



Sts. Peter & Paul Boulder

Weekly Bulletin Week of December 23rd, 2018



Contact Info

**Sts. Peter & Paul
Greek Orthodox Church**
5640 Jay Rd.
Boulder, CO 80301
Office: 303-581-1434
www.stspeterandpaulboulder.org
Rev. Fr. Jordan Brown

Service Schedule & Parish Activities

Monday, December 24	Nativity Royal Hours & Orthros Service	8 am
	Forefeast of the Nativity Vesporal Liturgy	5 pm
Tuesday, December 25	Nativity of Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ	
	Orthros	8 am
	Divine Liturgy	9 am

Christ is Born! Let us Glorify Him!

Recurring Services

Orthros
Sunday @ 8:30 am
Divine Liturgy
Sunday @ 9:30 am
Great Vespers
Saturday @ 5 pm
Confession by appt.

Welcome to Our Parish!

The mission of Sts. Peter & Paul is to be a beacon of Orthodox Christian spirituality in the greater Boulder area. We strive together to live our Orthodox Christian Faith by having a devoted prayer life, through fasting and almsgiving, and through regular participation in the services and sacraments of the Holy Orthodox Church.

Hosts & Volunteers

Fellowship Host	The Gregory Family
Ushers	Matt Melonakis
Myrrhbearers	Alexandra, Elizabeth, Cassie, Sophie
Epistle Reader	Georgia

Have an Announcement?

Please contact Aaron Wall:
awall609@yahoo.com;
(720) 400-6579
Deadline is every Wed. before Divine Liturgy.

Homily in Preparation for the Celebration of Christmas

By St. John Chrysostom

A feast is approaching which is the most solemn and awe-inspiring of all feasts. If one were to call it the metropolis of all feasts, one wouldn't be wrong. What is it? The birth of Christ according to the flesh.

In this feast the Epiphany, holy Pascha, the Ascension and Pentecost have their beginning and their purpose. For if Christ hadn't been born according to the flesh, he wouldn't have been baptized, which is Epiphany. He wouldn't have been crucified, which is Pascha. He wouldn't have sent the Spirit, which is Pentecost. So from this event, as from some spring, different rivers flow - these feasts of ours are born. But not only on this account would it be right to give precedence to this day, but also because what happened on it is much more awe-inspiring than all other days. I say this because the fact that Christ died after becoming human was the consequence of that: even if he didn't commit sin, still he assumed a mortal body. And that too was an amazing fact: that, although God, he was willing to become human and to condescend to take so much on himself that not even the imagination can embrace. It's this that is most awe-inspiring, and completely perplexing. Even Paul said in amazement: "Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our piety" (1 Tim. 3:16). How great? "God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16). And again he says elsewhere: "For surely it's not with angels that God is concerned, but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect" (Heb. 2:16-17).

On this account especially I embrace and love this day, and put my ardent love on show to make you share in my affection for it. On this account I beg and entreat all of you to be present with much zeal and enthusiasm, each having vacated your own house, so that we may see our Master lying in the manger, dressed in swaddling-clothes - that awe-inspiring and miraculous sight. What kind of defense could we have, what kind of excuse, when he came down from heaven for our sake while we can't even leave the house to go to him? Or when the Magi, who were barbarians and foreigners, hurried from Persia to see him lying in the manger? But you, a Christian, can't be bothered to travel even a short distance in order to enjoy this blessed sight? For if we're present in faith we'll certainly see him lying in the manger: this table fulfills the role of the manger.

Indeed, here lies the body of the Lord, not wrapped in swaddling-clothes as formerly, but attired completely with the Holy Spirit. Those who are initiated know what I'm saying. The Magi merely worshiped him, whereas you, if you approach to communicate with a clear conscience, we permit to consume him and go back home. Approach, then, bringing gifts - not gifts like the Magi brought but ones that are much more solemn. They brought gold; you must bring temperance and virtue. They brought incense; you must bring pure prayers which are spiritual incense. They brought myrrh; you must bring humility and a humble heart and love. If you approach with these gifts, with great confidence you'll enjoy this holy table. For my part, I'm saying this now because I know quite well that on that day many of you will come forward and fall on this spiritual sacrifice. So that we don't do this to the detriment or condemnation of our soul but for our salvation, I'm calling you to witness beforehand, and I'm begging you to approach the holy mysteries after you've cleansed yourselves in every respect.

Please don't let anybody say to me: "I'm full of shame, I have a conscience crammed with sins, I'm carrying a very heavy burden." If you're sober, and pray and keep vigil, the appointed period of five days is sufficient to trim away your many sins. Don't look at how short the time is, but consider the point that the Master is loving. The Ninevites were able to beat off God's considerable anger in three days, and the time-constraint was no hindrance, but their readiness of spirit captured the Master's generosity and was able to effect everything (cf. Jon. 3). The prostitute, too, coming to Christ in a brief critical moment washed away all her offenses (cf. Lk. 7). When the Jews made the accusation that Christ had admitted her and had given her so much confidence, he silenced them, and freed her from all evils, and, having approved her enthusiasm, he sent her away. What's the message? That she came with an ardent mind and a burning soul and a fervent faith, and she touched those holy and sacred feet, when she had let down her hair, let tears flood from her eyes, and poured out the perfume.

