farewege

THIS SUNDAY, MARCH 17

† William Chanatry, By Mr. & Mrs. Dan & Cindy Klockowski
 † Victoria Zipko, 20th Memorial Anniversary, By Robert Lalli

NEXT SATURDAY, MARCH 23

† William Chanatry, By Fr. Saba & Family

NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 24

† William Chanatry, By Mr. & Mrs. Dan & Cindy Klockowski
 † Adel & Bahejeh Giaingi, By Their Children

*** ANNOUNCEMENT ***

The next Parish Pastoral Council meeting will be held on Mon April 1, 6:30 PM, Rectory Meeting Rm