

✠ St. Gregory's Journal ✠

March, 2022 - Volume XXVII, Issue 3

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 of St. Cyril of Alexandria

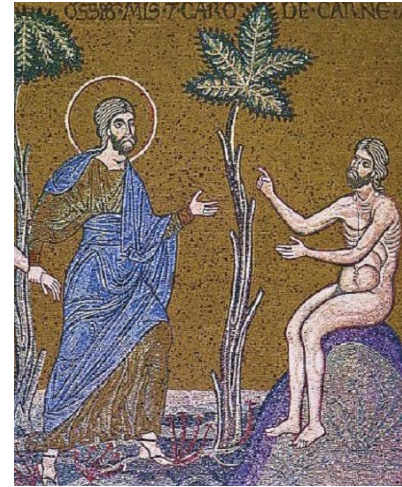
d. 444

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 parents' sin, and let us cry out what was so truly said in times past: *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.* [Gal. 3:13]

Inside:

St. Eosterwine.	3
Parish News	6
The Sunday of Orthodoxy	8
Calendar	11



Since we were because of the evil will of the devil sent forth from Paradise and its joy, and heard because of the just anger of God that sorrowful decree: *Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return* [Gen. 3:19], 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. That 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, *thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant* [Phil. 2:6], 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. *Therefore let us feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth* [I Cor. 5:8]. And should we keep ourselves pure and chaste, steadfastly adhering to a way of life that pleases God, we shall as not unprofitable servants hear in

due time these words: *Well done, good and faithful servant* [Matt. 25:23] For the fruits of their fasting shall not fail for those who hope in Him.

It is required of us therefore 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. And because of this it becomes us that: *Cleansing ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and of the spirit, we perfect our sanctification in the fear of God* [II Cor. 7:1]. And so with confidence and without fear we then shall stand before the Tribunal of Christ, clothed in shining garments, and cry out to Him: *Behold we come to thee: for thou art the Lord our God* [Jer. 3:22].

St. Eosterwine, Abbot

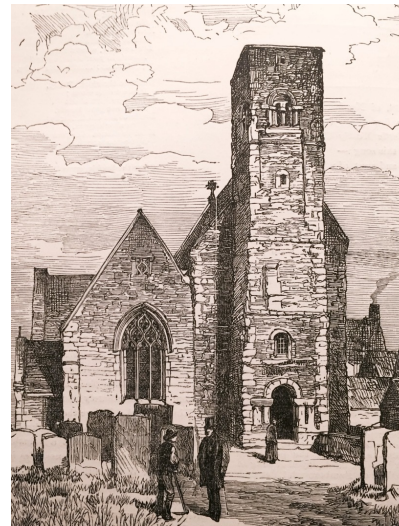
Feast Day ~ March 7

In the month of March, we celebrate the feast days of some of the “big names” among the saints: St. Gregory the Great, our patron (March 12), St. Patrick, Apostle to the Irish (March 17), St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and foster-father to our Lord Jesus Christ (March 19). There are also some saints whose feast days occur this month who are barely noticed in the calendars in most churches - saints whose holy lives were observed only by the people who were close to them, and whose influence during their lives did not reach beyond where they lived. One of these saints who struggled through and triumphed over the trials and tribulations of life in a remote part of the Christian world in the seventh century was St. Eosterwine, whose feast day is March 7.

We are taught that humility is the beginning of all virtue; above all, Eosterwine was remembered for his humility. As a young nobleman in the powerful Anglo-Saxon kingdom of

Northumbria, Eosterwine served in the army of King Egfrith. His family connections and his strong leadership qualities should have seen him rise to great heights in the kingdom, but Eosterwine chose to follow a different path. At the age of twenty-four, he left political and military life behind to begin the life of a monk in the Abbey at Monkwearmouth.

While there was clear evidence of the practice of Christianity in Britain under Roman rule, it was not until the mission sent by St. Gregory the Great in 596 that the Christian faith began to grow and flourish in this land. The contributions of Celtic monks from Ireland and Scotland, which at first presented difficulties due to differences in some practices, eventually helped to spread this faith throughout the land, and monasticism was a major force in the conversion of the people.



Founded by Eosterwine’s cousin, (St.) Benedict Biscop, in 674, the Monastery of St. Peter at Monkwearmouth (at the mouth of the River Wear) became an important center of learning and missionary zeal. In 684, a sister monastery was founded as St. Paul’s at Jarrow on the River Tyne. Eosterwine became a part of St. Peter’s Abbey in the year of its founding.

