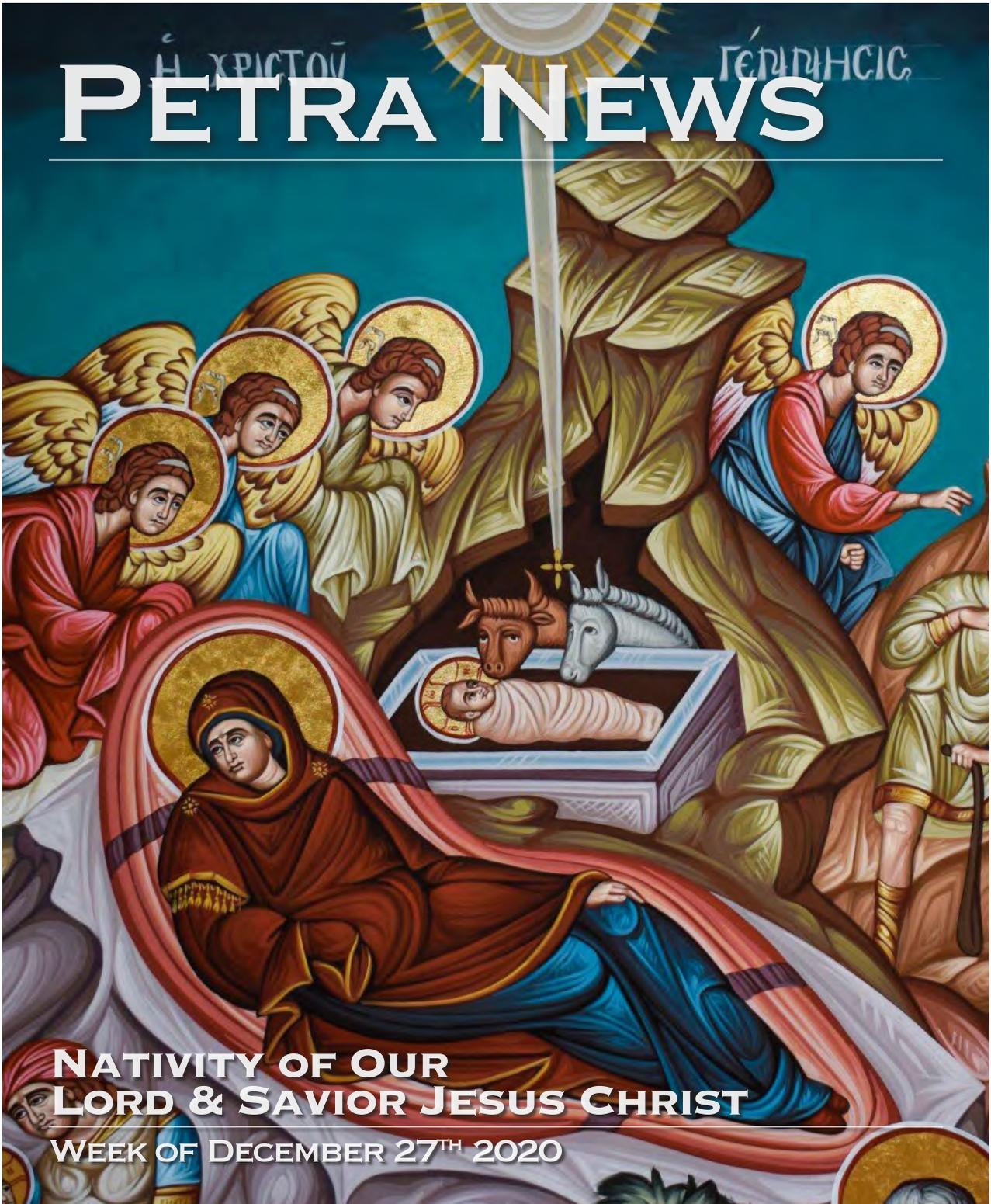


PETRA NEWS



**NATIVITY OF OUR
LORD & SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

WEEK OF DECEMBER 27TH 2020

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27TH 2020

STS PETER & PAUL WEEKLY SERVICES

THURSDAY, NEW YEARS EVE, DEC 31

Great Vespers _____ 5pm

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1, 2021

Feast of St Basil

Matins Orthros _____ 8:30am

Divine Liturgy _____ 9:30am

SATURDAY, JANUARY 2

Great Vespers _____ 5pm

**FAST FREE
DECEMBER 25 - JANUARY 4**

WELCOME...

