

Holy Apostles Orthodox Church

347 Ridge Rd Lansing NY

HolyApostlesLansing.org

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MARCH 8, 2015

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 6. St. Gregory Palamas. Synaxis of the Venerable Fathers of the Kiev Caves Lavra. St. Theophylactus, Bishop of Nicomedia (842-845). Ven. Lazarus (1391) and Athanasius (15th c.), of Múrom. Apostle Hermas of the Seventy (1st c.). Hieromartyr Theodoretus of Antioch (4th c.). Ven. Dometius (363). The “KURSK-ROOT” Icon of the Most-holy Theotokos.

EPISTLE: HEBREWS 7.26-8.2: Our High Priest is God Himself, not subject to weakness. Hebrews 1.10-2.3: We must hold true to what we have learned, for it is from God Himself.

GOSPEL: JOHN 10.9-16: Christ is the Good Shepherd, and we are His sheep. Mark 2.1-12: Christ heals the paralytic to the astonishment of all.

HOURS: Casey. **NEXT WEEK:** Available.

EPISTLE READER: Bill. **NEXT WEEK:** Available.

COFFEE HOUR HOST: Eileen. **NEXT WEEK:** Available.

LENTEN READERS: There is a sign-up sheet for the readers that are needed for the Lenten services. All skill levels are invited to read at any of the services.

ANNUAL MEETING: Our Annual Meeting was a great success, looking at the gains from 2014 and planning for our ministries in 2015. The minutes have been disseminated, and today the new Parish Council will be given the oath of office. Several committees were formed, and will be meeting in the near future.

KNOW YOUR FAITH: The next class will be March 17rd at Unwind Coffee Shop in the Ithaca Mall. We will be reading and discussing chapter 14 of the Gospel of St John: The Farewell Discourse (Part II), incl. Vine & Branches, Love & Hate, Paraclete. The time has also been changed to 7:30. Invite your friends to join us. The complete syllabus is available on the information table and online.

Fr James' contact information: Cell: 315-706-6185 Email: adelphotheos@gmail.com

MEMORIAL SATURDAY(S): During Great Lent, there are several Soul Saturdays on which we pray for the souls who have reposed in the Lord. Please fill out a prayer slip and come to the Divine Liturgy to ask God to be merciful to their souls, and ours, and pray for your loved ones at the Saturday Divine Liturgy.

LENTEN CALENDAR: The calendar of services for the lenten period is available. As we center more on a life of prayer over the next few weeks, take advantage of the services of the Church so that you may come closer to Christ in this time.

WELCOME!: We warmly welcome all of our visitors! It's good to have you with us! Please know that we are glad that you are here praying with us and invite you to join us after the service for a meal and to meet everyone in our community.

OCF: Our robust college ministry is looking to expand its offerings. Therefore, along with several other charitable outreaches, we will take special donations for their programming throughout this season, and on an ongoing basis.

VIGIL AT THE TOMB: It is a tradition to keep watch at the tomb of our Lord from after services on Holy Friday Evening through the beginning of the Paschal services. If you would be interested in being part of this, please see Fr James.

LIVING:

Apr Timothy H	Judy	Christina	Daniel
Apr Herman S	Gretchen	Jim & Kim	Ada
Apr John C	Mary & Susan	Rachel	Walter
Apr Thomas E	John & Carmine	Constantine & Maria	Lillian
Apr Michael T	Nathan	Gaetan	Joseph
Apr Stephen M	Leah	Jean	Marie
Dn Symeon	Helen	Christine	Joseph
Abbess Silouana	Lindsey	Samuel	Laura
Mother Raphaela	Susanne H	Iconographer Helena	Martha
Mother Christophora	Elizabeth	<u>Catechumens:</u> Elliott &	Stanley & Helen,
Mat Cecelia	Mary	Daniel	Taissia
Mat Katya	Joe A	<u>Children:</u> Caleb,	Steluta
Mat Dorothy	Daniel	Christopher E,	Theophan
Baker Family	Andrew and family	Anthony, Mia and	Lynda
Joshua	Harold	Isabel,	Florence
Brittany & Isaac	Wilhemina	BIRTHDAYS: Bill.	James
Gretchen	Gordon	ANNIVS: None.	James R
Peter	Elizabeth	NAMESDAYS: None.	Mordecai
Marriane	David	REPOSED:	Vasily
Terrence	Madeline	Priest John	NEWLY REPOSED:
Helen	Shirley	Apr Alexander	Priest Matthew.
	Larry	Rdr Gregory	ANNIVERSARIES: None

FB Check-in



SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK

CONFESSIONS ARE HEARD BEFORE AND AFTER VESPERS AND AT ANY OTHER CONVENIENT TIME.

