

# PETRA NEWS



**SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS**

WEEK OF MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup> 2021

# SUNDAY, MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup> 2021

## WELCOME FATHER LOU CHRISTOPULOS

Father Lou serves as the Chancellor for the Metropolis of Denver.

### STS PETER & PAUL WEEKLY SERVICES

#### MONDAY, MARCH 29

Great Compline \_\_\_\_\_ 6pm

#### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31

Presanctified Liturgy \_\_\_\_\_ 5:30pm

#### FRIDAY, APRIL 2

Presanctified Liturgy \_\_\_\_\_ 9am

Salutations / Hairitismi \_\_\_\_\_ 6pm

#### SATURDAY, APRIL 3

Great Vespers, \_\_\_\_\_ 5pm

## LITURGY OF SAINT BASIL

We celebrate the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil on the Sundays during Great Lent. The supplemental prayers are available in the Church Narthex for you to prayerfully participate with the clergy and chanters.

### PRAYER FOR THE CATECHUMENS

“Lord our God, Who dwells on high and watches over the humble, You sent forth Your only-begotten Son and God, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the salvation of the human race. Look down upon Your servants, the catechumens, who have inclined their necks to You, and grant them at a proper time the baptism of rebirth, the remission of sins, and the garment of incorruption. Unite them to Your holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, and number them among Your chosen flock.”

*Baily, Chad, Natasha, Yehor, Kate*

## HYMNS FOR THE SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

### RESURRECTIONAL HYMN (1ST TONE)

*“The stone that had been sealed before Your tomb by the Jews and the soldiers guarding did watch over Your pure and sacred body O Savior the third day You arose, and unto to all the world did You give life where by all the heavenly powers did proclaim that You are the giver of life.*

*Glory unto our resurrected Christ.*

*Glory unto Your Kingdom.*

*Glory to Your dispensation O You alone who loves all.”*

### HYMN FOR SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS

*“Beacon of Orthodox belief, the strong support of the Church and her teacher inspired by God, you are the ornament of monks, the unassailable champion of theologians, O Gregory the Wonder-worker and the boast of Thessalonica, the messenger of grace. Forever earnestly entreat for the salvation of our souls.”*

### HYMN FOR STS PETER 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 FOR GREAT LENT

*“O Champion General, I your City now inscribe to you  
\* triumphant anthems as the tokens of my gratitude,  
\* being rescued from the terrors, O Theotokos.  
\* Inasmuch as you have power unassailable,  
\* from all kinds of perils free me so that unto you  
\* I may cry aloud: Rejoice, unwedded Bride.”*

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

*Orthros Gospel: John 20:19-31*

*Epistle: Hebrews 11:10-14; 2:1-3*

*Gospel: Mark 2:1-12*

# SUNDAY OF ST. GREGORY PALAMAS

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## NINTH ORTHROS GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN 20:19-31

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On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in

his side, I will not believe."

Eight days later, his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name.

## EPISTLE: ST. PAUL'S LETTER TO THE HEBREWS 1:10-14; 2:1-3

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"IN THE BEGINNING, Thou, Lord, didst found the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they will perish, but thou remainest; they will all grow old like a garment, like a mantle thou wilt roll them up, and they will be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years will never end." But to what angel has he ever said, "Sit at my right hand, till I make thy enemies a stool for thy feet?" Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth

to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?

Therefore we must pay closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. For if the message declared by angels was valid and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him.

## THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK 2:1-12

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At that time, Jesus entered Capernaum and it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no longer room for them, not even about the door; and he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him; and when they had made an opening, they let down the pallet on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there, questioning in their hearts, "Why does this man speak thus? It is a blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" And

immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, "Why do you question thus in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, take up your pallet and walk? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins'-he said to the paralytic-"I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home." And he rose, and immediately took up the pallet and went out before them all; so that they were all amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"

## SUNDAY OF SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS

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On the Second Sunday of Lent the Orthodox Church commemorates our Holy Father Gregory Palamas, Archbishop of Thessalonica, the Wonderworker. The feast day of Saint Gregory Palamas is November 14, however, he is commemorated on this Sunday as the condemnation of his enemies and the vindication of his teachings by the Church in the 14th century was acclaimed as a second triumph of Orthodoxy.

Our holy Father Gregory was born in Constantinople in 1296 of aristocratic parents who had emigrated from Asia Minor in the face of the Turkish invasion, and were attached to the court of the pious Emperor Andronicus II Palaeologus (1282-1328). Despite his official duties, Gregory's father led a life of fervent prayer. Sometimes as he sat in the Senate, he would be so deep in prayer as to be unaware of the Emperor addressing him. While Gregory was still young, his father died after being clothed in the monastic habit; and his mother for her part wanted to take the veil, but delayed doing so in order to take care of the education of her seven children. Gregory, the eldest, was instructed by the most highly reputed masters of secular learning and, after some years, was so proficient in philosophical reasoning that, on listening to him, his master could believe he was hearing Aristotle himself. Notwithstanding these intellectual successes, the young man's real interest lay only with the things of God. He associated with monks of renown in the city and found a spiritual father in Theoleptus of Philadelphia, who instructed him in the way of holy sobriety and of prayer of the heart.