When Eosterwine began his life as a monk, he did not ask for any special privileges because he was the abbot’s cousin; he did not shirk any of the duties of the lowliest monk because he was royal by birth. Instead, in humility, he took his place at the plough in the fields, he took his turns with the household duties of cooking, cleaning, serving; he milked the cows and cared for the

garden. He may have been trained for battle and his hands may have been accustomed to wielding weapons of war, but he now submitted his body to the orderly workings of a family of monks following a rule based on that of St. Benedict.

Abbot Benedict Biscop was using his fortune inherited from his family to build up the physical as well as spiritual basis for the monastic community. He made numerous journeys to Rome to acquire books, vestments, and relics to enrich worship at the two monasteries. Among the treasures he acquired for the monasteries were icons, and he engaged stone-workers and glass producers from Gaul to create buildings like none had ever seen in this part of the world. In order to bring his English monasteries into the mainstream of Western Christian practice, he also brought from Rome the archcantor John, who taught the monks the proper way to sing the chant and celebrate the Mass. Thus, Eosterwine and his fellow monks not only strove to achieve inner peace through their orderly life, but they also received an excellent education in liturgical practice.

The monk Eosterwine was ordained priest in the year 679 and, because of his many travels, Abbot Benedict appointed him first as a sort of sub-abbot to oversee the workings of the monastery in his absence. Then in 682, Eosterwine was given full responsibility for the monastery. He continued to practice humility in everything including the menial, day-to-day chores which he had been engaged in. He slept in the same common area as the other monks and ate his meals at the same common table. Always gentle in his dealings with the monks, he was loved by all.

A plague devastated the community in 686 and among many who died was Abbot Eosterwine, who fell asleep in the Lord during Matins on March 7. He was buried by the church door but later, his relics and those of Benedict Biscop were translated to a shrine near the high altar. Eosterwine was acclaimed as a saint by those who knew him. Yearly remembrance of him on his heavenly birthday only happened at the Monasteries at Monkwearmouth and

Jarrow. But his example of humility in every instance of his life passed on from generation to generation of monks and those they taught.

All Christians are called to sanctification, to deification. In our journey toward that goal, may we - no matter what our family heritage or the circumstances of our lives now - follow the example of St. Eosterwine and make our journey in humility. *Holy Eosterwine, pray for us.*

Resources: A Calendar of British Saints, compiled by Fr. Benedict Haigh; Ecclesiastical history of the English People by St. Bede the Venerable; the Heavy Anglophile Orthodox blog; Oxford Dictionary of Saints by David Farmer.

Parish News



The season of Lent and our more intentional preparations for the Paschal celebration begin on Ash Wednesday, March 9. That evening, Vespers will be sung at 6:30 and Mass, with the blessing and imposition of ashes (made from the palms of last year's Holy Week observances), will be at 7pm.

On Saturday, March 12, we will celebrate the feast day of our patron saint, St. Gregory the Great. Matins will be at 9:30am, Mass at 10, followed by a Lenten pot-luck brunch.



We will celebrate the Feast of the Annunciation on the Eve, Thursday, March 24, with Vespers at 6:30 and Mass at 7pm.

Our Lenten practice of offering the service of Stations of the Cross and Litany of the Cross will begin on Friday, March 18, at 6:30pm and continue on each Friday through April 15. An additional Mass will be offered during Lent on Wednesday mornings at 7:30am.

Pan-Orthodox Vespers for the Sunday of Orthodoxy (March 13) will be held at St. Mark Church, 7124 River Rd., Bethesda, MD at 5:30PM. The speaker this year will be Metropolitan Tikhon of the Orthodox Church in America. Although the iconoclastic controversy was officially ended at the Seventh Ecumenical Council in 787, subsequent emperors again prohibited the use of icons and it was not until 843, when the Empress Theodora finally brought the controversy to an end. This “Triumph of Orthodoxy” is what we celebrate on the First Sunday in Lent.

Thanks to the Caldwell family for delivering our 216 pounds of canned and packaged food to the Manna Food Center in Gaithersburg, and thank you to all who contributed to help the needy in our area. As we fast during Lent, the Church encourages us to offer the money we otherwise would have spent on meat to help the needy.