PALAMAS SUNDAY, MARCH 8: 9 AM Divine Liturgy and Social Hour

TUESDAY, MARCH 10: 8:30 Lenten Daily Matins
6 PM Choir Rehearsal

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11: 8:30 Presanctified Liturgy
7 PM Akathist

THURSDAY, MARCH 12: 8:30 Lenten Daily Matins
9:15 Cornell OCF Morning Prayers
8 PM Ithaca College OCF

FRIDAY, MARCH 13: 8:30 Lenten Daily Matins
6 PM Presanctified Liturgy

MEMORIAL SATURDAY, MARCH 14: 9 AM Divine Liturgy
6 PM Great Vespers

SUNDAY OF THE CROSS, MARCH 15: 9 AM Divine Liturgy and Social hour

PRAYER FOR CHURCH GROWTH

Again, we pray to Thee, O Lord our God, that you would renew us and this parish by the Power of the Holy Spirit. Fill us with love and longing for Thee. Grant that we would seek not our own will but to do Thy will in all things and to be willing to lay down our lives out of love for Thee and for our neighbor. Draw thirsty souls to this place and remove their spiritual blindness, granting them through Thy grace to see the beauty of Thy Holy Glory in this place. Fill this community with new life, spiritual vigor and an insatiable desire to live godly and holy lives. Forgive us all of our sins as we fall down before Thee. Bring us all to a greater repentance and to an amendment of our lives as we look to Thee, the only Merciful and loving Lord Who calls all to salvation. We beg Thee, our merciful Lord, hear us, grant all of these petitions and all of our requests unto salvation: We pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

Troparion to the Apostles

First enthroned of the Apostles, And teachers of the Universe; Entreat the Master of all
To grant peace to the world, And to our souls great mercy!

Holy Apostles Orthodox Church
Lansing, New York



SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 2015
SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT
ST GREGORY PALAMAS

Second Sunday of Lent: St Gregory Palamas

TROPARION TONE 6 (RESURRECTION)

The Angelic Powers were at Thy tomb;
the guards became as dead men.
Mary stood by Thy grave,
seeking Thy most pure body.
Thou didst capture hell not being tempted by it.
Thou didst come to the Virgin, granting life.//
O Lord, Who didst rise from the dead, glory to Thee.

TROPARION TONE 8 (ST GREGORY PALAMAS)

O light of Orthodoxy, teacher of the Church, its confirmation,
O ideal of monks and invincible champion of theologians,
O wonderworking Gregory, glory of Thessalonica and preacher of grace,//
always intercede before the Lord that our souls may be saved!

KONTAKION TONE 8 (ST GREGORY PALAMAS)

Holy and divine instrument of wisdom,
joyful trumpet of theology,
together we sing thy praises, O God-inspired Gregory.
Since thou now standest before the Original Mind, guide our minds to Him, O Father,//
so that we may sing to thee: Rejoice, O preacher of grace!

KONTAKION TONE 4 (FROM THE LENTEN TRIODION)

Now is the time for action!
Judgment is at the doors!
So let us rise and fast,
offering alms with tears of compunction and crying:
Our sins are more in number than the sands of the sea;
but forgive us, O Master of all,//
so that we may receive the incorruptible crowns!

PROKEIMENON TONE 5

Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this generation forever. (Ps 11/12:7)
v: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly. (Ps 11/12:1)
Tone 1: My mouth shall speak wisdom, the meditation of my heart shall be understanding. (Ps 48/49:3)

ALLELUIA VERSES TONE 5

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! v: I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. (Ps 88/89:1)
v: For Thou hast said: "Mercy will be established forever; Thy truth will be prepared in the heavens. (Ps 88/89:2)
v: The mouth of the righteous shall meditate wisdom, and his tongue shall speak of judgment. (Ps 36/37:30)

HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS

All of creation rejoices in thee, O Full of Grace:
the assembly of Angels and the race of men.
O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise,
the glory of virgins,
from whom God was incarnate and became a Child:
our God before the ages.
He made thy body into a throne,
and thy womb He made more spacious than the heavens.
All of creation rejoices in thee, O Full of Grace.//
Glory to thee!