About the year 1316, Gregory decided to abandon the vanities of the world. His mother, two sisters, two brothers and a great many of his servants entered upon the monastic life with him. He and his two brothers went on foot to the holy Mountain of Athos, where they settled near the Monastery of Vatopedi under the direction of the Elder Nicodemus, who came from Mount Auxentius. Gregory made rapid progress in the holy activity of prayer, for he had put into practice since childhood the fundamental virtues of obedience, humility, meekness, fasting, vigil and the different kinds of renunciation that make the body subject to the spirit. Night and day he besought God ceaselessly with tears saying, "Lighten my

darkness!" After some time, the Mother of God, in whom he had put his trust since his youth, sent Saint John the Theologian to him with the promise of her protection in this life and in the next.

After only three years, the early death of his brother Theodosius, followed by that of the Elder Nicodemus, led Gregory and his second brother, Macarius, to attach themselves to the Monastery of the Great Lavra. Gregory was appointed chanter. His conduct in the cenobitic life was beyond reproach, and the brethren admired his zeal for putting into practice all the holy evangelical virtues. He lived with such abstinence as to appear unburdened by the flesh to the extent of being able to go three months without sleep. At the end of three years of common life, his soul thirsting for the sweet waters of the wilderness, he retired to the hermitage of Glossia, under the direction of an eminent monk called Gregory of Byzantium. With the passions purified, he was now able to rise up in prayer to the contemplation of the mysteries of the Creation. Solitude and inner stillness enabled him to keep his intellect fixed at all times in the depths of his heart, where he called on the Lord Jesus with compunction, so that he became all prayer, and sweet tears flowed continually from his eyes as from two fountains.

The incessant raids of Turkish pirates soon obliged Gregory and his companions to leave their hermitage. Together with twelve monks, he wanted to make the pilgrimage to the Holy Places and to seek refuge at Mount Sinai; but this did not prove feasible. Instead, he spent some time in Thessalonica, where he joined the group around the future Patriarch Isidore, who was endeavoring to spread the practice of the Jesus prayer among the faithful so that they might profit from the experience of the monks. In 1326, Gregory was ordained a priest, having understood in a vision that this was indeed the will of God. He then departed to found a hermitage in the area of Beroea, where he practiced an even stricter asceticism than before. For five days of the week he remained alone, fasting, keeping vigil and praying with abundant tears. He only appeared on Saturdays and Sundays to serve the Divine Liturgy, share a fraternal meal, and converse on some spiritual subject with his companions in the ascetic life. He continued thus to rise up in contemplation and to

enter into closer union with God in his heart.

When his mother died, he went to Constantinople to fetch his sisters, whom he settled in a hermitage near his own. But as Serbian raids in the region became more and more frequent, he decided to go back to Mount Athos. He settled a little above the Lavra in the hermitage of Saint Savas, where he lived in greater seclusion than before, and could converse alone with God. He went to the monastery only infrequently and would receive his rare visitors on Sundays and feast days. Going on from that contemplation which is still outward, Gregory then attained to the vision of God in the light of the Holy Spirit and to the deification promised by Christ to His perfect disciples.

One day in a dream, he saw that he was full of a milk from heaven which, as it overflowed, changed into wine and filled the surrounding air with a wonderful scent. This was a sign to him that the moment had come to teach his brethren the mysteries that God revealed to him. He wrote several ascetic treatises at this time, and, in 1335, was appointed Abbot of the Monastery of Esphigmenou. But the two hundred monks who lived there understood neither his zeal nor his spiritual expectations so, after a year, he returned to his hermitage.

At that time, Barlaam, a monk from Calabria, won a great name for himself as a speculative thinker in Constantinople. He was particularly fond of expounding the mystical writings of Saint Dionysius the Areopagite, which he interpreted in an entirely philosophical way, making knowledge of God the object of cold reason and not of experience. When this refined humanist learned of the methods of prayer of some simple monks of his acquaintance, who allowed a place to the sensory element in spiritual life, he was scandalized. He took occasion to calumniate them and to accuse them of heresy. The hesychast monks appealed to Gregory who then wrote several polemical treatises in which he answered the accusations of Barlaam by locating monastic spirituality in a dogmatic synthesis.

