

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

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St. Gregory the Great Orthodox Church
A Western Rite Congregation of the Antiochian Archdiocese
13407 Roxbury Rd., Silver Spring, MD - stgregoryoc.org

From a Homily by St. Cyril of Alexandria d. 444

Behold! This wondrous and most profitable time of our Pasch is now approaching, when, after we have shaken off the oppressive burden of our sins, we shall freely take upon us the saving yoke of the Divine Word come down from heaven; and taught by the mild and salutary words of Emmanuel, we shall no longer labor or be burdened.

And coming together in the churches in common joyfulness let us lift up our voices in holy harmony, and give humble thanks to Christ the Savior of all men, Who has cleansed us of the ancient stain that clung to us from of old, from our first parent's sin...

Since we were because of the evil will of the devil sent forth from Paradise and its joy, and heard because of the

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just anger of God that sorrowful decree: *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return* [Gen. 3:13], and since we were caught in the snare of that diabolical tyranny, unhappy that we were, we dared not raise our eyes to heaven for mercy. Where was the way of salvation for those who longed for it? What means of pardon was there for those who had broken the command of the Lord? There was only the clemency of God: the mercy and compassion that belong to that unseen and unutterable majesty.

So therefore he sent his Son as our Savior and Redeemer, Who alone had power to free mankind from the hands of the devil. And with infinite kindness and goodness the Only Begotten Son of the Father, equal to Him in power and majesty, Co-Eternal with Him who had begotten Him, Creator and Artificer of heaven and earth, of angels and of men, took upon Himself our likeness, made in all things as we are, sin alone excepted, that through Himself He might redeem us all, and bring us to God the Father freed from all defilement and stain.

For this purpose He suffered hunger, and fasted for a certain time, that He might be for us the beginning of our salvation, and the model of a blameless life. So let us also make fasting the prelude of our holy celebrations...

It is required of us that our life should be good in all ways, that fasting is but added to our own clear and joyful virtue, the sure means of immortality, the worthy pledge of the kingdom of heaven, and the strong and unshakeable foundation of eternal life...

Thus putting our lives in order, and cleansing ourselves of the stains of our former sins by an upright and devout manner of living, purified and without blemish, blameless and without reproach, let us show the tenderness of a father to the orphaned, let us bestow on the widow care such as becomes the sanctified; and in a word let us love our neighbor, and drive out from our own soul every iniquity.

Let us shelter in our homes the needy and the homeless, so that sharing with the poor that which God has given us for our own lives, clothing the naked, and in general adorning ourselves with everything that is pleasing to God we may be able to come to the joy of the good things He has promised us.

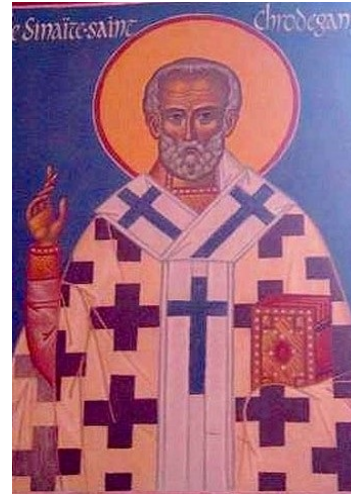
In this way we shall come to inherit the kingdom of heaven in Christ Jesus Our Lord, through Whom and with Whom, may there be glory and honor to the Father, for ever and ever. Amen.

St. Chrodegang of Metz

Feast Day ~ March 6

There are many priests who have to juggle the responsibilities of their work in the Church and work in the secular world. Even St. Paul worked as a tent-maker when it was necessary to earn money to finance his many travels. Serving as both a bishop and as the Prime Minister of a kingdom was the difficult task of St. Chrodegang, whose feast day we celebrate on March 6.

Chrodegang was born in what is now Belgium into the royal family of Charles Martel, ruler of the Kingdom of the Franks. The young boy received his education at a Benedictine monastery and then at the Cathedral school in Metz. Showing promise as a leader, Chrodegang was made Referendary at court, then



Chancellor, and then in 737, he became Prime Minister, undertaking all the administrative responsibilities of that position.

Chrodegang's life became much more complicated following the death of Charles, whose son, Pepin, succeeded him. In 742, Sigibald, the Bishop of Metz, died and Chrodegang was appointed to be the new bishop. Even though he was a laymen, his holiness of living, his care for the poor and widows, his constant prayer made him the obvious choice to be ordained through the various orders to become the new bishop. But Pepin refused to allow him to relinquish his responsibilities to the court. So the compromise was reached that Chrodegang would assume both roles.

History does not reveal the contributions which Prime Minister Chrodegang may have made for the good of the kingdom, but Bishop Chrodegang is remembered for enriching the life of the Church in the kingdom of the Franks in a number of ways. He introduced the Roman liturgy and chant into his diocese and he established the Abbey of Gorze near Metz and St. Peter's Abbey on the Moselle River. St. Chrodegang also wrote a rule, based on that of St. Benedict, for the canons of the Cathedral of Metz. Those priests, while living celibate lives, had not taken monastic vows and did not live in the same kind of regulated community as monks, but the Rule of Chrodegang helped to provide similar mutual support to the "secular" clergy as that found in monasteries.