The objects by which she bewitched people, she used to prepare the drugs of repentance. The objects by which she excited the gaze of the licentious, she used to wipe Christ's feet. The locks of hair by which she tripped up many people so they fell into sin, she used to wipe Christ's feet. The perfume by which she enticed, she used to anoint his feet. And you too therefore must placate God in turn by using the objects by which you provoked him. Did you provoke him by stealing money? Win him over by giving away what you stole to those who've been unjustly treated, and give other things in addition; say in the words of Zacchaeus: "I give back four times everything I've stolen" (cf. Lk. 19:8). Have you provoked him with your tongue and your abuse, by insulting many people? Propitiate him in turn with your tongue, by sending up pure prayers, by blessing those who abuse you, by praising those who speak badly of you, by thanking those who wrong you.

Homily in Preparation for the Celebration of Christmas

These actions don't require days or the passing of many years, but only right purpose, and they can be accomplished in one day. Keep aloof from wickedness, embrace virtue, desist from evil; promise to commit these sins no longer, and this will be sufficient for your defense. I testify and guarantee that, if each of us that has sinned keeps aloof from their former evil ways and promises God truthfully that they won't touch them any more, God will require nothing else for a substantial defense. I say this because he is generous and merciful, and just as a woman in labor longs to give birth, so he too longs to dispense his mercy - it's our sins that interfere with this.

Let's pull down the wall, then, and right from that time begin the feast, renouncing all activities for these five days. "Farewell to the law courts, farewell to the council chambers - a plague on daily business, with its contracts and transactions. I want to save my soul." "What does it profit a person if they gain the whole world and lose their own soul?" (Matt. 16:26). The Magi came away from Persia; you must come away from daily business and travel towards Jesus. The distance isn't great, if we're willing. The point is that you don't have to cross the sea, or traverse mountain peaks, but if you sit at home, exhibiting piety and much compunction, you can see the wall being completely broken down, you can remove the obstacle, you can cut the length of the journey. "For I am a God at hand," it says, "and not a God far off" (Jer. 23:23), and "The Lord is near to all who call on him in truth" (Ps. 145:18).

And just as here on earth you will welcome God with great honor, so too will he receive you in heaven with great glory, as he pays you back ten-thousandfold for your obedience. May all of us attain this through the grace and love for mankind of our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom to the Father, together with the Holy Spirit, be glory, honor, power and worship, for ever and ever. Amen.

Events & Announcements

Church Cleaning

Please help with the cleaning of the church today. We are preparing our church for the upcoming Nativity Services. Please see Presbytera Kedrann after services.

Christmas Eve, December 24 is Strict Fast Day

December 24 is a strict fast day. Those who are preparing to receive Holy Communion are to fast from the noonday meal or sooner from all food and drink (11 am for lunch and should eat a very light Lenten meal). There will be no fasting from December 25th until January 4th.

Cookie Basket Fundraiser

If you pre-ordered a cookie basket, please pick them up in the hall today. If you forgot to order a basket, we have a few baskets available along with several boxes of cookies ranging from \$10-\$20. Come in the hall after liturgy and take a look!

Ushers for 2019

We are looking for volunteers to serve as church ushers in 2019. If you were on the schedule last year, then we will automatically include you in the rotation for 2019. Please let us know if you would like to be removed from the list. Also, if you were not on the schedule last year, and would like to participate this year, please contact Jim Zissimos.

Stewardship 2019 Packets

The Parish Council members will be distributing the 2019 Stewardship Packets after service today in the Narthex. Included in the packets are the 2019 Church Calendar. Before completing the Commitment Card and Information Form, please give prayerful consideration to the commitment you are making. A check mailed to the church is most meaningful when accompanied by your presence, by your willingness to serve, by your prayers, and by your commitment. Giving is not a substitute for commitment - it is an expression of your commitment and as expression of thanks for the many blessings in your life.

Stewardship Social 2019 - Saturday, January 12, 7 pm

Our first Stewardship Social will take place at the home of George and Nicole Tsiovaras. If you live in the Broomfield / Thornton area, please join us for an evening of fellowship. This will be a great time to get to know your church neighbors.

GOYA Fellowship - Friday, December 28, 11 am

Join us for skating and lunch. Contact Fr. Jordan for more information.

OCF Lunch - Thursday, January 3, 12:30 pm

Attention all college students on break, come join us! Contact Fr. Jordan for more information.

Orthodox Spirituality: Spiritual Awakening - Wednesday, January 16, 7 pm

Please join Father Jordan as we read the book by St Paisios, "Spiritual Awakening." If you are interested in joining this class, please contact Father Jordan (we will be ordering the books this week).

Senior Lunch Bunch - January 15, 11:30 am - 2:00 pm

Introducing a new ministry for the "young at heart" of our parish that includes social, cultural and religious activities. You are such an integral part of our community and we want to set aside one day a month to honor you. The group will be meeting monthly, generally the second or third Tuesday of each month. We will be providing lunch as well as a spiritual talk from Fr. Jordan and a variety of activities; such as musicians, guest speakers, etc. Our first official get together will be in the home of Dena and Dean Tinsley 1825 Chilton Pl. Broomfield, on Tuesday, January 15 from 11:30 am - 2:00 pm. Please R.S.V.P. to Dena Tinsley (724)705-3225. **Also, please contact us if you would be interested in volunteering.** Also, if you need help with arranging transportation, please call Dena or Fr. Jordan.