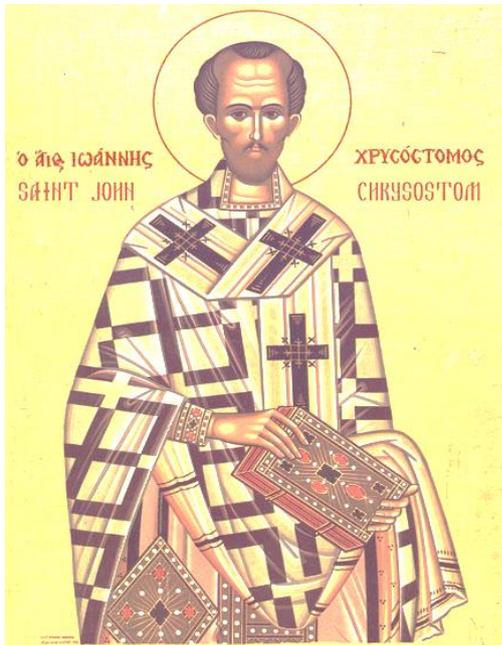




# PARISH BULLETIN

HOLY ARCHANGHEL MICHAEL'S ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

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## **St. John Chrysostom 347-407**

Our father among the saints John Chrysostom (347-407), Archbishop of Constantinople, was a notable Christian bishop and preacher from the fourth and fifth centuries in Syria and Constantinople. He is famous for eloquence in public speaking, his denunciation of abuse of authority in the Church and in the Roman Empire of the time, and for a Divine Liturgy attributed to him. He had notable ascetic sensibilities. After his death he was named Chrysostom, which comes from the Greek Χρυσόστομος, "golden-mouthed." The Orthodox Church honors

him as a saint (feast day, November 13) and counts him among the Three Holy Hierarchs (feast day, January 30), together with Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian. Another feast day associated with him is January 27, which commemorates the event in 437, thirty years after the saint's repose, when his relics were brought back to Constantinople from the place of his death.

He was born in Antioch of noble parents: his father was a high-ranking military officer. His father died soon after his birth and so he was brought up by his mother Anthusa. He was baptized in 370 and tonsured a reader (one of the minor orders of the Church). He began his education under a pagan teacher named Libanius, but went on to study theology under Diodore of Tarsus (one of the leaders of the later Antiochian School) while practising extreme asceticism. He was not satisfied, however, and became a hermit (circa 375) and remained so until poor health forced a return to Antioch.

He was then ordained a deacon in 381 by St. Meletius of Antioch, and was ordained a presbyter in 386 by

Bishop Flavian I of Antioch. It seems this was the happiest period of his life. Over about twelve years, he gained much popularity for the eloquence of his public speaking. Notable are his insightful expositions of Bible passages and moral teaching. The most valuable of his works are his Homilies on various books of the Bible. He particularly emphasized almsgiving. He was also most concerned with the spiritual and temporal needs of the poor. He spoke out against abuse of wealth and personal property. In many respects, the following he amassed was no surprise. His straightforward understanding of the Scriptures (in contrast to the Alexandrian tendency towards allegorical interpretation) meant that the themes of his talks were eminently social, explaining the Christian's conduct in life.

One incident that happened during his service in Antioch perhaps illustrates the influence of his sermons best. Around the time he arrived in Antioch, the bishop had to intervene with the Emperor St. Theodosius I on behalf of citizens who had gone on a riotous rampage in which statues of the Emperor and his family were mutilated. During the weeks of Lent in 387, John preached 21 sermons in which he entreated the people to see the error of their ways. These apparently had a lasting impression on the people: many pagans reportedly converted to Christianity as a result of them. In the event, Theodosius' vengeance was not as severe as it might have been, merely changing the legal standing of the city.

In late October of 397, he was called (somewhat against his will) to be

the bishop of Constantinople. He deplored the fact that Imperial court protocol would now assign to him access to privileges greater than the highest state officials. During his time as bishop he adamantly refused to host lavish entertainments. This meant he was popular with the common people, but unpopular with the wealthy and the clergy. In a sermon soon after his arrival he said, "people praise the predecessor to disparage the successor." His reforms of the clergy were also unpopular with these groups. He told visiting regional preachers to return to the churches they were meant to be serving—without any pay out.

His time there was to be far less at ease than in Antioch. Theophilus, the Pope of Alexandria, wanted to bring Constantinople under his sway and opposed John's appointment to Constantinople. Being an opponent of Origen's teachings, he accused John of being too partial to the teachings of that master. Theophilus had disciplined four Egyptian monks (known as "the Tall Brothers") over their support of Origen's teachings. They fled to and were welcomed by John. He made another enemy in Aelia Eudoxia, the wife of the eastern Emperor Arcadius, who assumed (perhaps with justification) that his denunciations of extravagance in feminine dress were aimed at herself.

