

✠ 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. Gregory of Nyssa

d. 394

There are three things which characterize the life of a Christian: action, speech, thought. The origin of every word is thought. After thinking comes speech, which reveals in words the idea which has been conceived in the mind. After thought and speech in the third place comes action, which realizes the thought in deed. So, when in the

course of life we are brought to think, to speak, or to act, it is a good rule to keep a careful eye on those divine epithets by which the Lord is conceived or named, that our action, word or thought may never miss the implication of those lofty titles.

What then ought that man do who has been thought worthy to bear the great name of Christ? What else except to examine carefully in himself his thoughts and words and deeds to see whether thy one and all tend

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towards Christ or are foreign to him. It is very easy to make such judgments. Any action, thought or word which involves passion is out of harmony with Christ and bears the mark of the devil, who makes muddy the pearl of the soul with passions and mars the luster of that precious jewel.

That which is pure of every inclination to passion tends towards the source of tranquillity, namely Christ. If a man draws from him his thoughts, as though drawing water from a spring which is pure and unconfined, he will reveal in himself the same likeness to his pattern as there is between two sorts of water, that which is in a gushing stream and that which is drawn from the spring and confined in a jar. Purity has only one nature, both that which is in Christ and that which is seen in the one who shares in him: Christ is like the spring which gushes out, the one who shares in Christ draws from him, as it were, and brings beauty of thought to his life. And so there is a harmony between the hidden inner man and the outward appearance when decency of life is joined with thoughts which are inspired by Christ.

That, in my judgment, is the perfection of the Christian life, to share in all the titles used to describe Christ, in soul, in word, and in the habits of our daily life, so as to reveal the name of Christ.



Ss Potamiana and Basilides, Martyrs *Feast Day ~ June 28*

Of the many questions asked by Christians today, at least two were addressed early in the history of the Church: “What influence can one person have?” and “Can the saints really intercede for us?” The answer to these questions can be found in the story of the martyrdoms of Saints Potamiana and Basilides.

Potamiana was a beautiful Christian slave girl, who had been struggling to fend off the sexual advances of her pagan master. Her rejections led him to report her to the authorities, and she and her mother were arrested and brought before a judge, who threatened to turn Potamiana over to the abuse of the gladiators if she did not renounce Christianity. Her persistence brought the sentence of death by boiling oil.

Basilides, an officer of the court, was assigned to escort Potamiana to the place of execution. This man was kind, even to a “criminal”, and kept the attending mob from molesting Potamiana. She assured him that, when she reached her destination, she would remember him to her Lord.

This made such an impression upon the soldier that, shortly after this incident, when he was required to renew his oath to the emperor and the Roman gods, Basilides refused, saying that he had become a Christian. His fellow soldiers at first thought he was joking but when they realized that he was truly serious, they denounced him and he was sent to prison to await his sentence of beheading.

While he was in prison, Basilides was visited by some Christians (possibly including Origen, the teacher of many martyrs in this purge of Christians) who asked him how he came to be converted. He told them of Potamiana’s promise and how, three



days after her execution, she had appeared to him in a dream, put a crown on his head, and said that the Lord would soon receive him. The visitors baptized Basilides and the next day he received the crown of martyrdom.

The question of “What influence can one person have?” was answered by the example of Potamiana. Her courage and steadfast faithfulness to Jesus Christ in the face of torture and execution was so compelling that even an officer of the government that had condemned her was convinced to follow her example. Potamiana also answered the question, “Can the saints really intercede for us?” Her promise to Basilides and her appearance to him after her death are considered the

earliest assurance of saintly intercession.

These compelling events, which occurred around the year 205, were described by the historian Eusebius (263-339) in his *History of the Church*, a record of all the available information about the Church in the years before the Emperor Constantine gave Christianity legal, and then preferred, status.

We give thanks to God for many things about these events: we thank God for the martyrs’ perseverance despite torture and death; we thank God that St. Basilides followed the example of a Christian slave girl; and we thank God that St. Potamiana assured us that she and all the saints would intercede for us. *Holy Potamiana and Basilides, pray for us.*

On Holiness

- St. Nikolai of Ochrid



Holiness, my brethren, is the virtue that encompasses all the other virtues. A saint, a mere man, is adorned through it with all the virtues. If a man is a man of prayer and is not compassionate, he cannot be called a saint, and if a man endures all things but has not faith and hope, he does not belong among the saints. A saint is a perfected man, such as Adam was in Paradise; or, still better, a man such as is the New Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is the Saint of saints. Here is the Sower of

sanctity upon the earth and the Guardian of the saints in history. He has revealed to us the ideal of the true saint. He is the prototype of the saints, as he is also the primal image of man. A true man, my brethren, is nothing other than a saint. Saint and man - they are the same thing. He has shown us what it means to be a man and what it means to be a saint. And so His Apostle Peter commands us: *Be holy in all manner of living* [I Peter 1:15]. A saint cannot be a saint only in one part of his life, but must be so in the whole of it. We must be holy in every part and particle of our lives, so that we may be counted among the saints, among the people who are conformed to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prototype of the saints and Primal Image of man.

O all-holy Lord, to Thee be glory and praise for ever. Amen.

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Address Correction Requested

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>June 2026</h1>						<i>Sunday services: Matins at 9am Sung Mass at 9:30</i>
	1 Monday in the Octave of Pentecost	2 Tuesday in the Octave of Pentecost; Ss. Marcellinus, Peter & Erasmus, Mm, 304	3 Ember Wednesday in the Octave of Pentecost; St. Kevin of Glendalough, Ab, c. 618	4 of the Octave of Pentecost	5 Ember Friday in the Octave of Pentecost; St. Boniface, BM, 754; St. Dorotheus of Tyre, BM, 362	6 Ember Saturday in the Octave of Pentecost <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
7 Trinity Sunday; 1 st Sun. after Pentecost <i>W</i>	8	9 St. Columba of Iona, Ab, 597	10 St. Margaret of Scotland, QW, 1092	11 St. Barnabas, Apostle, 1 st C	12	13 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
14 2 nd Sunday after Pentecost; All Saints of Antioch; St. Basil the Great, BCD, 379 <i>G</i>	15 Ss. Vitus, Modestus & Crescentia, Mm, c. 303	16	17	18	19 Ss. Gervase & Protase, Mm, 2 nd C	20 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
21 Third Sunday after Pentecost <i>G</i>	22 St. Alban, M, 209	23	24 Nativity of St. John the Baptist	25	26 Ss. John & Paul, Mm, c. 362	27 <i>Vespers at 6pm</i>
28 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost; St. Irenaeus of Lyon, BM, 202 <i>G</i>	29 Ss. Peter & Paul, Apostles and founders of our Patriarchate, 1st C	30 Comm. of St. Paul the Apostle				