



METROPOLIS  
OF DENVER

## **Sts. Peter & Paul Greek Orthodox Church**

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**Reverend Father Jordan Brown**

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## **Weekly Bulletin Sunday, April 7th, 2019**

### **Welcome To Sts. Peter & Paul!**

We welcome visitors worshipping with us today. Please introduce yourself to our priest and members of our community. Thank you for joining us this morning for prayer and fellowship. Sts Peter and Paul is a Greek Orthodox Church. We are proud of our cultural heritage, but please do not think that one must be Greek, Arab or Russian to be part of the Orthodox Church. The foundation of the Orthodox Church are the teachings and Holy Tradition of Jesus Christ. We follow the first Christians who began to worship Jesus Christ after the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

Please join us for our fellowship after services in the parish hall. We invite you to visit our bookstore which is located in the parish hall. Our diverse church family encompasses many converts to the Orthodox Christian Faith, as well as Greek, Arab, Romanian, Serbian and Russian Orthodox Christians.

If you are interested in learning more about the Orthodox Christian faith, please visit with our priest, Fr. Jordan (see contact info above)

**The sacrament of Holy Communion is reserved only for baptized and / or chrismated Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared by prayer, fasting and confession.** The Orthodox Church understands the reception of Holy Communion to be the highest expression of our faith. Everyone is invited at the end of the Divine Liturgy to receive the blessed bread 'antidoro.'

## Service Schedule & Parish Activities Week of April 7th, 2019

### Memorial Service

Today we offer a memorial service for George Pappas (40-day), Jalil Issa, father of Aida Nader and grandfather of Jacques Nader (40-day), and Jan Ciolan (1 year), father of Dana Gall.

May their memories be eternal!

<b>Sunday, April 7</b>	<b>St Herman of Alaska Pan Orthodox Vespers</b>	<b>5 pm</b>
<b>Monday, April 8</b>	<b>Great Compline</b>	<b>6 pm</b>
<b>Wednesday, April 10</b>	<b>Presanctified Liturgy</b>	<b>6 pm</b>
<b>Friday, April 12</b>	<b>Presanctified Liturgy Akathist</b>	<b>8 am 7 pm</b>
<b>Saturday, April 13</b>	<b>Great Vespers</b>	<b>5 pm</b>

### Hosts & Volunteers

<b>Ushers</b>	Brian Gregory
<b>Myrrhbearers</b>	Demetra, Cassie
<b>Epistle Reader</b>	Niko

### April Usher Schedule

Apr 14	Odeta & Gaby Kapatayes
Apr 21	Parish Council
Apr 28	Parish Council

## News & Events

### **Presanctified Fellowship Evenings**

During the Great and Holy Lent, the church celebrates the Pre-sanctified Liturgy every Wednesday Evening (6 pm), and Friday Morning (8 am). It has been a parish tradition to have a Lenten Supper after the Wednesday evening service. Parishioners are encouraged to bring a lenten dish (please, no dairy or meat). You are welcome to bring fruit, vegetables, bread and humous. **The Philoptochos will host the Presanctified Dinner on April 10.**

### **Parish Lenten Retreat: April 12 & 13**

**Theme: Holy Week - Carrying the Cross with Christ**

**Speaker: Fr John Angelis**

Holy Week is the most important week for the Orthodox Christian. Our guest speaker, Father John Angelis, will offer reflections commemorating the last days of Jesus Christ leading up to His Crucifixion and Resurrection. The retreat is a wonderful opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the Passion of Christ. Father John, a well-respected and beloved clergyman, offers many years of pastoral experience. **(A detailed retreat schedule and biography of Father John is available in the church narthex and parish hall).**

### **Church Flowers for Holy Week**

We are making preparations for the Holy Week Flowers. The church has a special tradition with decorating the tomb of Christ on Holy Friday. Please help with flower donations. There is a special basket for the Holy Week Flowers located at the back of the church (near the narthex doors).

### **Pascha Red Egg Preparation - Holy Thursday, April 25th**

We will be preparing the Pascha Red eggs for the Anastasi Resurrection Service on the morning of Holy Thursday, April 25, immediately following the Divine Liturgy at 8 am. We need to prepare 200 eggs. If you are able to donate eggs (**raw**), please bring them on the weekend of Palm Sunday (**place them in the refrigerator**).

### **Philoptochos Bookstore**

**Decorated Pascha candles** (lambades) and other items from Mysteria Orthodox Designs are available for purchase or special order. **Holy Week/Pascha Service books** are now available for purchase! Limited quantities.