Father Stephan Close and Presbytera Violet

Father Stephan serves the St Luke
Antiochian Church located in Erie.

Happy Name Day to Father Stephan! God
grant you many years!

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Today's memorial is offered for
Christina Tsiouvaras, mother of
George Tsiouvaras (40 day memorial)
and Stephen (father of Illeana Barbu)

Christ is Born!
Let us Glorify Him!

SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY

HYMN FOR THE NATIVITY

"Your birth, O Christ our God, did shine upon the world and through the light of wisdom illumined the universe. And to those who held the stars in worship did through a star learn to worship You, the Sun of righteousness, and came to know You the light from on high. Glory to You, O Lord."

"I genesis Su Christe O Theos imon anetili to kosmo to fos to tis gnoseos en afti garitis astris latrevontes ipo asteros ethithaskonto Se proskinin ton ilion tis thikeosinis ke Se ginostin ex I psus anatolin Kirie thoxa Si."

SPECIAL NATIVITY ANTIPHON HYMN

"Save us, O Son of God, who were born of a Virgin. We sing to You, Alleluia."

RESURRECTIONAL HYMN (4TH TONE)

"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 to the world His great mercy."

HYMN FOR THE ANCESTORS OF GOD

"Annunciate the miracles to David the ancestor of God, O Joseph. You saw the Virgin pregnant. You glorified with the shepherds. You worshipped with the Magi. And you were warned by an Angel. Entreat Christ God to save our souls."

HYMN FOR ST. STEPHEN FIRST MARTYR

"O Stephen, a crown of royalty was laid on your head for contests you courageously endured for Christ our God, as first among Martyr saints. You stood in accusation of the raging Judeans; and you saw your Savior at the right hand of the Father. We pray that you will ever entreat Him to save our souls."

KONTAKION

*"On this day the Virgin gives * birth to the Super-essential. * To the Unapproachable, * earth is providing the grotto. * Angels sing and with the shepherds offer up glory, * Following a star the Magi are still proceeding. * He was born for our salvation, a newborn Child, the pre-eternal God."*

SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY

EPISTLE: ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 6:8-15; 7:1-5, 47-60

In those days, Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Then they secretly instigated men, who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

And the high priest said, "Is this so?" And Stephen said: "Brethren and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, 'Depart from your land and from your kindred and go into the land which I will show you.' Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans, and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living; yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him in possession and to his posterity after him, though he had

no child.

"But it was Solomon who built a house for him. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says, 'Heaven is my throne, and earth my footstool. What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hand make all these things?'

"You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."

Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth against him. But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him. Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

ST STEPHEN THE FIRST MARTYR

On December 27 we remember St. Stephen the Archdeacon and First Martyr of the Church. The name Stephen (stephanos in Greek) means 'crown.' A man full of grace and fired by the power of the Holy Spirit, St. Stephen was indeed the crown of Christ's saints, the first to suffer martyrdom because of his confession of faith in Christ. His story is told in the Book of Acts 6-7, and is a remarkable account of a man who reflected the glorious radiance, fearless courage and humble love of Christ - and who suffered innocently.



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 1:1-25

The book of the Genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Aram, and Aram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David the king.

And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa, and Asa the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.

And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar,

and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took his wife, but knew her not until she had borne a son; and he called his name Jesus.

THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

By St Athanasius the Great

Our own transgression became the reason for His descent to earth ... so that the Lord came to us and appeared among men ... For our own salvation, He showed such love for mankind that He became a man and appeared in a human body.

When an image of a person painted on wood begins to fade and disappears completely because of the various substances that fall on it, it becomes necessary to depict it anew on the same wood; during the restoration, the original wood is not thrown away but is used again and the new image is painted on it. In the same way the All-Holy Son of the Father came to our dwelling place in order

to make new again him whom He had created according to His own image but was lost. He came to find him by forgiving his sins as He says in the Gospel: "I came to find and save the lost one."

CHRIST IS BORN! LET US GLORIFY HIM!

