

Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Second Mode

When You descended unto Death, O Lord, You who are immortal Life put Hades to death, by the lightning of Your divinity. And when You raised the dead from the netherworld, all the hosts of heaven sang aloud to You, “O Christ God, Giver of life, glory to You!”

Apolytikion for Apostles Peter and Paul in the Fourth Mode

Preeminent Apostles and teachers of the universe, intercede with the Master of all, to grant peace to the whole world, and great mercy to our souls.

Apolytikion of the Church in the Fourth Mode

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, after You filled the Disciples with joy, by promising to send them the Holy Spirit, and You blessed them and established their faith, that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world.

Ἀνελήφθης ἐν δόξῃ, Χριστέ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν, χαροποιήσας τοὺς Μαθητάς, τῇ ἐπαγγελίᾳ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος· βεβαιωθέντων αὐτῶν διὰ τῆς εὐλογίας, ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ λυτρωτὴς τοῦ κόσμου.

Apolytikion of St. Katherine (Protectress of our Chapel)

Let us praise and extol the all-lauded Bride of Christ,* the Protectress of Sinai, divine Saint Katherine,* as the one who gives aid and her assistance to us;* for she brilliantly suppressed the impious orators,*with the sword of the Spirit.* And being crowned as a martyr,* she asks that all receive the great mercy.

Seasonal Kontakion in the Second Mode

O Protection of Christians that never falls, intercession with the Creator that never fails, we sinners beg you, do not ignore the voices of our prayers. O good Lady, we implore you, quickly come unto our aid, when we cry out to you with faith. Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who protect now and ever those who honor you.

The reading is from St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians 11:21-33; 12:1-9

Brethren, whatever anyone dares to boast of -- I am speaking as a fool -- I also dare to boast of that. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one -- I am talking like a madman -- with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I have received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I have been beaten with rods; once I was stoned. Three times I have been shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brethren; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to fall, and I am not indignant?

If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, He who is blessed forever, knows that I do not lie. At Damascus, the governor under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped his hands.

I must boast; there is nothing to be gained by it, but I will go on to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows. And I know that this man was caught up into Paradise -- whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows -- and he heard things that cannot be told, which man may not utter. On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses. Though if I wish to boast, I shall not be a fool, for I shall be speaking the truth. But I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

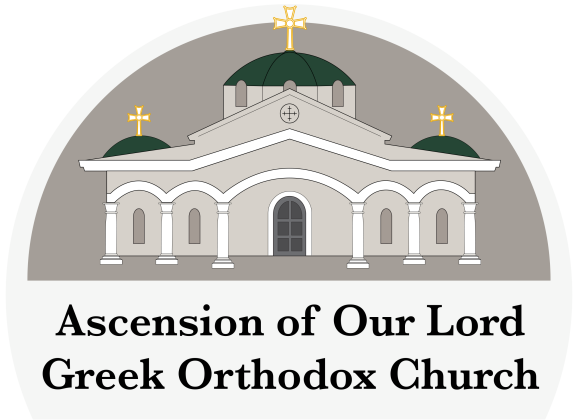


The Gospel of Matthew 16:13-19

At that time, when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

OUT OF RESPECT FOR THE ICON PRINTED ON THE BULLETIN, PLEASE RECYCLE RATHER THAN DISCARD IN THE GARBAGE

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WEEKLY PARISH BULLETIN
June 29 – July 6, 2025

WELCOME TO THE ASCENSION PARISH! Your presence has brought us much joy! We hope your visit is memorable and meaningful in every way. Our doors and hearts are always open to you. Please join us for fellowship following the Divine Liturgy and visit with Fr. Sotiri and with members of the Parish Council. They will answer questions and provide you with information regarding Ascension’s ministries and vibrant parish life.

COMMUNION GUIDELINES: To partake of Holy Communion, one must be a Baptized/Chrismated Orthodox Christian and be in good standing with the church. Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and regular participation in Holy Confession are welcome to receive communion. One should also be present at the Liturgy before the Scripture readings. Please follow the directions of the ushers during Holy Communion, and, also please allow the Sunday Church School staff and students to commune first so they can make their way to class and promptly begin their lessons. Thank you.

Spiritual Reflection

“Chiefs of the Apostles, St. Peter and Paul, went through difficulties in this life that many of us could only imagine in our worst nightmares. In the epistle, St. Paul reflects on how He was beaten with rods, stoned, shipwrecked 3 times, robbed, yelled at by his own countrymen, and often left hungry, thirsty and naked. St. Peter had his own troubles in Rome and was ultimately tortured and crucified upside down...all while doing God’s work in the world! Yet despite all that happened to them, both of these men spent their lives in complete trust in God. They both had complete confidence that God was with them, and their focus was only on the Kingdom which is to come. While we might not all reach the level of St. Peter and Paul, that does not mean that we can’t apply some of their examples to our own lives.”