### **Pascha Cookie Basket Fundraiser**

Please see flyer in the narthex and e-bulletin for order form and additional information. Cookie Basket includes a variety of Mediterranean specialty pastries. Minimum Donation of \$20.00 per basket

Order on or before Sunday, April 14, 2019. Pick up basket(s) Saturday, April 20, 2019 from 10:30AM to 11:30PM in the Church Hall

### **Gift Card Sale**

The Philoptochos is having their bi-annual special gift card fund raiser sale today and next Sunday. See Ashley Dzilvelis or Julie Powers to view the list of retailers available and submit your order. All orders must be submitted by Sunday Apr 14th to receive them by Apr 21st. Think graduation, Easter, birthdays, mother's day, father's day and support the Philoptochos by purchasing gift cards through us rather than the grocery store!

## Sunday of St. John Climacus

### The Gospel According to Mark 9: 17-31

At that time, a man came to Jesus kneeling and saying: "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit; and wherever it seizes him it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able." And he answered them, "O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." And they brought the boy to him; and when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "How long has he had this?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." And after crying out and convulsing him terribly, it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And he said to them, "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not have any one know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he will rise."

## On the Sunday of Saint John Climacus

### By St. Justin Popovich

Why does the Church place this Saint in the middle of the Fast, as the most holy image, so that all would behold him? Saint John of the Ladder. Who is he? He is the man who experienced and wrote the *Ladder of Paradise*, who experienced the ascent of man from hell to heaven, to paradise. He experienced the ladder from earth to heaven, the ladder that extends from the bottom of the hell of man to the peak of paradise. He experienced and wrote. A very educated man, well studied. A man who led his soul along the path of Christ, entirely leading it from hell to paradise, from the devil to God, from sin to sinlessness, and who in a divinely wise way recorded this journey, namely what takes place when a man fights with each devil that is behind sin.

The devil fights us with sin, both you and I, my brothers and sisters. He fights against you with every sin. Do not fool yourself, do not think that a small and weak force attacks you. No! He attacks you! Even if it is a grimy thought, only a thought, know that he is rushing on you. A thought of pride, a thought of desire, a thought of avarice, an innumerable multitude of thoughts come upon you from every side. And you, what are you?

O, Ladder of Paradise! How, Father John, were you able to make this ladder from paradise stand between earth and heaven? Did not the demons tear it down, cut it or break it? No! His fasting was a flame, a fire, an inferno. What devil could endure it? All fled panic stricken, all the demons fled being chased away by his glorious and divine prayers, all the demons fled terrified by his fasting, all the demons disappeared by his fiery and fervent prayer.

The Ladder of Paradise! What is it? It is the holy virtues. The holy evangelical virtues: humility, faith, fasting, gentleness, patience, kindness, goodness, compassion, truthfulness, the love for Christ, the confession of

## On the Sunday of Saint John Climacus

Christ, suffering for the sake of Christ. These and many other New Testament holy virtues. Every command of Christ, my brethren, is a virtue. Do you keep them? Do you apply them? Fasting is a holy virtue, it is a step on the ladder from earth to heaven. Fasting, blessed fasting, like the entire ladder leads from earth to heaven.

Each virtue is a small paradise. Each virtue nourishes your soul, making it blessed, and brings down into your soul divine, heavenly rest. Each virtue is a gold and diamond step on the ladder of salvation, the ladder that unites earth and heaven, that stretches out from your own hell to your own paradise. This is why none of them are ever on their own. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is never on its own. It is manifested by prayer, by fasting, by almsgiving, by humility, by suffering on behalf of ones neighbor. Not only does it manifest itself this way but it also lives every virtue, because the other virtue exists. Faith lives with prayer, prayer lives with fasting, fasting is nourished by prayer, fasting is nourished by love, love is nourished by compassion. Thus every virtue is alive through the other. And when one virtue resides in your soul, all the others follow, all will slowly emerge and grow through it and with it.

Yes, the ladder of paradise depends on you. Let's say I fast with fear of God, with reverence, with mourning, with tears. But then I give up on it. There, I began to build the ladder and I myself tore it down, I broke it. And you, you fast often, and are temperate with every physical food. But, at the time of fasting, you allow sin to dwell in your soul, and allow various unclean thoughts and desires sprout in your soul. It belongs to you to immediately chase them far away with prayer, with mourning, with reading or with any other exercise. If you, however, although you physically fast, nourish your soul with some sin or some hidden passion, then you, although you began to build each step one by one with fasting from earth to heaven, you yourself will pull it down and destroy it.

