

St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Mission
1635 Shaffer Road
Atwater, California 95301

Sunday March 8th 2026
2nd Sunday of Lent
St. Gregory Palamas
St. Theophylactus, Bishop of Nicomedia

Activities and Events this Week

Tuesday March 10	Choir Rehearsal	6:00pm
Friday March 13	Presanctified Liturgy	6:00pm
Saturday March 14	Baptism	10:00am
	Catechism	3:00pm
	Great Vespers	5:00pm

Announcements

Great Lent Confessions - Everyone, whether you confess regularly or only once per year, will need to make a confession during the Lenten season. I am giving a time window from Sunday of Zacchaeus to Friday April 3rd. Please avail yourself to this huge window to make a confession as part of our season of repentance.

A big thank you to everyone who showed up on Saturday to help clean and beautify our church and property. We are looking to make some improvements in terms of safety on the back part of our property for our processions during Holy Friday, Palm Sunday and Pascha.

Baptisms and Chrismations this year will take place April 4th (Lazarus Saturday) - ½ of our baptisms. April 5th (Palm Sunday during Divine Liturgy, all Chrismations), and April 11th (Holy Saturday) at 10am the other ½ of our Baptisms. Exciting time for our catechumens and indeed our entire community.

Next Sunday is the Veneration of the Precious Cross - the third of Lent! When we sing "Before Thy Cross..." just prior to the reading of the Epistle we should not prostrate - at least where the reader of the epistle needs to stand.

On the Calendar

Wednesday April 1st at 1:00pm at the Church Hall – Kathy Anderson will lead a group putting together the Palm Sunday Bouquets. All are welcome to participate. We will need to make many more than we have in the past – thanks to the Holy Spirit!

Gregory Palamas Archbishop of Thessalonica (1347-1359) taught through his own experience that man is capable to achieving such heights of contemplation and direct experience with the energies of Christ. Palamas and his followers known as the Hesychasts (silence) practice a form of prayer that featured unending recitation of the Jesus Prayer, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God have Mercy on Me a Sinner.” He debated against the much learned monk Barlaam of Calabria in Italy who argued that man could not have direct experience of God. In the Christian West it was believed that it was impossible to know the essence of God. In time Palamas was shown to be correct that through prayer, man could know the energies and essence of God. Many Hesychasts even experienced the uncreated light of Mt. Tabor as we celebrate in the Transfiguration of Christ.

While you and I are not likely to become Hesychasts we can through a lifetime of prayer, fasting and repentance can become transformed creatures of Christ. Prayer is our natural mode of existence in this world. To not pray is to say something a kin to not breathing or stopping our heart beat. Our prayer needs to be as natural as our breathing and our heart beat – after all prayer and communion with God is what precisely make us human. God created us to be in complete communion with Him. How most of us live now is completely alien to the life we were created to have with God. Never, never miss a day of not standing in prayer, in fervent supplication before God. Listen to those who before us achieved such great feats and showed us what man can look like in this world.

St. Gregory performed many miracles in the three years before his death, healing those afflicted with illness. On the eve of his repose, St. John Chrysostom appeared to him in a vision with the words “To the heights! To the heights!” Saint Gregory Palamas fell asleep in the Lord on November 14, 1359. He was canonized in 1368 in Constantinople. This Second Sunday of the Great Lent later became known as Sunday of Gregory Palamas, the Second Triumph of Orthodoxy. The truth of who man is and who God is prevailed against all western Christian arguments to the contrary.

Please feel free to contact Fr. Lawrence for questions or to visit. 719-347-1211
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Welcome to all visitors!