He showed that ascesis and prayer are the outcome of the whole mystery of Redemption, and are the way for each person to make the grace given at Baptism blossom within himself. He also defended the authenticity of the methods which the Hesychasts used to fix the intellect in

the heart; for since the Incarnation we have to seek the grace of the Holy Spirit in our bodies, which are sanctified by the Sacraments and grafted by the Eucharist into the Body of Christ. This uncreated grace is the very glory of God which, as it sprang forth from the body of Christ on the day of the Transfiguration, overwhelmed the disciples (Matthew 17). Shining now in the heart purified from the passions, it truly unites us to God, illumines us, deifies us and gives us a pledge of that same glory which will shine on the bodies of the Saints after the general Resurrection. In thus affirming the full reality of deification, Gregory was far from denying the absolute transcendence and unknowableness of God in His essence. Following the ancient Fathers, but in a more precise manner, he made a distinction between God's imparticipable essence and the eternal, creative and providential energies by which the Lord enables created beings to participate in His being, His life and His light without, however, introducing any division into the unity of the divine Nature. God is not a philosophical concept for Saint Gregory: He is Love, He is Living Person and consuming fire, as Scripture teaches (Deuteronomy 4:24), Who does everything to make us godlike.

Saint Gregory's brilliant answer to Barlaam was first accepted by the authorities of Mount Athos in the Hagiorite Tome and then adopted by the Church, which condemned Barlaam (and with him the philosophical humanism that would soon inspire the European Renaissance), during the course of two Councils at the Church of Saint Sophia in 1341.

Barlaam's condemnation and his departure for Italy did not bring the controversy to an end. No sooner had Gregory returned to his Athonite hermitage from Thessalonica where he had been writing his treatises in seclusion than Akindynos, an old friend of his, restated the substance of Barlaam's arguments and condemned Gregory's distinction between essence and energies as an innovation. Akindynos, who at first aspired to be an umpire between Barlaam and Gregory, was the kind of rigid conservative who does no more than repeat set phrases without seeking to enter into the spirit of the tradition. At the same time, a dreadful civil war broke out as a result of the rivalry between the Duke Alexis Apokaukos and Saint Gregory's friend, John Cantacuzenus (1341-

*Continued on page 5.*

47). The Patriarch, John Calecas, sided with Apokaukos and encouraged Akindynos to bring a charge of heresy against Gregory, which led to the excommunication and imprisonment of the Saint.

During the four years of Gregory's confinement, there was no slackening of his activity. He carried on a huge correspondence, and wrote an important work against Akindynos. When John Cantacuzenus gained the upper hand in 1346, the Regent, Ann of Savoy, came to the defense of the Saint and deposed the Patriarch on the eve of Cantacuzenus' triumphal entry into the City. He nominated Isidore as Patriarch (1347-50), and summoned a new Council to vindicate the Hesychasts. The controversy was not finally resolved until 1351, at a third Council which condemned the humanist Nicephorus Gregoras. In the Synodal Tome the doctrine of Saint Gregory on the uncreated energies and on the nature of grace was recognized as the rule of faith of the Orthodox Church.

Among Isidore's new episcopal appointments, Gregory was named Archbishop of Thessalonica in 1347; but he was unable to take possession of his see as the city was in the hands of the Zealots, the party opposed to Cantacuzenus. After finding shelter for a while in Lemnos, where he showed heroic devotion during an epidemic, Gregory

was eventually able to enter the city acclaimed as if Christ Himself were coming in triumph, with the chanting of Paschal hymns.

During a voyage to Constantinople, he fell into the hands of some Turks, who held him for a year in Asia Minor (1354-55), but allowed him a measure of freedom. This, and his openness of spirit, enabled him to engage in amicable theological discussions with the Muslim doctors of religion and with the son of the Emir Orkhan. When he was set free, thanks to a ransom from Serbia, he returned to Thessalonica to take up his activity again as pastor and wonderworker. He suffered a long illness and, some time before his death, Saint John Chrysostom appeared to him with the invitation to join the choir of holy hierarchs immediately after his own feast. And, indeed, on November 14, 1359 the Saint gave up his soul to God. When he died, his countenance was radiant with a light like to that which shone on Saint Stephen (Acts 6:15). In this way God showed, through the person of his servant, the truth of his doctrine on the reality of deification by the uncreated light of the Holy Spirit. The veneration of Saint Gregory was approved by the Church in 1368. The Saint works many miracles even to the present day and, after Saint Demetrios, is regarded as the Protector of Thessalonica.

## COVID-19 GUIDELINES UPDATE 3/28/2021

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:  
MASK IS REQUIRED AND TO BE PROPERLY  
WORN AT ALL SERVICES,  
INCLUDING ALL WEEKDAY SERVICES.**

**Please be considerate and sign up for only one of the Divine Liturgies offered. This week the Presanctified will be offered Wednesday Evening, March 31, 5:30pm, Friday morning, April 2, 9am, and Sunday, April 4, 9:30am.**

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.