As Italy was being harassed by invading Lombard tribes in 753, Pope Stephen II sought temporary refuge with the Franks and St. Chrodegang was sent to escort the pope to safety. A year later, the bishop was sent to plead with Astulph, the Lombard king, to

spare Rome and to return the cities they had already taken and in gratitude for this effort, Pope Stephen elevated Bishop Chrodegang to the honor of Archbishop in 755.

St. Chrodegang passed from this life to the next on March 6, 766, and was buried at the monastery of Gorze. With constant humility and care for others, he had successfully balanced his responsibilities in the secular realm and also the work of the Church. St. Chrodegang's life should be a reminder to all of us that whatever work we do should be done as an offering for the Lord and with thanksgiving. *Holy Chrodegang, pray for us.*

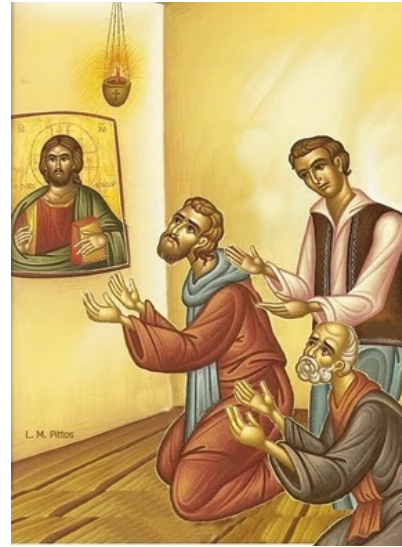
Our Calling to Holiness

by Mother Christophora

We have our time. We have our place - our generation, in the 21st century, in America. I did not think we were worthy of a calling to sainthood. How were we living before the pandemic hit? What were we doing? It was like we were living on a crazy treadmill: moving so fast, going everywhere, doing everything, buying everything, needing everything, involved in every activity, spending our money, spending our time, going so fast, not turning back, not resting, never turning off the lights, never being quiet, never being together with our family, forgetting to take time to eat a meal together around our table. We were living at an unbelievable pace.

And then God called us to stop.

He has given us a cross that I never thought we would be worthy to bear. The cross of a worldwide pandemic - it is our generation's calling. The generation before us suffered World War and horrific persecution under Communism, when thousands of monks and nuns, clergy and faithful died witnessing to Christ. That was *their* calling.



Now God has given *our* generation a calling. I did not think it would happen, but it has! God has given us a cross and we must be worthy to bear it, and we must be strong enough to carry it. This pandemic is affecting the world, affecting each and every one of us - our families, our lives and our communities.

Our lives are not the same as they were just some months ago. Since these changes occurred, what do we miss the most? That is

probably the most important question we need to ask ourselves. When this is all over, what part of our lives do we really want to get back to? Is it getting up before dawn, going to the gym at 6:00 and getting to work by 7:00? Is it eating a donut on the train during our two-hour commute? Is it getting home tired after work, picking up kids at daycare, taking them to music lessons, having supper, telling them to do their schoolwork before putting them to bed, and then starting all over? Do you miss shopping? For what? Filling your closets that are already so full?

If we cannot wait to get back to the rat race, and we cannot wait to get back to shopping, these things may not be worthy of a blessing. If we are looking forward to being able to go out to a nice restaurant for a relaxing evening that is probably worthy of a blessing. But going to the bar and staying for several hours and driving home drunk, I do not think that is worthy of a blessing. Spending money frivolously, buying things we can't afford or don't really need, using our credit cards and buying more things, this is probably not worthy of a blessing. So, what is it that we really miss? Ask yourself this question because it can give an indication of your life, where it was going and where you want it to go from now on...

In the future will someone say of our generation, “Wow, they really corrected themselves! They heard the word of God. They changed, they repented, they humbled themselves, they lowered the bar of activity and expectations, and they paid more attention to their family, to themselves, and their relationship with God!” This is what we have to really hope and pray will happen, that we will not forget what we have learning during the pandemic.

Every saint had their time and place, their unique calling to holiness. We have a wonderful country, a wonderful life, and we have a cloud of witnesses showing us the way. All we have to do is realize that we are in a certain garden and we are a certain flower at a certain time. We need to protect one another and to care for one another...

We are not alone in this. The saints are showing us the way. Our Lord is helping us. But He is also calling us. He is calling us, in our time, in our place, to “Shine! Shine! O new Jerusalem!”

This is an excerpt from a talk given by Mother Christophora at the Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, reprinted here by permission. The entire homily can be heard on omtnuns.org/chapel.