CHRIST THE SAVIOR

By Father Theodore Stylianopoulos

During the early Christian centuries the Nativity of Jesus Christ and Theophany/Epiphany were celebrated together. The liturgical tradition concentrated on Theophany which marks the baptism of Jesus and the beginning of His adult ministry as the initial great event revealing Jesus' significance to humanity. During the 4th century the Church of Alexandria observed both Christmas and Theophany on January 6th. In due time Christmas began to be celebrated separately - first in Rome (354), then Cappadocia (380), Antioch (386), Constantinople (400) and gradually everywhere - on December 25th. By choosing this date the Church wished to christianize the 'Feast of the Invincible Sun,' a popular observance marking the shift in the sun's cycles in late December when the days again become longer. For the Church Fathers Christ was the only invincible Sun of Righteousness Who by His birth illuminated the world and inaugurated the dawn of a new age.

In the liturgical year it is still natural to observe the period from Christmas to Theophany as a continuous celebration of Christ's coming to the world. On Christmas we celebrate the incarnation of Christ while on Theophany we remember His public appearance as the Son of God. To think of the period between these two holidays as having the same significance, that is, Christ's coming to the world, may help us to appreciate more deeply the meaning of Christ's coming to our own lives.

What is the meaning of Christmas? The heart of Christmas is Christ Himself. Only Christ can give us a true Christmas. Christmas is not merely a promise but already a fulfillment because Christ, God's priceless gift to us, is already given! We have the assurance that Christ lives and embraces us with His love here and now. All we need to do is receive

His gift by faith, and open heart and obedience under the Lordship of Christ. Without accepting the call of Christ, without receiving the loving forgiveness of the One Who was crucified for us, Christmas remains an unfulfilled dream. Only as the Risen Christ is born in our hearts, as we die to our old ways and become new by His grace, can we truly experience the magnitude of the meaning of Christmas, the joyful festival of God's personal presence in our midst.

On Christmas we celebrate the birth of the Son of God Who came to invite us to be His friends and to make us all sons and daughters of the living God. By virtue of His divine Sonship, Christ has the power to confer upon us adoption - spiritual sonship. To whomever receives Him and believes in Him, Christ gives the right to become God's child. We become God's children not by natural means, for God Himself is our Father (John 1:12-13).

All people are precious to God as His beloved creatures but only those are adopted sons and daughters who believe in Christ and have received the Holy Spirit. "Those who are led by God's Spirit are God's sons and God's daughters ... the Spirit makes you God's children, and by the Spirit's power we cry out to God 'Father! My Father!' God's Spirit joins Himself to our spirits to declare that we are God's children" (Romans 8:14-16).

The highest honor that one can be granted on this earth is adoption through Christ in whom we are baptized and clothed. During the Christmas liturgy we sing "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Through this privilege Christians have Christ both as their Lord and well as their brother and friend. So "we will also possess with Christ what God has kept for him; for if we share Christ's suffering, we will also share His glory" (Romans 8:17).

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This year has been a year of challenges: to our health, to our wallets, to our sense of safety. But as we reflect back, there are also many reasons to be grateful, such as a small, but very dedicated team of people who stream the services for us, chanters who fill the church with their beautiful voices during every service, and a priest who tirelessly visits the homebound and high-risk members of our parish.

We are also immensely grateful to those who generously contributed to our parish this year to keep the doors open, to help fund the new HVAC system, to cover the income lost by not hosting the festival, and other unplanned expenses that came up through the year. Those efforts made a significant difference; thank you all.

As always at the end of the year, we find ourselves falling a bit short of the income needed to meet our budgeted expenses.

As we approach the Nativity of our Lord, please prayerfully consider making an additional gift to Sts. Peter and Paul to help us meet our expenses for 2020.

May the Lord richly bless you all as we prepare for his Nativity,
George and Nicole Tsiouvaras, Stewardship Chairs

COVID-19 GUIDELINES UPDATE 12/27/2020

The revised Colorado Safer-at-Home guidelines set forth by the Governor of Colorado allow Sts Peter Paul to 45 people in Church during the services.

PLEASE NOTE THAT MASKS ARE REQUIRED AND TO BE PROPERLY WORN AT ALL SERVICES INCLUDING ALL WEEKDAY SERVICES.

Please be considerate and **sign up for only one of the weekend services** (Divine Liturgy). Please allow others to sign up if you have already attended, especially if it was the prior Sunday. If at the end of the week (Saturday evening), the list is not filled, then please sign up. If you did not sign up or prefer not to attend on Sunday, please contact Father Jordan (frjordanbrown@gmail.com or 720-329-5212. Arrangements can be made to receive Holy Communion during the week.

