Slide 1:

Slide 2: Gregory Palamas 1296-1360.

Monk at Vatopedi

Monk at Esphigmenou

Theologian

Hesychast

Abp of Thessalonica

Feast: November 14 and 2 Lent.

Slide 3:

**Life:**

**Family:**

Family was from Anatolia. Father was a confidant and counselor of the emperor.

His father was friend to Andronicos – story about being deep in prayer.

Slide 4: Koloumzin 150 first partial paragraph.

Follow up with Runciman 138.

His father died young.

Mother, brothers and sisters (and even their household servants) followed him into monasticism.

**Monasticism:**

Slide 5: Map of Athos

Map of Greece – Thessalonica

Slide 6: Map of Calabria

Slide 7: **“Enlighten my darkness”**

The first two years in his monastic habit, he spent with fasting, vigil, concentration of the mind and unceasing prayer. In his prayers he always evoke as intercessor the Mother of God and in every occasion he would ask for Her help. Once, when he was still and wholly surrendered to the thought of God, he saw in front of him a very venerable elder (St. John the Theologian). Turning at him with a gentle look, the elder said: “I came my child, sent by the Most Holy and Queen of all to ask you, why every hour, day and night, you cry to God ‘…enlighten my darkness, enlighten my darkness …?” In reply, Gregory said: “And what else shall I ask, me who am full of passion and sin, but to be shown mercy and be enlighten to see and do the Will of God?” Then the Evangelist told him: “The Mistress of all – through me, her servant – commands that I should be your helper.” Then Gregory asked him: “When will the mother of my Lord help me, now or after death?” “Now and at the future life”, said the Theologian and disappeared, filling the heart of Gregory with unspeakable joy in regard to the promises of the mother of God. http://sgpm.goarch.org/Monastery/?page\_id=33

Slide 8: **Hesychastic Controversy: Barlaamite Debates.**

Barlaam was born about 1290 in a Greek community in Calabria, Southern Italy, in an area that then used the Eastern rite. Taking monastic vows, Barlaam was a [monk](http://orthodoxwiki.org/Monk) on [Mount Athos](http://orthodoxwiki.org/Mount_Athos), and [abbot](http://orthodoxwiki.org/Abbot) of San Salvatore at Constantinople.

Around 1330, [Barlaam of Seminara](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barlaam_of_Seminara) came to Constantinople from Calabria in southern Italy, where he had grown up as a member of the Greek-speaking community there. It is disputed whether he was raised as an Orthodox Christian or converted to the Orthodox faith.[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palamism#cite_note-18)[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palamism#cite_note-19) He worked for a time on commentaries on [Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pseudo-Dionysius_the_Areopagite) under the patronage of [John VI Kantakouzenos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_VI_Kantakouzenos). Around 1336, Gregory Palamas received copies of treatises written by Barlaam against the Latins, condemning their insertion of the [Filioque](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filioque) into the [Nicene Creed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicene_Creed). Although this condemnation was solid Eastern Orthodox theology, Palamas took issue with Barlaam's argument in support of it, since Barlaam declared efforts at demonstrating the nature of God (specifically, the nature of the Holy Spirit) should be abandoned, because God is ultimately unknowable and undemonstrable to humans. Thus, Barlaam asserted that it was impossible to determine from whom the Holy Spirit proceeds.

Slide 9: 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.

Patristic witness to Palamas’ position: See Runciman 134.

Barlaam did not understand what the Energies of God are. Neither did he understand the Essence of God. See Runciman 150.

Upon his return to Italy, Barlaam accepted the authority of the [Roman Catholic Church](http://orthodoxwiki.org/Roman_Catholic_Church) and in 1342 was appointed Bishop of Gerace, a [diocese](http://orthodoxwiki.org/Diocese) in the province of Reggio in Calabria. He died in 1348.

Slide 10: The real burning bush at St Catherine’s Monastery on Mt Sinai.

Slide 11: **Knowability of God**

Koloumzin 152 para 2

Essence v Energies

We can know God in how He reveals himself – his energies. His essence is unknowable, but an infinite amount has been revealed in his energies.