Fr. Gabriel Bilas, St. Mary Magdalene Orthodox Church, Michigan

Weekly Calendar

<u>Sunday</u> 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	<u>June 29</u> Orthros Divine Liturgy 40-Day Blessing, Daughter of Christina & John Anastopoulos Coffee Fellowship Iconostasis Committee Meeting Great Vespers @ Holy Apostles Church, Westchester	<u>Peter & Paul, the Apostles</u>
<u>Monday</u> 8 a.m. 9 a.m.	<u>June 30</u> Orthros Divine Liturgy	<u>Synaxis of the Holy Apostles</u>
<u>Friday</u>	<u>July 4</u> Office Closed	<u>Independence Day</u>
<u>Sunday</u> 8:15 a.m. 9:30 a.m.	<u>July 6</u> Orthros Divine Liturgy	<u>4th Sunday of Matthew</u>

+ **PASTORAL NEEDS, HOSPITAL CALLS, NURSING/REHAB AND HOME-BOUND PARISHIONERS:** If you have a pastoral need or emergency and would like to speak to Fr. Sotiri, or know of someone who would like to schedule a pastoral visit, please contact Father via the office.

+ **PLEASE CONSIDER HOSTING A SIMPLE COFFEE FELLOWSHIP THIS SUMMER** with your family, or together with another family, so that we may continue our fellowship after Liturgy throughout the summer months. You may sign up via our website, or by calling the church office. Thank you to those parishioners who have signed up!

+ **THE GREEK FEST SEASON IS OFFICIALLY UP AND RUNNING AGAIN!** Support our local Metropolis Churches and celebrate summer Greekstyle! Dates are posted on the Metropolis of Chicago Events Page: <https://chicago.goarch.org/events/>.

+ **WE WISH ALL OF OUR YOUTH ATTENDING FANARI, LIGHTHOUSE AND IONIAN VILLAGE CAMP SESSIONS THIS SUMMER** an uplifting, safe, fun and blessed experience. May God grant you safe travels and spiritually guide you while you are away from home. Please note that John Anton will at Fanari this week.

+ **“WILL YOU BRING TWO?”** Our Project HOPE ministry requests your participation in our current food collection project where we ask parishioners to bring two cans or boxes of food with them to Liturgy on Sunday mornings throughout the summer and place them in the collection bins on the way into church

Condolences

WE EXTEND OUR DEEPEST CONDOLENCES to the family of George Pappas, who fell asleep in the Lord on June 19, 2025. George was the beloved husband of the late Barbara Pappas, who fell asleep in the Lord last July 2024. He was the loving, faithful father of Laina (Michael) Krabbe, Dheanna (Dr. George) Fikaris, and Michele (John) Glavanovits. He was the proud, devoted grandfather of Maria (Quinn), Justin, Michael (Clare), Jeremy, Joshua, Faith and Austin; and, great-grandfather of Gigi, Henry and Molly. His funeral was held at Holy Apostles church this past Tuesday, June 24. May his memory be eternal.

Sunday Volunteers

Prosphoro Bakers: Elaine Stevens & Despina Taranko
Epistle Reader: Kathie Rutkowski
Greeters: Maureen Patouhas, Elaine Stevens
Ushers: UIC: **Tom Kiriakos**, Robert Buhler, Chris Chatzidakis, Alex Gianaras, Frank Kazas, David Rutkowski

Prayer Requests

PLEASE INCLUDE IN YOUR PERSONAL PRAYERS the servants of God: Eleni, George, Anastasia, Stella, Mitchell, Joanne, Panagiotis, Christina, Dee, Helen, Sophia, Connie, Katerini, James, Theresa, Peter, Anna, Alexander, Anthony, Magdalena, Maggie, Panagiotis, Paraschos, Chris, Don, Justin, Ignacio, Finn, Kevin, Theodore, Mary, Madison, Trinity, Evangelos, John, Rick, Robert, Tom, Georgia, Kristi, Rob, Maureen, Antonia, Christina, Constantine, Irene, Iliana, John, Carolyn, Mary, Maria, Patrick, John, Panagiota, Luci, Stephanos, Leonidas, Vasiliki, Nikki, Anastasios, Stacey, Eleni, Helen, George, Gregory, Irene, Artemis, Efstathia, Maria, Vasilios, Bertha, Christina, Tom, Nick

Stewardship 2025

The theme of the 2025 Stewardship Campaign is, “Your own from Your own.” Let us draw together as a parish family to demonstrate our gratitude to God and lovingly serve Him by supporting Ascension. What better way to demonstrate our thanks and faith in God than by offering a portion of what God has blessed us with to support His ministries. Stewardship is the lifeblood of our Parish. To date, we thank the 355 families that have pledged \$519,960 as well as generously offer their time and talents to this Parish! As of this week, we are at 80% of our 2025 stewardship target of \$650,000. *(Please be aware that Stewardship doesn’t automatically renew annually.* Please contact the office with any questions.