St. John was fearless when denouncing offences in high places. An alliance was soon formed against him by Eudoxia, Theophilus and other enemies of his. They held a synod in 403 to charge John, in which the accusation of Origenism

was used against him. It resulted in his deposition and banishment. He was called back by Arcadius almost immediately, however, for the people of the city were very angry about his departure. There was also a "quaking" in the Imperial bedroom (thought to be either an actual earthquake or perhaps as a stillbirth or miscarriage for the empress) which was seen as a sign of God's anger. Peace was shortlived. A silver statue of Eudoxia was erected near the cathedral of Hagia Sophia. John denounced the dedication ceremonies. He spoke against her in harsh terms: "Again Herodias rages; again she is confounded; again she demands the head of John on a charger" (an allusion to the events surrounding the death of John the Forerunner). Once again he was banished, this time to Caucasus in Georgia.

The pope in Rome (Innocent I at this time) protested at this banishment, but to no avail. John wrote letters which still held great influence in Constantinople. As a result of this, he was further exiled to Pityus (on the eastern edge of the Black Sea). However, he never reached this destination, as he died during the journey. His final words were "Glory be to God for all things!"

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**Source:** (<https://orthodoxwiki.org>)



### + St. John Chrysostom – Quotes

„Pay attention carefully. After the sin comes the shame; courage follows repentance. Did you pay attention to what I said? Satan upsets the order; he gives the courage to sin and the shame to repentance.”

“Since it is likely that, being men, they would sin every day, St. Paul consoles his hearers by saying ‘renew yourselves’ from day to day. This is what we do with houses: we keep constantly repairing them as they wear old. You should do the same thing to yourself. Have you sinned today? Have you made your soul old? Do not despair, do not despond, but renew your soul by repentance, and tears, and Confession, and by doing good things. And never cease doing this.”

“Everywhere, wherever you may find yourself, you can set up an altar to God in your mind by means of prayer.”

“Let no one bewail his poverty,  
For the universal Kingdom has been revealed.

Let no one weep for his iniquities,  
For pardon has shown forth from the grave.

Let no one fear death,  
For the Saviour's death has set us free.  
He that was held prisoner of it has annihilated it.

By descending into Hell, He made Hell captive.

He embittered it when it tasted of His flesh.

And Isaiah, foretelling this, did cry:  
Hell, said he, was embittered  
When it encountered Thee in the lower regions.

It was embittered, for it was abolished.  
It was embittered, for it was mocked.  
It was embittered, for it was slain.  
It was embittered, for it was overthrown.  
It was embittered, for it was fettered in chains.  
It took a body, and met God face to face.  
It took earth, and encountered Heaven.  
It took that which was seen, and fell upon the unseen.

O Death, where is thy sting?  
O Hell, where is thy victory? ”

“So it is with sorrow, each thinks his own present grief the most severe. For of this he judges by his own experience. He that is childless considers nothing so sad as to be without children; he that is poor, and has many children, complains of the extreme evils of a large family. He who has but one, looks upon this as the greatest misery, because that one, being set too much store by, and never corrected, becomes willful, and brings grief upon his father. He who has a beautiful wife, thinks nothing so bad as having a beautiful wife, because it is the occasion of jealousy and intrigue. He who has an ugly one, thinks nothing worse than having a plain wife, because it is constantly disagreeable. The private man thinks nothing more mean, more useless, than his mode of life. The soldier declares that nothing is more toilsome, more perilous, than warfare; that it would be better to live on bread and water than endure such hardships. He that is in power thinks there can be no greater burden than to attend to the necessities of others. He that is subject to that power, thinks nothing more servile than living at the beck of others. The married man considers nothing worse than

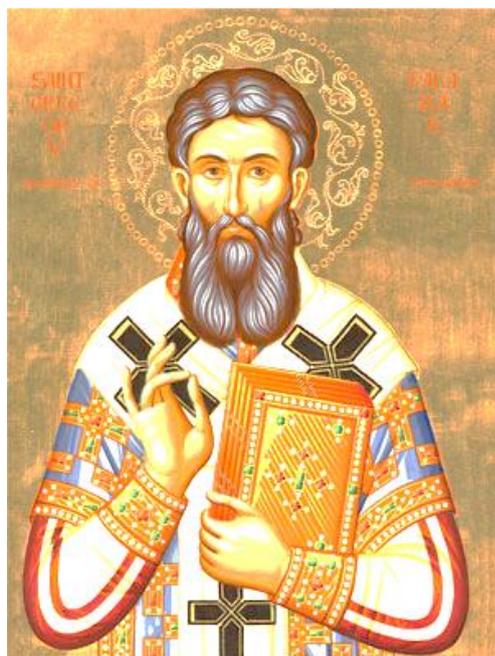
a wife, and the cares of marriage. The unmarried declares there is nothing so wretched as being unmarried, and wanting the repose of a home. The merchant thinks the husbandman happy in his security. The husbandman thinks the merchant so in his wealth. In short, all mankind are somehow hard to please, and discontented and impatient.”