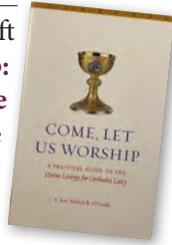
**Our hope and prayer is to reopen the Parish Hall on Sundays. God willing the doors of the hall will open during Great Lent. We are in the process of creating the proper procedures to ensure the health and safety of our parish family. Please be patient with us.**

**The Welcome committee and members of the Parish Council will offer coffee & pastry 'To Go' at the end of service of today.**

# NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## PARISH BOOK READING

Please pick up your parish book gift for lent, **Come, Let us Worship: A Practical Guide to the Divine Liturgy for Orthodox Laity**. The author, Father Patrick O'Grady, offers a wonderful reflection on the Divine Liturgy. I ask you to join me in reading this book during Great Lent. Couples and families can read together. Lent brings us all together with prayer, fasting and works of charity. The Divine Liturgy is the foundation of our faith, and it is the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist which brings us together as a parish family. I pray this special parish family reading will bring us closer to our Lord and Savior, and reunite us in worship. Please begin reading the Introduction and 1st section, 'What is the Divine Liturgy.' **Your book is available in the Narthex. If you are new to our parish, please take on and join us for this special parish family reading during Lent.**



## ADULT EDUCATION

### ORTHODOX FAITH SERIES

**The Orthodox Christian Faith Class will meet today after the Divine Liturgy.** Class will begin at 12 noon. We will be meeting in the parish hall (upstairs classroom). If you are interesting in learning about the Orthodox Christian Faith and/or becoming an Orthodox Christian, please join us for class. Father Jordan will be leading, and providing the reading material. If you have any questions, please contact Father Jordan at frjordanbrown@gmail.com or 303-581-1434.

### April Schedule:

Saturday, April 10, 4pm; Saturday, April 17, 4pm

**MARCH 28 CLASS TOPIC:  
PRAYER, FASTING AND ALMSGIVING**

## YOUTH MINISTRY SCHEDULE: APRIL SCHEDULE

### SATURDAY OF LAZARUS RETREAT APRIL 24, 9 AM - 12 NOON.

We are planning a special retreat for our youth on the Feast of Lazarus. The Divine Liturgy will begin at 9am. The children will prepare the palm crosses for Palm Sunday. A Lenten Pancake Breakfast will be offered.

### HOLY FRIDAY YOUTH RETREAT FRIDAY, APRIL 30

We are planning a special youth retreat for Holy Friday. The children will help with the decorating of Christ's tomb. The retreat will begin at 11 am, and end with the Taking down of Christ @ 2 pm.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL ON SATURDAY! SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 5PM TO 7PM

### Schedule:

5pm Vespers (Evening Prayers)

5:45pm Dinner

6pm - 7pm Breakout Classes  
(pre-k thru grade school)



Father Jordan will be meeting with the middle & high school young adults in the church, 6pm-7pm

## BIBLE STUDY: LENTEN SERIES

### PLEASE JOIN US FRIDAY, APRIL 2

Friday mornings during Lent: 10:30am-11:30am  
Questions please contact Father Jordan at frjordanbrown@gmail.com

## HOLY WEEK FLOWERS

You may offer a donation for the Holy Week Flowers. There is a special basket on the table with the Lenten Spiritual Articles in the Narthex.





## SAINTS PETER & PAUL

### GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

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5640 Jay Road, Boulder, CO 80301  
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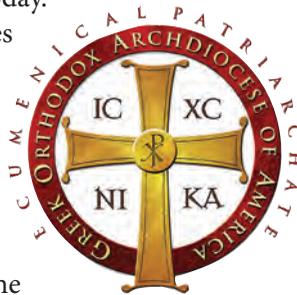
Icon of the Theotokos “Sweet-Kissing”  
by Ileana Barbu

### ABOUT OUR PARISH

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We welcome visitors worshiping 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

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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

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Reverend Father Jordan Brown  
[frjordanbrown@gmail.com](mailto:frjordanbrown@gmail.com)

### PARISH COUNCIL

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Nick Kallan - President  
Steven Dzilvelis - Vice President  
Brian Gregory - Treasurer  
Philip Haratsaris - Secretary  
Michael Bateh  
Oliver Huskey  
Kostas Pagratis  
George Saliba

### PHILOTOCHOS

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Presidents - Dana Gall and Sharon Dzilvelis  
Treasurer - Julie Powers

### YOUTH / GOYA

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Fr. Jordan Brown

### CHOIR DIRECTOR

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Presbytera Marika Brown

### RECURRING SERVICES

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