The weekly schedule of services are as follows:

- Friday, January 1
Divine Liturgy 9:30am
- Sunday, January 2
Divine Liturgy, 9:30am (sign up required)

The fellowship Hall will remain closed on Sundays. The Welcome committee and members of the Parish Council will offer coffee & pastry 'To Go' at the end of service. Due to recent restrictions, in person Sunday School, Classes and Bible Studies are discontinued until further notice. The Wednesday Bible Study is available via 'zoom.' Father Jordan will offer a youth discussion via 'zoom' beginning December 5th (details TBA).

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

VASILOPITA BLESSING

The traditional Vasilopita Bread (sweet bread) in celebration of the philanthropic works of St Basil will be blessed on January 1st, Feast of St Basil, and Sunday, January 3rd. You are welcome to bring a Vasilopita Bread to be blessed on either day. Please contact Father Jordan if you are able to prepare a Vasilopita for the church.

BLESSING OF HOMES 2021

Father Jordan will begin blessing homes on the Feast of Epiphany, January 6th. Father will be blessing all the homes of our parish. The house blessing schedule will be going out next week. House blessings will be a little different for 2021. Father Jordan will be blessing only the entrance of the home. If you are new to our parish or have any questions for Father, please contact him.

ADULT EDUCATION

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Classes will resume on January 13th

ORTHODOX FAITH SERIES

If you are interested in learning about the Orthodox Faith, please contact Father Jordan at frjordanbrown@gmail.com or 303-581-1434. The Orthodox Christian Faith Classes will begin in January 2021.



BOOKSTORE

We are here for you! Philoptochos would be happy to help you with your bookstore Christmas purchase on Sunday's after Liturgy. Please see Lis Troicky or Julie Powers.



YOUTH MINISTRY

FIRESIDE CHAT (MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL ONLY) SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

Sts Peter Paul will begin a Fireside Chat for our teens (middle and high school age only) beginning Saturday, January 9th. We will meet for evening prayer, Vespers at 5 pm, and gather for dinner and discussion in the parish hall (5:45 pm / 6 pm). We will gather in a safe distance manner. If you have any questions, please contact Father Jordan.

HOME VISITATIONS

Father Jordan is available to make home visitations for our elderly, shut ins, and all those with 'high risk' health challenges. Please do not hesitate to contact Father Jordan to schedule a visit. Parishioners with 'high risk' health challenges are welcome to visit the church during the week to schedule a time to pray and receive the Holy Sacraments.



WE CAN'T HELP WITHOUT YOU!

There is a box outside the church building to drop off your donation. If you would like us to shop for you, we will be taking donations. You can contact Ashley Dzilvelis at ashleydz1@hotmail.com or send money via Venmo to @AshDz. You can also mail a check to Julie Powers, please contact her for her address (powerjulie@gmail.com), and put "Our Center" in the memo line.



GROCERY GIFT CARDS

Remember to purchase your grocery gift cards and old Chicago pizza Palz from Julie Powers on Sunday or contact her directly at powerjulie@gmail.com



SAINTS PETER & PAUL GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

5640 Jay Road, Boulder, CO 80301
303.581.1434 • stspeterandpaulboulder.org

ABOUT OUR PARISH

We welcome visitors worshipping with us today. Our diverse church family encompasses many converts to the Orthodox Christian Faith, as well as Greek, Arab, Romanian, Serbian and Russian Orthodox Christians. 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 introduce yourself to our priest and members of our community. We also encourage you to join us for our fellowship after services in the parish hall and visit our bookstore. If you are interested in learning more about the Orthodox Christian faith, please visit with our priest, Fr. Jordan Brown.

HOLY COMMUNION IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

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. Both Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike are invited to receive the 'antidoro' (blessed bread) at the end of the Divine Liturgy.



PRIEST

Reverend Father Jordan Brown

PARISH COUNCIL

President - Erica Gerakos
Vice President - Nicholas Kallan
Treasurer - Brian Gregory
Secretary - Phillip Haratsaris

PHILOTOCHOS

Presidents - Dana Gall and Sharon Dzilvelis
Treasurer - Julie Powers

YOUTH / GOYA

Fr. Jordan Brown

CHOIR DIRECTOR

Presbytera Marika Brown

RECURRING SERVICES

Orthros - Sundays, 8:15am
Divine Liturgy - Sundays, 9:30am
Great Vespers - Saturdays, 5pm
Confession by appointment.