COMMUNION HYMNS

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest! (Ps 148:1)
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings. (Ps 111/112:6b-7a) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

SECOND SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT: ST GREGORY PALAMAS

Since 1368 this Sunday has been dedicated to the memory of St. Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica (1296-1359). This commemoration forms a continuation of the feast celebrated on the previous Sunday: St. Gregory's victory over Barlaam, Akindynos and the other heretics of his time is seen as a renewed Triumph of Orthodoxy. In the earlier period there was on this day a commemoration of the Great Martyr Polycarp of Smyrna (+ c. 155), whose feast was transferred from the fixed calendar (23 February). This commemoration, like that of St. Theodore, underlined the connection between Lenten asceticism and the martyr's vocation. The second Sunday also takes up the theme of the Prodigal Son as a model of repentance, with the first of the two Canons at Mattins being devoted to this parable.

THE CITY OF CAIN AND THE CITY OF JESUS, III

4. The city of Cain, the kingdom of Satan, cannot stand (Mt. 12:25-26). But neither is our end to be found in a flight from history, an escape from the city. For if the story of Scripture, which is *our* story, began with a garden, we know that it will end, *not* with a garden, but with a *city*: even the holy city, the new Jerusalem, “coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:2), and in the midst of her, the tree of life (Rev. 22:2).

And just as in the Exodus into the promised land the people of Israel brought with them the spoils of Egypt (Ex. 3:21-22), the silver and the gold gathered in the land of their affliction, so also into this holy city “the kings of the earth shall bring their glory” (Rev. 21:24): “whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise” (Phil. 4:8) – all things of beauty and genuine creativity which have been made or accomplished within the city of man, shall in some way be found in this new Jerusalem, the city of the living God. The human *polis* and all that it represents – human history, human culture – is not only judged; it is also cleansed and sanctified, *redeemed* – if only now “in hope” (Rom. 8:24; cf. 8:25). “What shall pass from history into eternity?” asked Fr Georges Florovsky, of blessed memory. “The human person with all its relations, such as friendship and love. And in this sense also *culture*, since a person without a concrete cultural face would be a mere fragment of humanity.”

5. Truly, “the stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, and it is marvelous in our eyes” (Mt. 21:42). Through his suffering and death at the hands of the city, and through his resurrection, Jesus Christ has not only undone man’s attempt to found a city without God; he has also become, in himself, the beginning of a new polis – a new human community.

The city of Cain was founded upon the blood of Abel, crying out for vengeance from the ground (Gen. 4:10). But the city we await, the city of the living God, is founded upon a “blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel” (Heb. 12:22-24), speaking a word, not of vengeance, but forgiveness and resurrection. Cain is avenged sevenfold; the vengeance of his city is magnified by generation; his descendent Lamech is avenged seventy-sevenfold (Gen. 4:24). Entrance to God’s city, Jesus Christ tells us, is bought with mercy, the forgiveness of debts “seventy times seven” (Mt. 18:22; cf. 18: 23-34).

Of this coming city we are citizens, of this blood we partake, when we gather together in love in the Eucharist. And though the world does not know it, it is *this* city that holds the world together, as the soul holds together the body (*Epistle to Diognetus*, 6). In the Church’s Eucharist, we “taste and see” (Ps. 34:8) already – as in an icon, veiled under signs – that glorious future the Lord has prepared for his creation. Let us, then, love one another, and seeking that “city which is to come” (Heb 13:14), receive him – with the prayer of the Spirit and the Bride upon our hearts: “Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev. 22:20).

THE CITY OF CAIN AND THE CITY OF JESUS, II

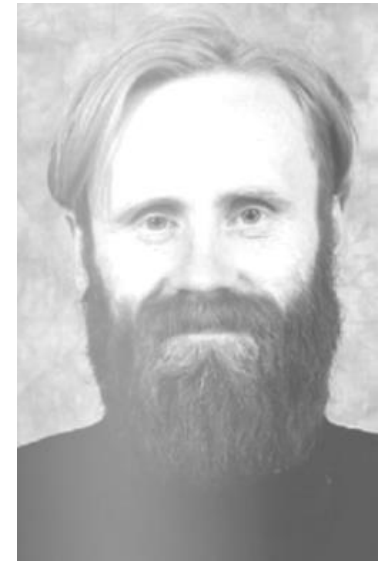
achievements of human culture, are disfigured by sin. There is no civilization in the history of the world that has not in some way been built and maintained by a flight from God, idolatry and brutality, the exploitation and killing of other human beings. This pattern is confirmed by the two cities mentioned next in the book of Genesis: Babel (Gen. 11) and Sodom (Gen. 13-14; 19).