Fasting requires compassion, humility and gentleness. They all go together. It is like a group of builders, whose head is prayer. This is the master builder, the architect, the chief engineer of our spiritual life, our spiritual desire, the ladder that we will make stand between earth and heaven. Prayer occupies the first place. When prayer becomes established in your heart, and it is inflamed with an unquenchable thirst for the Lord, when it continuously sees Him, continuously senses Him, then with prayer you import into your soul all the other virtues. Then the engineer (prayer) has excellent craftsmen, and quickly builds marvelous ladders from earth to heaven, the ladders of your gradual ascent to God, towards your perfection. When you have power, powerful prayer, then no type of fasting will be difficult for you, no type of love will be impossible. Holy evangelical love!

Prayer sanctifies everything within you, your every exercise, your every thought, your every feeling, your every mood. Prayer! A divine power, which the Lord gave us to sanctify whatever is within us, in our souls. Prayer will unite you with the Most Compassionate Lord, and He will pour into your heart compassion for every person, for the sinner, for the brother who is weak like you, that falls like you, but also can get up like you; who yet needs your help, your brotherly help, your prayerful help, your ecclesiastical help. Then, when you give help, without a doubt you will build your own ladder, the ladder that leads from your hell to your paradise; then, with certainty in your heart you will ascend step by step, from virtue to virtue, and you will arrive at the top of the ladder, Heaven, and you will step down onto Heaven, you will step down onto heavenly Paradise.

We have everything, you and I: nine Beatitudes, nine holy evangelical virtues. This is the gospel of fasting, the gospel of Saint John of the Ladder. Virtues, my brethren, great virtues. The difficult ascetic practices of fast

## On the Sunday of Saint John Climacus

ing, prayer and humility, were presented by the Lord in the Beatitudes. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matt. 5:3).

Humility! This is the beginning of the Christian life, the beginning of our faith, the beginning of our virtues, the beginning of our ascent to Heaven, the foundation of our ladder. Lord, I am a nothing. You are everything! I nothing, You everything! My mind is nothing before Your Mind, my spirit is nothing before Your Spirit, my heart, my knowledge... O nothing, nothing before Your knowledge Lord! I, I, nothing, nothing, and behind it countless nothings. This is what I am before You, Lord. Humility! This is the first holy virtue, the first Christian virtue. Everything begins from this.

But the Christians of this world, who build this ladder of our salvation, are always in danger from unclean forces. What are these? Sins, our sins, our passions. And behind these are the devil. Just as the holy virtues build the heavenly ladder between earth and heaven, so do our sins build a ladder to hell. Every sin. If there are sins in your soul, be careful. If you hold hate in your soul for one, two, three, five days, notice into what kind of a hell your soul has changed into. It is the same if you hold anger, avarice, obscene desire. And what are you doing? Indeed, you are making for yourself a ladder to hell.

But the Good Lord gives us an amazing example. Here, in the middle of the Fast, is displayed the great and wondrous Saint John of the Ladder. He entirely shines with the holy evangelical virtues. We see him ascend quickly and wisely the ladder of paradise, which he made to stand between earth and heaven. As a teacher, as a holy guide, he gives us Christians his *Ladder* as a model so that we may ascend from hell to Paradise, from the devil to God, from earth to Heaven.

I pray that our merciful and great Holy Father John of the Ladder, will influence us in our struggles against all our sins with the aim of the holy virtues; that we may also build with his help our own ladder and following him we will arrive at the Kingdom of Heaven, Paradise, where there exists all heavenly rests, all eternal joys, where together with him we will glorify the King of all those good things, the Eternal King of the Heavenly Kingdom, our Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom belongs all glory and honor now and forever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

## News & Events

### **Pan Orthodox Sunday Lenten Vespers**

Each year the faithful of the Orthodox Christian churches throughout Colorado unite by visiting one another's parishes on the Sunday evenings of Great Lent. The Pan Orthodox Vespers will be this evening, Sunday, April 7, 5 pm, at the St Herman Orthodox Church, located @ 991 W. Prentice Ave., Littleton. **The speaker will be His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin**

### **Sacrament of Confession**

Father Jordan will be available for confession prior to Monday Evening Compline, Friday Evening Salutations, and Saturday Great Vespers. Father is also available during the day. Please visit or contact Father Jordan to schedule your confession. The children are encouraged to come for confession on either Friday evening or before Saturday Vespers.