“Palamas’s doctrine of the Divine Energies not only provided the dogmatic basis to the Greek view of mysticism. It was also a restatement of the traditional interpretation of the Greek Fathers; theory of God’s relation to man. It came to be accepted by the 14th century Councils as the official doctrine of the Greek Church. To Western theologians it seemed to be clear heresy. It could not be reconciled with Thomism.” Runciman 100-101

Sun analogy. <https://modeoflife.wordpress.com/tag/palamas/>:

“The divine transcendent being is never named in the plural. But the divine and uncreated grace and energy of God is divided indivisibly according to the image of the sun’s ray which gives warmth, light, life and increase, and sends its own radiance to those who are illuminated and manifests itself to the eyes of those who see. In this way, in the manner of an obscure image, the divine energy of God is called not only one but also many by the theologians.[[4]](https://modeoflife.wordpress.com/Users/vasilli/Documents/Sermons/Stratos%20texts/Essay%20on%20Capita%20150.docx#_ftn4)

“Just as the sun, in that without diminution it bestows a measure of warmth and light upon those who participate, possesses these activities as natural and essential energies, so too the divine communications, in that without diminution they inhere in the one who bestows participation, are natural and essential energies of God, and therefore are also uncreated … The warmth of the sun and the effects brought about by it for the generation and growth of sensible creatures when it brings together the manifold differences of the humours and qualities do not abandon these creatures even when there is no contact with the sun through the ray. In the same manner as in an obscure sensible image, only those who set their path towards the supernatural and most divine Light participate purely in divinizing grace and are thereby united with God …[[6]](https://modeoflife.wordpress.com/Users/vasilli/Documents/Sermons/Stratos%20texts/Essay%20on%20Capita%20150.docx#_ftn6)

In his theology he presented the teaching of the Church that uncreated light, that is, the vision of God, is not simply a symbolic vision, nor sensory and created, nor inferior to understanding, but it is deification. Through deification man is deemed worthy of seeing God. And this deification is not an abstract state, but a union of man with God. That is to say, the man who beholds the uncreated light sees it because he is united with God. He sees it with his inner eyes, and also with his bodily eyes, which, however, have been altered by God’s action. Consequently theoria (vision of God) is union with God. And this union is knowledge of God. At this time one is granted knowledge of God, which is above human knowledge and above the senses. <http://sgpm.goarch.org/Monastery/?p=43>

**Troparion for Transfiguration**

Thou wast transfigured on the mount.

O Christ God,

revealing Thy glory to Thy disciples as they could bear it.

Let Thine everlasting light shine upon us sinners.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos,

O Giver of Light, glory to Thee

The Heart – the Prayer of the heart. Koloumzin 152 para 3

Slide 12: **Aftermath of Barlaamite Controversy:**

Of Barlaam’s disciples were 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 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.

**Later Life:**

Not immediately accepted in Thessaloniki

To Constantinople for a council. Was waylaid by Turks. Held for ransom. Some were astonished by his words, some were enraged. He preached to them, almost to his own demise. They held him for 1 year until the ransom was paid.

He became a miracle worker in his later life.

Heavenward! Heavenward!

Slide 13: **Works**

*Triads in defense of the Holy Hesychasts* c 1338. The **Triads of** [**Gregory Palamas**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregory_Palamas) are a set of nine treatises entitled "Triads For The Defense of Those Who Practice Sacred Quietude" written by [Gregory Palamas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregory_Palamas) in response to attacks made by [Barlaam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barlaam_of_Calabria). The treatises are called "Triads" because they were organized as three sets of three treatises.

*One Hundred and Fifty Chapters* c 1347-1351. a concise exposition of his theology.

Numerous Homilies

Passages of the Philokalia

Much that is still untranslated

**Canonization**

Glorified in 1368. Amazingly fast. Believed to be a saint almost immediately at his death by the clergy and the people.

Slide 14: **Assigned Reading**