“It were indeed meet for us not at all to require [15] the aid of the written Word, but to exhibit a life so pure, that the grace of the Spirit should be instead of books to our souls, and that as these are inscribed with ink, even so should our hearts be with the Spirit. But, since we have utterly put away from us this grace, come, let us at any rate embrace the second best course. For that the former was better, God hath made manifest, [16] both by His words, and by His doings. Since unto Noah, and unto Abraham, and unto his offspring, and unto Job, and unto Moses too, He discoursed not by writings, but Himself by Himself, finding their mind pure. But after the whole people of the Hebrews had fallen into the very pit of wickedness, then and thereafter was a written word, and tables, and the admonition which is given by these. And this one may perceive was the case, not of the saints in the Old Testament only, but also of those in the New. For neither to the apostles did God give anything in writing, but instead of written words He promised that He would give them the grace of the Spirit: for "He," saith our Lord, "shall bring all things to your remembrance." [17] And that thou mayest learn that this was far better, hear what He saith by the Prophet: "I will make a new covenant with you, putting my laws into their mind, and in their heart I will write them," and, "they shall be all taught

of God." [18] And Paul too, pointing out the same superiority, said, that they had received a law "not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." [19] But since in process of time they made shipwreck, some with regard to doctrines, others as to life and manners, there was again need that they should be put in remembrance by the written word."

— John Chrysostom, *The Complete Works of Saint John Chrysostom*

Source: (<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes>)



**St. Gregory Palamas**  
**1296-1357**

Saint Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, was born in the year 1296 in Constantinople. St Gregory's father became a prominent dignitary at the court of Andronicus II Paleologos (1282-1328), but he soon died, and Andronicus himself

took part in the raising and education of the fatherless boy. Endowed with fine abilities and great diligence, Gregory mastered all the subjects which then comprised the full course of medieval higher education. The emperor hoped that the youth would devote himself to government work. But Gregory, barely twenty years old, withdrew to Mount Athos in the year 1316 (other sources say 1318) and became a novice in the Vatopedi monastery under the guidance of the monastic Elder St Nicodemus of Vatopedi (July 11). There he was tonsured and began on the path of asceticism. A year later, the holy Evangelist John the Theologian appeared to him in a vision and promised him his spiritual protection. Gregory's mother and sisters also became monastics.

After the demise of the Elder Nicodemus, St Gregory spent eight years of spiritual struggle under the guidance of the Elder Nicephorus, and after the latter's death, Gregory transferred to the Lavra of St Athanasius (July 5). Here he served in the trapeza, and then became a church singer. But after three years, he resettled in the small skete of Glossia, striving for a greater degree of spiritual perfection. The head of this monastery began to teach the young man the method of unceasing prayer and mental activity, which had been cultivated by monastics, beginning with the great desert ascetics of the fourth century: Evagrius Pontikos and St Macarius of Egypt (January 19).

Later on, in the eleventh century St Simeon the New Theologian (March 12) provided detailed instruction in mental

activity for those praying in an outward manner, and the ascetics of Athos put it into practice. The experienced use of mental prayer (or prayer of the heart), requiring solitude and quiet, is called "Hesychasm" (from the Greek "hesychia" meaning calm, silence), and those practicing it were called "hesychasts."

During his stay at Glossia the future hierarch Gregory became fully imbued with the spirit of hesychasm and adopted it as an essential part of his life. In the year 1326, because of the threat of Turkish invasions, he and the brethren retreated to Thessalonica, where he was then ordained to the holy priesthood. St. Gregory combined his priestly duties with the life of a hermit. Five days of the week he spent in silence and prayer, and only on Saturday and Sunday did he come out to his people. He celebrated divine services and preached sermons. For those present in church, his teaching often evoked both tenderness and tears. Sometimes he visited theological gatherings of the city's educated youth, headed by the future patriarch, Isidore. After he returned from a visit to Constantinople, he found a place suitable for solitary life near Thessalonica the region of Bereia. Soon he gathered here a small community of solitary monks and guided it for five years.

In 1331 the saint withdrew to Mt Athos and lived in solitude at the skete of St Sava, near the Lavra of St Athanasius. In 1333 he was appointed Igumen of the Esphigmenou monastery in the northern part of the Holy Mountain. In 1336 the saint returned to the skete of St Sava, where he

devoted himself to theological works, continuing with this until the end of his life.