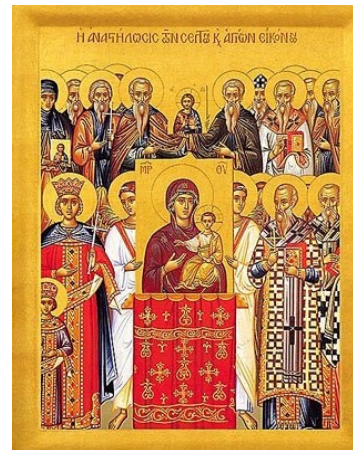
Our annual Parish Meeting, which was postponed from January at the request of the bishops, is now scheduled for Sunday, March 20, after Mass. Please plan to stay for this opportunity to hear from the Parish Council on matters pertaining to our property, to hear a financial report from our treasurer, Karl Tsuji, and for any

discussion of other matters which pertain to parish life. New Council members will be elected at this time. Coffee Hour will be a Lenten pot-luck brunch that day.

Mark your calendars now for the episcopal visit of Bishop JOHN on the weekend of May 21-22, when we celebrate the anniversary of the dedication of our church. Since we were unable to have a 25th anniversary celebration of the parish in 2021 due to the covid pandemic, this will be an opportunity to review our history and give special thanks to God for his blessings on our parish.

The Sunday of Orthodoxy

by Fr. Christopher Retelas



Icons have been in use since the earliest days of the Church. In their simplest forms, icons were found in catacombs, graves, and other places of ancient Christian worship. They included the cross, the fish, the lamb, and other symbols that represented Jesus.

By the fifth century, iconography began to be wide-spread. Beautiful paintings, mosaics, frescoes, and other media of art were used to

depict Christ, the Theotokos, and the saints. The Church felt quite comfortable in depicting our Lord and His saints, as art was just another way to praise and teach about God, just as the Church used music and poetry.

St. Gregory Orthodox Church
c/o 804 E Randolph Rd
Silver Spring, MD 20904

Address Correction Requested

Icons also affirm for us a very foundational and fundamental truth of Christianity: that is, the Incarnation of Christ, that God became man. The invisible became visible, the intangible became tangible, the unseen is now seen in the person of Jesus Christ. This is the truth we proclaim today: that we can see God.

When a priest censes the church, he offers a blessing and prayer to the icons of the church, paying honor not to the painting, but to the saint. Then the priest censes the living icons throughout the church, you the faithful, because that's what you are, living icons of the beauty of God.

So on this Sunday of Orthodoxy, we celebrate the Triumph of Truth by remembering Who is Truth Incarnate - Jesus Christ.

May we all make His life and His way become our life and our way. Let us allow His Truth to be the guiding factor in our lives not only throughout our Great Lenten journey, but throughout every day of our lives.

To Him be all glory, honor, and worship, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Fr. Christopher Retelas is the presiding pastor of St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church in Anaheim, CA. This article is reprinted from Reflections for Great Lent published by International Orthodox Christian Charities.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>March 2022</h1>						<i>Sunday Services: Matins at 9AM, Mass at 9:30AM</i>
		1 St. David of Wales, BC, 544	2 St. Chad, BC, 672	3	4	5 St. Lucius, BM, 254 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
6 Quinquagesima; Ss. Perpetua & Felicitas, Mm, 203 ✓	7	8	9 Ash Wednesday; St. Gregory of Nyssa, BCD, 394 <i>Mass at 7pm</i> ✓	10 Forty Martyrs of Sebaste, Mm, 320	11 St. Sophronius of Jerusalem, BC, c. 369	12 St. Gregory the Great, BCD, 604 <i>Mass at 10AM</i> W <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
13 First Sunday in Lent (<i>Sunday of Orthodoxy</i>) ✓	14	15	16 Ember Wednesday in Lent <i>Mass at 7:30am</i> ✓	17 St. Patrick, BC, 461; St. Joseph of Arimathea, C, 1 st c.	18 Ember Friday in Lent; St. Cyril of Jerusalem, BCD, 386 <i>Stations of the Cross & Litany at 6:30pm</i>	19 Ember Saturday in Lent; St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin; 1 st c. <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
20 Second Sunday in Lent; St. Cuthbert, BC, 687 ✓	21 Repose of St. Benedict, c. 550	22	23 <i>Mass at 7:30am</i> ✓	24 St. Gabriel the Archangel <i>Mass at 7pm</i> W	25 The Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary <i>Stations of the Cross & Litany at 6:30pm</i>	26 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
27 Third Sunday in Lent; St. John of Damascus, CD, 749 ✓	28	29	30 St. John of the Ladder, Ab, 649 <i>Mass at 7:30am</i> W	31 St. Innocent of Alaska, BC, 1879		