Even Jerusalem does not escape this ambiguity. Jerusalem is “comely” (Song of Songs 6:4), but only in the future. The prophets prophesy the great day when Jerusalem be holy (Joel 3:17), when God will dwell in her and she will be called “a city of truth” (Zech. 8:3). But in the meantime, she is filled with injustice, having “grievously sinned” (Lam. 1:8). She called a sister to Sodom (Ez. 16:46-47), even Sodom itself (Is. 1:10; Jer. 23:14; Rev. 1:18), the city “which kills the prophets” (Jer. 23:37). And when the Lord finally does come to dwell in her, he is rejected, driven outside the gates like a scapegoat (Heb. 13:12) to be crucified.

3. As mortal men, born outside of Paradise, we are well acquainted with Cain’s city: the city of man without God, the Sodom and the Babylon that surround us all about (Rev. 17:15). We are familiar, too, with the sinful Jerusalem, the “dark double” of the Church shadowing her history: the abuse of holy things to the harm of God’s people (Jer. 23:1); the pandering of lies and false visions in God’s name (Jer. 2:8; 4:14; 6:14; 23:16-17).

As disciples of Jesus Christ, our task, however, is not to flee from this dark city, but to be his witnesses within it. During Lent, we prepare for that time when we will follow the Lord into the city, for that hour when he will say to us: “Behold we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise” (Mk. 10:33-34).

And after three days he will rise. In these words springs the substance of all our hope, for in them stands the promise of an end to Cain’s city, indeed to all the tragedy of history. In this season of repentance, we are reminded that “here we have no lasting city” (Heb. 13:14). We struggle harder to answer a resounding “No” to that tempting offer for which Cain fell: power and authority, the kingdoms of this world, in exchange for the worship of the devil (Lk. 4:5-7). We can do this because we know that, in the cross and resurrection of Jesus, the city of Cain has already had its judgment: already the “prince of this world,” who was “a murderer from the beginning,” is “cast out” (Jn. 12:31-32; Jn. 8:44).



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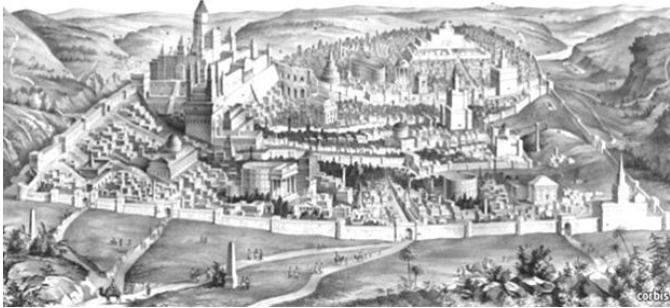
THE CITY OF CAIN AND THE CITY OF JESUS

By Fr. Matthew Baker

This is one of the last sermons Fr. Matthew Baker wrote.

He intended to deliver it last Wednesday.

“Two loves formed two cities: the love of self, reaching even to contempt of God, an earthly city; and the love of God, reaching to contempt of self, a heavenly one. – St. Augustine of Hippo, De Civitate Dei, XIV: 28



Then Cain went away from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, east of Eden. Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. To Enoch was born Irad; and Irad was the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael the father of Methushael, and Methushael the father of Lamech. And

Lamech took two wives; the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. Adah bore Jubal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have cattle. His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. Zillah bore Tubalcain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubalcain was Naamah. Lamech said to his wives: “Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, hearken to what I say: I have slain a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain is avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold.” (Gen. 4:16-24)

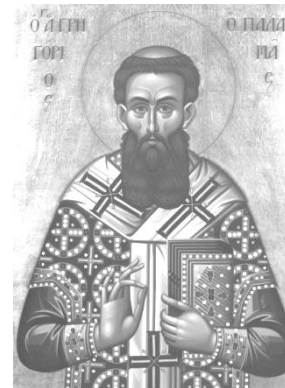
1. Cain in his anger has slain his brother Abel. He is far from the presence of the Lord, a wanderer and a fugitive: lost in the land of Nod – “the land of wandering.” He is east of Eden: fixed at the point of departure, with no direction. But rather than accept the Lord's promise of protection (Gen 4:15), Cain seeks a place of security apart from God. He founds a city, and calls it “Enoch,” meaning “discipline,” “utilization.” Cain, the son of Adam: the first murderer; the founder of the first city.