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**Source:** (<https://oca.org/saints/lives>)



### **St. Gregory Palamas teachings**

Since our soul is a single entity possessing many powers, it utilizes as an organ the body that by nature lives in conjunction with it. What organs, then, does the power of the soul that we call 'intellect' make use of when it is active? No one has ever supposed that the mind resides in the finger-nails or the eye-lashes, the nostrils or the lips.

But we all agree that it resides within us, even though we may not all agree as to which of our inner organs it chiefly makes use of. For some locate it in the head, as though in a sort of acropolis; others consider that its vehicle is the centermost part of the heart, that aspect of the heart that has been purified from natural life. We know very well that our intelligence is neither within us as in a container - for it is incorporeal - nor yet outside us, for it is united to us; but it is located in the heart as in its own organ. And we know this because we are taught it not by men but by the Creator of man Himself when He says, 'It is not that which goes into man's mouth that defiles him, but what comes out of it' (Matt. 15:11), adding, 'for thoughts come out of the heart' (Matt. 15:19). St Makarios the Great says the same: 'The heart rules over the whole human organism, and when

grace takes possession of the pastures of the heart, it reigns over all a man's thoughts and members. For the intellect and all the thoughts of the soul are located there.'

Our heart is, therefore, the shrine of the intelligence and the chief intellectual organ of the body. When, therefore, we strive to scrutinize and to amend our intelligence through rigorous watchfulness, how could we do this if we did not collect our intellect, outwardly dispersed through the senses, and bring it back within ourselves - back to the heart itself, the shrine of the thoughts? It is for this reason that St Makarios - rightly called blessed - directly after what he says above, adds: 'So it is there that we must look to see whether grace has inscribed the laws of the Spirit.' Where? In the ruling organ, in the throne of grace, where the intellect and all the thoughts of the soul reside, that is to say, in the heart. Do you see, then, how greatly necessary it is for those who have chosen a life of self attentiveness and stillness to bring their intellect back and to enclose it within their body, and particularly within that innermost body within the body that we call the heart?

If, as the Psalmist says, 'All the glory of the king's daughter is within' (Ps. 45:13. LXX), how shall we seek it somewhere without? And if, as St Paul says, 'God has sent forth His Spirit into our hearts, crying: "Abba Father" '(cf. Gal. 4:6). how shall we not pray in union with the Spirit that is in our hearts? And if, as the Lord of the prophets and the apostles says, 'The kingdom of heaven is within us' (cf. Luke 17:21), how shall we not find ourselves outside the kingdom of heaven if we strive

to alienate our intellect from what lies within us? 'An upright heart', says Solomon, 'seeks conscious awareness' (cf. Prov. 27:21. LXX), the awareness or perception which he elsewhere calls noetic and divine (cf. Prov. 2:5. LXX). It is to such awareness that the fathers urge all of us when they say: 'A noetic intellect assuredly acquires noetic awareness. Let us never cease from seeking for this, which is both in us and not in us.'" Do you not see that whether we wish to withstand sin, or to acquire virtue, or to gain the reward of the contest for virtue or, rather, the noetic awareness which is the pledge of the reward for virtue, we have to bring our intellect back into our body and into ourselves? On the other hand, to extract the intellect not from a materialistic manner of thought but from the body itself, in the hope that there, outside the body, it may attain noetic visions, is the worst of profane delusions, the root and source of every heresy, an invention of demons, a doctrine engendering folly and itself the result of dementedness. It is for this reason that those who speak by the inspiration of the demons are out of their wits and do not even comprehend what they say. But we, on the contrary, install our intellect not only within the body and the heart, but also within itself.

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**Source:** (The Philokalia, Volume 4)





## Liturgical Schedule

<b>Monday</b> <i>November, 14</i>	8.30 am ?	Divine Liturgy – St. Philip and St. Gregory Palamas
<b>Tuesday</b> <i>November, 15</i>	9.30 am ?	Divine Liturgy - St. Herman of Alaska and St. Paisie of Neamt (Velicicovski)
<b>Wednesday</b> <i>November, 16</i>	6:00 pm	Paraklesis of Theotokos
<b>Thursday</b> <i>November, 17</i>	6:30 pm	Bible study
<b>Friday</b> <i>November, 18</i>	8.30 am ?	Divine Liturgy
<b>Saturday</b> <i>November, 19</i>	8:00 am 6.00 pm	Divine Liturgy Vespers
<b>Sunday</b> <i>November, 20</i>	8:00 am 8:15 am 9:30 am	Church opens Matins Divine Liturgy

### Announcements:

- **November, 17** – Thanksgiving Community meal, 4.30-6.00pm
- **December, 4** – His Eminence Archbishop Nicolae, Metropolitan will be attending the Divine Liturgy at St. Nicholas Church, Shrewsbury



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