## Hymns for Sunday

### **Resurrection Hymn** (4th Tone p. 84-85 Green Hymnal)

“When the tidings of the resurrection from the glorious angel was proclaimed unto the women disciples and our ancestral sentence also had been abolished to the Apostles with boasting did they proclaim that death is vanquished evermore and Christ our God has risen from the dead and granted tot he world His great mercy.”

### **Hymn for St John Climacus of the Ladder**

“With the rivers of your tears you made the barren desert bloom; and with your sighs from deep within, you made your labors bear their fruits a hundredfold; and you became a star, illuminating the world by your miracles, O John, our devout father. Intercede with Christ our God, for the salvation of our souls.”

### **Hymn for Saints Peter and Paul**

“O leaders of the Apostles, and teachers of the world, intercede with the Master of all that He may grant peace unto the world, and to our souls His great mercy.”

### **Kontakion Hymn**

“To You, the Champion Commander, I, Your City, Inscribe victorious anthems of thanksgiving, For deliverance from sufferings, Theotokos. In as much as you have power unassailable, From all manner of dangers set me free; That I may cry to you, Rejoice Bride unwedded.”

### **Special Hymn in place of “Axion estin... It is truly worthy..**

“All of creation rejoices in you, O full of grace: the assembly of angels and the human race. You are a sanctified temple and a spiritual paradise, the glory from whom God was incarnate and became a child - our God, existing before all ages. He made Your womb a throne, and your body more spacious than the heavens. All of creation rejoices in you, O full of grace. Glory to you.”

## Epistle Reading

### **St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 6: 13-20**

*O Lord, how manifold are your works. You have made all things in wisdom.*

*Verse: Bless the Lord, O my soul.*

BRETHREN, when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore to himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

## News & Events

### **Senior Lunch Bunch - April 15th, 11 am**

The seniors will be visiting Fr. Christodoulos at the Brotherhood of St. George in Denver. We will meet at Sts. Peter and Paul at 11am. Rides will be provided. Please RSVP to Dena Tinsley at 724-705-3225

### **2nd Annual Pan-Orthodox Women's Retreat – Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>**

Join us for a weekend of spiritual enlightenment, food, fun, and meeting fabulous women from other Orthodox communities. Please see the flyer in this month's Petra and in the e-bulletin.

### **Canned Meat Donations Needed**

Thank you to everyone who continues to donate canned meats to the OUR Center! God grant you His abundant blessings! There is a basket for donations on the coffee table in the hall!

### **Help with Parish Communication & Stewardship Tools - EasyTithe and Flocknote**

For the next four Sundays, a parish council member will be available in the parish hall to help parishioners sign-up and learn more about our online communication and stewardship tools. EasyTithe is our parish's online giving platform, where you can set-up one-time or recurring donations from a checking/savings account or a credit card. Flocknote allows us to communicate to parishioners and RSVP for events via e-mail using their PC's or smartphones. Signing up is quick and easy, and we are happy to help! Please see Nick Kallan if you have questions.

### **Yia-Yia's Attic Rummage Sale - Saturday, May 11th**

Sts. Peter and Paul will be sponsoring a rummage sale on Saturday, May 11th in the Fellowship Hall. Please start saving items you may have and no longer need. We can accept household goods, tools, jewelry, toys, books, arts & craft items, handmade items, and small pieces of furniture. Any items not sold can be reclaimed, all other will be donated. You may bring donations to the church between May 5 - 10. Proceeds will be used to purchase Sunday School furniture. Contact Pam Torrance for questions or concerns, [mtnyiyia@aol.com](mailto:mtnyiyia@aol.com), 720 517-6459.

## Youth Events

### **Dinner & Fireside Chat w/ Father John - Saturday, April 13, 6 pm**

All middle and high school teens are invited for a special evening with Father John. The event will take place at the home of Father Jordan & Presbyteria Marika (7793 Essex Place, Boulder). Dinner will be provided. Parents are welcome to attend.

### **GOYA Lunch & Meeting w/ Father Jordan - Sunday, April 14, 12:15 pm**

All middle and high school teens are invited for lunch. We will meet upstairs in the large Sunday school room. We will be discussing the upcoming youth events and new ideas.

### **Saturday of Lazarus Retreat - April 20**

### **Holy Friday Retreat - April 26**

### **Rocky Mountain Orthodox Youth Camp - July 24 - 27**