This is the anti-Eden: an economy, a social order, all of man's making. Cast out from God's kingdom, Cain founds his own kingdom – a kingdom without God. With Cain's descendants, Jubal, Jubal, and Tubal-cain, come the marks of civilization: agriculture, fine art, technology (Gen. 4:20-22). But, as the story of Lamech shows, these benefits are accompanied by a continued pattern of vengeance and bloodshed (Gen. 4:23-24).

2. This story indicates for us the deep moral and spiritual ambiguity – to say the least – which surrounds the city and all that it represents. All human communities, even those with the greatest

LIFE OF ST GREGORY PALAMAS, PART II

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.

In the 1330s events took place in the life of the Eastern Church which put St Gregory among the most significant universal apologists of Orthodoxy, and brought him great renown as a teacher of hesychasm.

About the year 1330 the learned monk Barlaam had arrived in Constantinople from Calabria, in Italy. He was the author of treatises on logic and astronomy, a skilled and sharp-witted orator, and he received a university chair in the capital city and began to expound on the works of St Dionysius the Areopagite (October 3), whose “apophatic” (“negative”, in contrast to “kataphatic” or “positive”) theology was acclaimed in equal measure in both the Eastern and the Western Churches. Soon Barlaam journeyed to Mt. Athos, where he became acquainted with the spiritual life of the hesychasts. Saying that it was impossible to know the essence of God, he declared mental prayer a heretical error. Journeying from Mount Athos to Thessalonica, and from there to Constantinople, and later again to Thessalonica, Barlaam entered into disputes with the monks and attempted to demonstrate the created, material nature of the light of Tabor (i.e. at the Transfiguration). He ridiculed the teachings of the monks about the methods of prayer and about the uncreated light seen by the hesychasts.

LIFE OF ST GREGORY PALAMAS, PART III

St Gregory, at the request of the Athonite monks, replied with verbal admonitions at first. But seeing the futility of such efforts, he put his theological arguments in writing. Thus appeared the "Triads in Defense of the Holy Hesychasts" (1338). Towards the year 1340 the Athonite ascetics, with the assistance of the saint, compiled a general response to the attacks of Barlaam, the so-called "Hagiorite Tome." At the Constantinople Council of 1341 in the church of Hagia Sophia St Gregory Palamas debated with Barlaam, focusing upon the nature of the light of Mount Tabor. On May 27, 1341 the Council accepted the position of St Gregory Palamas, that God, unapproachable in His Essence, reveals Himself through His energies, which are directed towards the world and are able to be perceived, like the light of Tabor, but which are neither material nor created. The teachings of Barlaam were condemned as heresy, and he himself was anathemized and fled to Calabria.

But the dispute between the Palamites and the Barlaamites was far from over. To these latter belonged Barlaam's disciple, the Bulgarian monk Akyndinos, and also Patriarch John XIV Kalekos (1341-1347); the emperor Andronicus III Paleologos (1328-1341) was also inclined toward their opinion. Akyndinos, whose name means "one who inflicts no harm," actually caused great harm by his heretical teaching. Akyndinos wrote a series of tracts in which he declared St Gregory and the Athonite monks guilty of causing church disorders. The saint, in turn, wrote a detailed refutation of Akyndinos' errors. The patriarch supported Akyndinos and called St Gregory the cause of all disorders and disturbances in the Church (1344) and had him locked up in prison for four years. In 1347, when John the XIV was replaced on the patriarchal throne by Isidore (1347-1349), St Gregory Palamas was set free and was made Archbishop of Thessalonica.

In 1351 the Council of Blachernae solemnly upheld the Orthodoxy of his teachings. But the people of Thessalonica did not immediately accept St Gregory, and he was compelled to live in various places. On one of his travels to Constantinople the Byzantine ship fell into the hands of the Turks. Even in captivity, St Gregory preached to Christian prisoners and even to his Moslem captors. The Hagarenes were astonished by the wisdom of his words. Some of the Moslems were unable to endure this, so they beat him and would have killed him if they had not expected to obtain a large ransom for him. A year later, St Gregory was ransomed and returned to Thessalonica.

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!" St Gregory Palamas fell asleep in the Lord on November 14, 1359. In 1368 he was canonized at a Constantinople Council under Patriarch Philotheus (1354-1355, 1364-1376), who compiled the Life and Services to the saint.

LIFE OF ST GREGORY PALAMAS

This Sunday of Lent was originally dedicated to St Polycarp of Smyrna (February 23). After his glorification in 1368, a second commemoration of St Gregory Palamas (November 14) was appointed for the Second Sunday of Great Lent as a second "Triumph of Orthodoxy."

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.