

## **THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULETIN . . . . VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY**

### **“YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN”**

Suppose that you could ask God to grant you ONE REQUEST, what would it be? Would it be riches, fame, health or immortality? What is the greatest thing that our Heavenly Father could give us?

We find our answer in today's GOSPEL Lesson, when our Lord is apporached in a rather unconventional way: a paralytic is lowered through a roof so that Christ might heal him! Eventually, our great Physician fulfills this request, but before He does, He teaches us where our priorities must lie. As important as it was for the young man to be made whole PHYSICALLY, Christ points out SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS is a far greater blessing! He gives the paralytic the greatest of all gifts by offering these words of encouragement to him: **YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN!**

Our Holy Church wisely places this message before us in the early weeks of Great Lent. How comforting it is to know that God is willing to forgive us of our sins! How encouraging it is to know our loving Father awaits us with open arms! Forgiveness, however, does not come without effort on our part. In order for us to be forgiven of our sins, we must recognize them, confess them, and be sorry for them. This SEASON OF REPENTANCE is an excellent time for us to come to this realization.

On this Second Sunday of Great Lent, the Church honors the memory of **ST. GREGORY PALAMAS**. Having served as the Archbishop of Thessalonica, he has been associated with this particular Sunday of the Fast since the 14<sup>th</sup> Century. In his troparion, St. Gregory is referred to as a **LIGHT** of Orthodoxy, a **TEACHER** of the church, an **IDEAL** of monastics and in invincible **CHAMPION** of Theologians.