

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

28 Cross Street - Auburn, New York 13021 (www.stnicholasauburn.com)

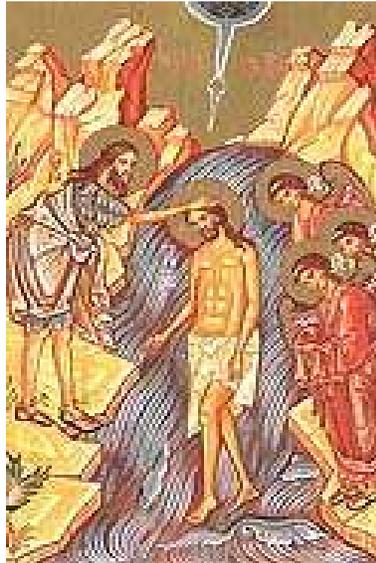
Very Reverend Michael Speck – Pastor

(315) 246-6051 (Cell), (315) 255-2998 (Home) mspeck100@gmail.com

Office Hours Thursday from 2PM to 4PM or by Appointment

Reverend Deacon David Donch Reverend Deacon Michael W. Speck
Sr. Warden - Greg Michaels Jr. Warden - Rocco Lupo of Blessed Memory
Reader Nathaniel Donch

Sunday, January 9, 2022



Schedule of Services and Activities

Saturday, January 8 – 5:00 PM - Vespers

**Sunday, January 9 – 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy with Coffee Hour and
Sisterhood Meeting**

Wednesday, January 12 – 8:30 AM - Divine Liturgy

Saturday, January 15 – 5:00 PM – Vespers

**Sunday, January 15 – 9:30 AM - Divine Liturgy with Coffee Hour and
Parish Council Meeting**

At our annual parish meeting scheduled for Sunday, January 23, we will need to fill the Junior Warden position on the Parish Council left vacant by our loss of Rocco Lupo. The Junior Warden is responsible for the operation of the Vestry, that is, the acquisition of church supplies, the ordering of and sale of candles, preparation of the church for services, and general assistance during the services. The junior warden also assists the Senior Warden in his/her duties.

We are also seeking an individual to assume the position of parish treasurer. The duties of this office primarily consist of managing the accounts of the church and filing tax forms. The position does not at present usually require the treasurer to routinely make payments, write checks, or make bank deposits (these duties are currently performed by our Senior Warden).

We would greatly appreciate the help of several dedicated individuals who are willing to serve the church. Thanks!

Donations

\$200 by Anne Bandas in Memory of Susan and William Bandas, Irene Bashta, Helen Glowacki, and Laura Ingalls

We are currently planning to delay blessing of homes at least for several weeks until the number of COVID-19 cases begins to decline again. I hope this will be possible by later in January.

Upcoming Events

January 9 – Sisterhood Meeting following Divine Liturgy

January 16 – Parish Council Meeting following Divine Liturgy

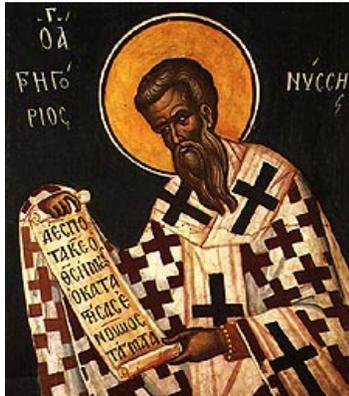
January 23 – Annual Parish Meeting following Divine Liturgy

January 30 – Feast of the Three Holy Hierarchs

February 2 – Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple

February 27 – Archbishop Michael's visit for Divine Liturgy followed by a church dinner.

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa



Commemorated on [January 10](#)

Saint Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa, was a younger brother of Saint Basil the Great (January 1). His birth and upbringing came at a time when the Arian disputes were at their height. Having received an excellent education, he was at one time a teacher of rhetoric. In the year 372, he was consecrated by Saint Basil the Great as bishop of the city of Nyssa in Cappadocia.

Saint Gregory was an ardent advocate for Orthodoxy, and he fought against the Arian heresy with his brother Saint Basil. Gregory was persecuted by the Arians, by whom he was falsely accused of improper use of church property, and thereby deprived of his See and sent to Ancyra.

In the following year Saint Gregory was again deposed in absentia by a council of Arian bishops, but he continued to encourage his flock in Orthodoxy, wandering about from place to place. After the death of the emperor Valens (378), Saint Gregory was restored to his cathedra and was joyously received by his flock. His brother Saint Basil the Great died in 379.

Only with difficulty did Saint Gregory survive the loss of his brother and guide. He delivered a funeral oration for him, and completed Saint

Basil's study of the six days of Creation, the Hexaemeron. That same year Saint Gregory participated in the Council of Antioch against heretics who refused to recognize the perpetual virginity of the Mother of God. Others at the opposite extreme, who worshipped the Mother of God as being God Herself, were also denounced by the Council. He visited the churches of Arabia and Palestine, which were infected with the Arian heresy, to assert the Orthodox teaching about the Most Holy Theotokos. On his return journey Saint Gregory visited Jerusalem and the Holy Places.