Parish News

The beginning of the holy season of Lent for the Western Rite is on Wednesday, March 17. In the Ash Wednesday liturgy, we are marked with ashes (made from the palms of the previous Palm Sunday) to remind us that we are sinful and repentance is required of us. For the next forty days - in memory of our Lord’s time of temptation in the wilderness - we will fast and pray, we will give alms and confess our sins. Vespers will be at 6:30PM that evening, the Blessing and Imposition of Ashes and Mass will begin at 7PM.

For those keeping the full Byzantine fast, Meatfare Sunday (the last day to eat meat) is March 7th, and Cheesefare Sunday (the last day to eat dairy) is March 14th. The traditional Western fast begins on Ash Wednesday (3/17).



We will celebrate the Eve of the Feast of St. Gregory on March 11th, with Vespers at 6:30PM and Sung Mass at 7PM. We will celebrate the Eve of the Feast of the Annunciation on Wednesday, March 24, with Vespers at 6:30PM and Mass at 7PM.

On the Fridays of Lent, Stations of the Cross and Litany will be offered at 7PM. On four Wednesdays, March 31, April 7, 14, and 21, a Bible

study on the Scripture readings from the Paschal Vigil service will be held at 7PM. This study was planned for Lent of 2020 but had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Since we remain under restrictions from the pandemic, these classes will be held by Zoom.

In the annual parish meeting, held via Zoom this year, Karl Tsuji and Nathaniel Green were elected for second terms on the parish council. We are nearing the completion of Phase 2 of our construction, awaiting the installation of the railing on the handicap ramp and deck. Our food contributions for the Food for Hungry People weighed in at 200 pounds. These canned and packaged goods were donated to the Manna Food Center, which has locations in Silver Spring and Gaithersburg.

St. Gregory Orthodox Church
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Address Correction Requested

Happy Anniversary!

On the weekend of March 2 and 3, 1996 - twenty-five years ago - a new parish was born. Fr. Nicholas was ordained to the holy Orthodox diaconate on Saturday and the priesthood on Sunday. A small group of people were chrismated and our parish was founded. Metropolitan PHILIP named our parish for St. Gregory the Great, Orthodox Pope of Rome, Apostle to the English, author of hymns, who wrote the lives of the saints in the *Dialogues*, and who called himself “the servant of the servants of God.”

Through the years, we have worshiped in many different places: first, the chapel of Ss. Peter & Paul parish; an unused parish hall and later a large upper room in a Methodist church; and, just after our tenth anniversary, we purchased a church in a renovated townhouse in Washington DC. In 2016, we found our present home in Silver Spring, Maryland. All these spaces have been made holy for us through our prayers, our participation in the Sacraments, and our study of God’s word.

More important than the physical setting of our parish has been the community which we have formed. Our members are from many different backgrounds, in all stages of life. We have shared births, deaths, marriages, chrismations, tonsurings and ordinations; we have shared many wonderful meals, parish work days and game days; we have rejoiced with each other and cried with each other. At this time, we are struggling to maintain this sense of community in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions that have resulted. We look forward to resuming our full cycle of activities!

Because we are unable to have a public gathering at this time to celebrate this important anniversary, we will be preparing a video recording of our memories and impressions to be shared among ourselves and with others. May St. Gregory continue to intercede for us as we look to him for inspiration, and may God continue to guide us as we strive to serve him in this church.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>March 2021</h1>						
<i>Sunday Matins at 9AM, Sung Mass at 9:30AM</i>	1 St. David of Wales, BC, 544	2 St. Chad, BC, 672	3	4	5 St. Lucius, BM, 254	6 Ss. Perpetua & Felicitas, Mm, 203 <i>Vespers at 6PM</i>
7 Sexagesima <i>V</i>	8	9 St. Gregory of Nyssa, BCD, 394	10 Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, Mm, 320	11 St. Sophronius of Jerusalem, BC, c. 369 <i>Mass at 7PM</i>	12 St. Gregory the Great, BCD, 604	13 <i>Vespers at 6PM</i>
14 Quinquagesima <i>V</i>	15	16	17 Ash Wednesday; St. Patrick, BC, 461; St. Joseph of Arimathea, C, 1 st c. <i>Mass at 7PM</i> <i>V</i>	18 St. Cyril of Jerusalem, BCD, 386; St. Edward, KM 979	19 St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin; 1 st c. <i>Station of the Cross & Litany at 7PM</i>	20 St. Cuthbert, BC, 687 <i>Vespers at 6PM</i>
21 First Sunday in Lent (<i>Sunday of Orthodoxy</i>) <i>V</i>	22 Repose of St. Benedict, c. 550 (tr.)	23	24 St. Gabriel the Archangel; Ember Wednesday <i>Mass at 7PM</i> <i>W</i>	25 The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary	26 Ember Friday <i>Station of the Cross & Litany at 7PM</i>	27 Ember Saturday; St. John of Damascus, CD, 749 <i>Vespers at 6PM</i>
28 Second Sunday in Lent <i>V</i>	29	30 St. John of the Ladder, Ab, 649	31 St. Innocent of Alaska, BC, 1879 <i>Bible Study at 7PM</i>			