

February 27, 2023

Good Morning!

Remember new office hours start today at the church office--opening from 12:00 to 3:30.

1. Today's Readings: [Monday of the First Week of Lent | USCCB](#)

2. The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus: St. Gregory of Narek is the newest of the 37 Doctors of the Church. This relatively unknown saint hails from Armenia (now Turkey). He lived from 951-1003. He is a theologian who is generally considered the first great Armenian poet and was renowned for his mystical poems and hymns. Being Lent, we include a short biography and a poem of a sinner is crying out to God.

3. Quotes of the Day: St. Gregory of Narek

~"The soul's every movement is a reminder of God, the taking of a step, the extension of the right hand, the raising of the arm, with thanks for good works, with shame for bad, for familiar conversation and public addresses, in rational discourse, in works of success, in the fervour of virtue, day and night, we are guided by You in the useful movements for our spirit, asleep or awake....

~"You seek my return to you, but do not grow weary. You run after me in my obstinacy, but do not give up....You rush after me in my sloth and are not stopped....In the face of my darkness, you are light. In the face of my mortality, you are life."

St. Gregory of Narek, Pray for Us!

St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

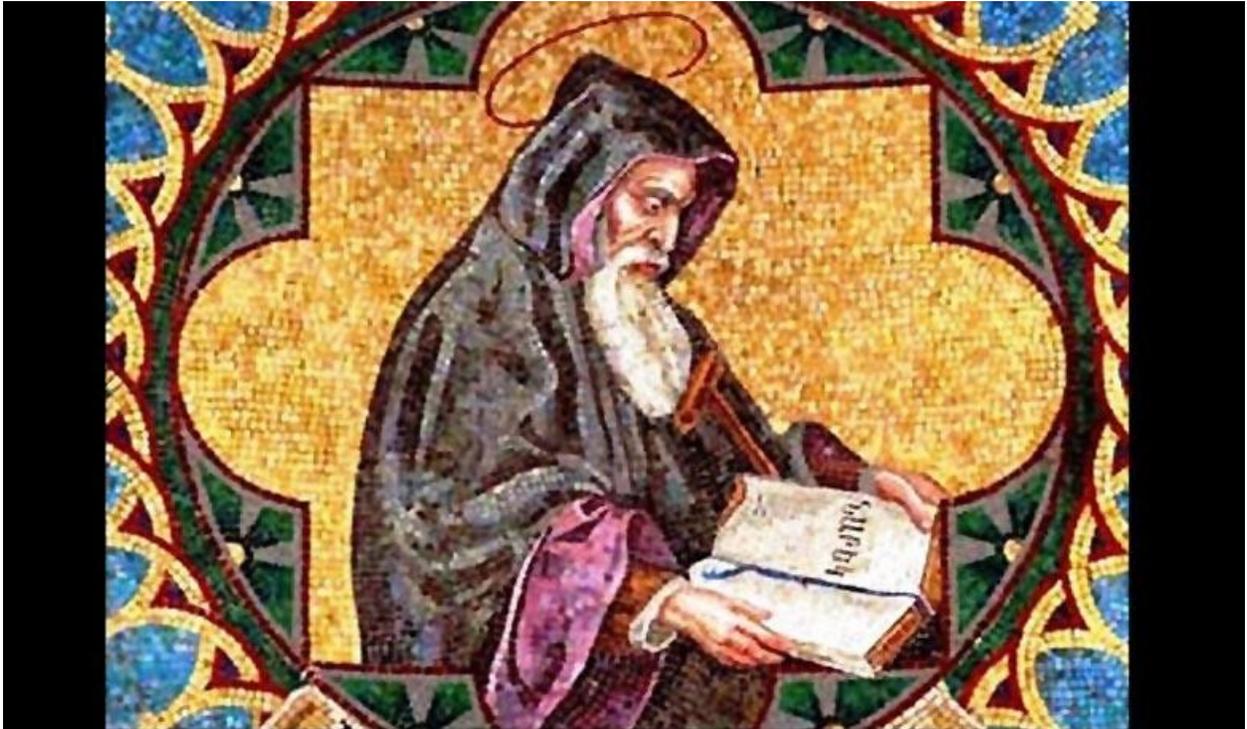
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St. Gregory of Narek



Gregory was raised in a monastery and eventually entered the Narek Monastery, known as Narekavank in what is now Turkey, as a monk and lived there for nearly the entirety of his life.

At the time, Armenia was experiencing a literature, painting, architecture, and theological renaissance, in which Gregory participated.

As an Armenian monk, Gregory lived humbly and taught at the monastic school. He wrote his prayers in the encyclopedia of prayer for all nations in hopes the book would one day guide people of all stations around the world to prayer.

He was a leader of the well-developed school of Armenian mysticism at the Monastery and was asked to answer the question, "What can one offer to God, our creator, who already has everything and knows everything better than we could ever express it?"

In his Book of Prayer, also called the Book of Lamentations or the Song of Songs, Gregory wrote that the answer to the question is "the sighs of the heart." The book contains 91 prayers and was completed one year before he died.

Several miracles and traditions have been traced back to Gregory and he is known as "the watchful angel in human form."

Gregory of Narek was venerated as a saint by the Armenian Catholic Church and is also recognized as a saint of the Roman Catholic church. On April 12, 1015, Pope Francis officially proclaimed Gregory of Narek as a Doctor of the Church.

Saint Gregory has been depicted holding his book of prayer in a variety of artwork and a professor of psychiatry was able to develop a unique kind of therapy based on Saint Gregory's Book of Lamentations.

Though he has yet to be proclaimed the patron saint of a particular patronage, his Book of Prayer has been used to treat several diseases including schizophrenia, Hepatitis C, periodic disease, stress symptoms and depression.

Source: catholic.org

Live the penitential way

I, breathing dust, have grown haughty.
I, talking clay, have become presumptuous.
I, filthy dirt, have grown proud.
I, disgusting ashes, have risen up,
raising my hands with my broken cup, strutting
like a swaggering peacock, but then
curling back into myself, as if rejected,
my speaking slime glowing with anger
I grew arrogant, as if I were immortal,
I who face the same death as the four legged creatures.
I embraced the love of pleasure
and instead of facing you, turned my back.
In flights of fancy I darted into lurid thought.
Indulging my body I wore out my soul.
In strengthening the sinister side
I weakened the force of my right side.
I saw your concern for me, too deep for words,
and paid no heed...

And again, O compassionate Lord who loves mankind,
almighty God, as you consider these words of pleading,
treat them as a confession from a contrite soul
fallen at your feet in repentance.
And as you judge, note, and weigh
the tearful soul, the heaving sighs,
the quivering lips, the dry tongue,
the clenched face, the goodwill and the depth of the heart,
you who are the salvation of humanity,
the seer of the undone, the creator of all,
the healer of invisible wounds,
the defender of all the helpful and the guardian of all,
to you glory and forever and ever.
Amen.

—St. Gregory of Narek

Source: A Year with the Mystics by Kathryn Jean Lopez