In the year 381 Saint Gregory was one of the chief figures of the Second Ecumenical Council, convened at Constantinople against the heresy of Macedonius, who incorrectly taught about the Holy Spirit. At this Council, on the initiative of Saint Gregory, the Nicene Symbol of Faith (the Creed) was completed.

Together with the other bishops Saint Gregory affirmed Saint Gregory the Theologian as Archpastor of Constantinople.

In the year 383, Saint Gregory of Nyssa participated in a Council at Constantinople, where he preached a sermon on the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In 386, he was again at Constantinople, and he was asked to speak the funeral oration in memory of the empress Placilla. Again in 394 Saint Gregory was present in Constantinople at a local Council, convened to resolve church matters in Arabia.

Saint Gregory of Nyssa was a fiery defender of Orthodox dogmas and a zealous teacher of his flock, a kind and compassionate father to his spiritual children, and their intercessor before the courts. He was distinguished by his magnanimity, patience and love of peace.

Having reached old age, Saint Gregory of Nyssa died soon after the Council of Constantinople. Together with his great contemporaries, Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, Saint Gregory of

Nyssa had a significant influence on the Church life of his time. His sister, Saint Macrina, wrote to him: “You are renowned both in the cities, and gatherings of people, and throughout entire districts. Churches ask you for help.” Saint Gregory is known in history as one of the most profound Christian thinkers of the fourth century. Endowed with philosophical talent, he saw philosophy as a means for a deeper penetration into the authentic meaning of divine revelation.

Saint Gregory left behind many remarkable works of dogmatic character, as well as sermons and discourses. He has been called “the Father of Fathers.”

Why Repent?



In the ecclesial calendar this Sunday after Theophany is called the “Sunday after the Enlightenment.” And we have all just heard the Holy Gospel, where the beginning of the preaching of our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ, is spoken of, which was preceded by the words: “Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”

Why did our Lord Jesus Christ begin His preaching to people with precisely these words? We need to turn our serious attention to this in our hearts. How does the path to God begin? How does the correction of human life begin? How do we truly begin to believe? – Here the Lord Himself has given us the answer.

When the Lord appeared in the Jordan, when He revealed His Divine glory, when He came along with sinners who gathered and awaited the Baptism of John, they plunged into the Jordan as a sign that, just as water washes dirt from man, so too did these people, sinners, want to wash the dirt from their body as a sign of a change of life, as a sign of repentance. Then John the Baptist said: “I Baptize you with water, but after me comes One Who is mightier than I, Whose shoes I am even unworthy to untie, and He will Baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.” John the Baptist spoke of that faith, of that flame of saving faith, which the Lord Jesus Christ will bring into the world.

And so the Lord comes and stands along with all the sinners, and reveals His glory. A voice from heaven says: “This is My Beloved Son, harken unto Him, in Him I am well pleased.” The Holy Spirit descends. God reveals Himself. But what happens next? The Lord begins His preaching, and He begins it with the words: “Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”

In our lives we also strive for God. In our lives we would like God to reveal Himself to us also, and to sanctify us, and to help us, and to be a mainstay in our lives. But what do we need, above all, to ensure that we were with God, and God were with us? Above all, we need that to which the Lord has called us: we need genuine repentance, real repentance.

“Repent!” What does “repent” mean? The word “repentance,” translated from Greek, means a change in way of life. That is, that

which for us is familiar and everyday, that with which we have already gotten used to, we need to change. And, unfortunately, what for us is familiar and everyday? For us it is familiar and everyday to judge one another, familiar and everyday to get irritated, familiar and everyday to be spiritually slack, because we do not know how to pray; for us to get ourselves really to pray is something unusual, because real prayer is when the human heart, the human mind, and the human soul fully turn to God – and we see, of course, that we do not have this.

Thus, the Lord calls us to Him, calls us to the Heavenly Kingdom, which He has brought to us on earth, which has already been revealed to us, and which already exists here on earth. This Heavenly Kingdom is the Holy Orthodox Church, which has the Holy Spirit, which has the ecclesial Mysteries, and which will abide on earth for all days until the end of the ages and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail (Matthew 16:18). But only how difficult it is for us truly to become authentic sons and daughters of Christ's Church! It is difficult, but it is the only path, the path of salvation, the path of eternal life.

God is the only mainstay that is given to us in this life. Without God, life is meaningless. And how can we be together with God, so that God was with us, that God would bless us and help us, that He would strengthen us and comfort us, so that our hope would not be ashamed, that in our hearts would be both faith and love? It was about this that the Lord spoke at the very beginning of His preaching: "Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

Let us ask of the Lord God this gift of repentance. Let us ask Him that He would help us change our sinful way of life, to leave behind the sinful way of life, and to correct ourselves. The Holy Church gives us everything necessary for this. There is the Mystery of Repentance, in which we acknowledge our sins, disclose them before a priest at Confession, and they are forgiven by the Holy Spirit. There is the

Mystery of Communion, in which man unites with our Lord Himself, Jesus Christ, in His Precious Body and Life-Giving Blood. There is the spirit of prayer, there is the life of the Church... the Lord has done everything for us. Let us make every effort to correct ourselves, repent, and to be with Him.

To Him be glory unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Archpriest Alexander Ganaba (Source Pravmiv.com)

