Saint Gregory, pray for us!

“I must stay at your house today!”

Have you ever had an unexpected visitor at your house? Maybe somebody called your parents and said, “I’m coming over!” All of a sudden, everybody is running around. We have to clean the house! We have to find something to serve for dinner! We have to change out of our sloppy clothes and into something nice!

In today’s Gospel, we hear about a man named Zacchaeus who saw that Jesus was coming to his town. There were so many people, and Zacchaeus was so short, that he climbed up a tree so he could see Jesus! But the Lord saw Zacchaeus up in the tree, and He told him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down! I must stay at your house today!” Imagine! Jesus surprised him, “I must stay at your house today!”

Today, and every day, let’s always remember to be ready for our Lord. God always wants us to be close to Him, just like He wanted to be close to Zacchaeus. We have to be ready to invite Him to be with us. That means we talk to God in prayer. That means we learn about Him in the Bible. That means we help other people, who are God’s children too. That means we visit with Him at Church. When we’re always ready to receive Christ, He won’t seem like that unexpected visitor! We’ll be waiting for Him!
Here is an icon of our friends, Saint Basil and Saint Gregory.

Remember, they were friends on earth and now they are still friends together in heaven!

**What's in an Icon?**

Can you find these words in the jumble?

BE READY

FRIENDSHIP

GREGORY

HOLY

SAINTS

SHORT

VISITOR

ZACCHAEUS

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**WORD SEARCH**

A holy friendship

**SAINT GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN**

**Making friends. How do you do it?**

Well, usually, friends have to have something in common with each other. Maybe you both like playing soccer, or dancing, or video games, or even pizza. Or maybe you live next door and you play together every day after school.

Friends share something in common.

This week, we celebrate the memory of a saint who had a very deep and holy friendship with St. Basil. We have heard about St. Basil and his brother, St. Gregory of Nyssa. But tomorrow we remember Saint Basil's great friend, Saint Gregory (who is called “the Theologian”). Both St. Basil and this St. Gregory were bishops. They were about the same age. They met each other in Athens, Greece, and they became friends.

But what did these friends have in common? We can learn about their friendship from St. Gregory’s own words. (He wrote them almost 1700 years ago!) St. Gregory said, “Our great pursuit, the great name we wanted, was to be Christians, to be called Christians.” And that is what these two great saints had in common (not soccer or pizza!) They helped each other become greater Christians, to know more about God and to love Him even more.

St. Basil and St. Gregory show us a great thing about friendship! When we make friends, we can try to have deep and holy friendships too, close to God!

We celebrate his nameday on Thursday, January 25th (Feb. 7 OC).