Announcements

+ **DEAR PARISH FAMILY** On behalf of his immediate and extended family, **Fr. Sotiri expresses his heartfelt love and gratitude to our parish family for the many notes, calls, and especially your prayers following the sudden passing of his beloved father, †Fr. Panagiotis Malamis, in Greece this past Wednesday.** As soon as funeral arrangements are finalized, we will share them via email. In the meantime, please continue to pray for the repose of the soul of Fr. Panagiotis. We also ask the Lord to grant peace and comfort to Presvytera Theodora, his 9 children, 27 grandchildren, the entire extended Malamis family, and all brother clergy, dear friends and parishioners who are mourning this great loss.

+ **ON FRIDAY WE COMMEMORATE INDEPENDENCE DAY IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.** Let us give thanks to God for the blessings of liberty and the freedom He has bestowed upon our nation. We remember and honor those who gave their lives for the freedoms we cherish today. As we recite in the petitions of the Divine Liturgy, let us also pray for peace for the whole world, stability of the holy churches of God and for the unity of all. Together, let us nurture lives of Christian service, love, and gratitude in the United States and beyond. Have a safe and joyful holiday with loved ones!

+ **CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED THIS FRIDAY:** Please be advised that the Church office will be closed this Friday, July 4th in honor of the Independence Day holiday.

+ **REGISTRATION OPEN FOR VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL:** Ascension is excited to announce the theme of this summer's Vacation Church School: "We Believe! One God, One Church, One Creed" which will take place July 28-August 1. The week-long program is designed for rising Kindergarteners through 8th graders, and will focus on the Creed and what we believe about God and the Church. Please see the flyer for more information and to register. We look forward to spending a fulfilling week together with our youth immersed in worship, outdoor activities, arts & crafts, and hands-on learning.

+ **MEN’S RETREAT: SAVE THE DATE!** Please mark your calendars for the 8th annual Koinonia Men's Retreat, which will take place on Saturday, October 18th at the St. Iakovos Retreat Center in Kansasville, WI. Save the date and stay tuned for more information!

+ **PUSHPAY – OUR NEW PLATFORM:** Ascension launched Pushpay on June 1st, a new giving and engagement platform to better serve our Parish family. Most every one of you have already received an email to activate your account. We ask that each adult in your family activate their own account as soon as possible. Some of you who have a recurring gift in our former system, ParishSoft, also received an email with simple directions to move the recurring gift over to Pushpay. If you did not receive an activation email, then please read the quick instructions in the flyer explaining how to create an account and how to download our new app. For assistance, there is a Pushpay resource page on our website at www.ascensiongoc.com/pushpay. Thank you for your patience during this transition and your generosity and involvement in our community. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the office or email stewardship@ascensiongoc.com.

+ **LETTERS OF GOOD STANDING** Please be advised that if you need the church office to produce a Letter of Good Standing (i.e.: for a Sacrament you may be sponsoring, etc.), you must be a steward of Ascension. There is no fee if the Sacrament is taking place within the Metropolis of Chicago, however, the office would appreciate at least a one-month lead time. If the Sacrament you are sponsoring is taking place outside of the Metropolis of Chicago, there is a fee of \$100, made payable by check to the Metropolis of Chicago and processed through our office. If you have any questions, contact the church at 847.482.1200.

+ **SAVE THE DATE for the ANNUAL MID-SUMMER SOCIAL, July 27th.** Sponsored by Men’s Koinonia, this gathering gives the families and youth in our Parish the opportunity to enjoy ice cream, hotdogs, fun and fellowship immediately following Liturgy.

Did You Know?

When Jesus tells St. Peter "on this rock I will build my church" in today's gospel reading, He is not actually referring to St. Peter! The commonly held interpretation among Roman Catholics is that Matthew 16:18 indicates the institution of the Church on the rock that is the *person* of St. Peter and his successors, the popes of Rome. However, the Orthodox Church interprets the verse in context to mean the rock of St. Peter's *faith*. Ultimately then, our Church is founded not only on the rock of St. Peter's faith, but on the faith of all who confess Jesus Christ to be Lord. St. Peter's faith is not unique, but his profession of Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God" is an example for us all to make Him and His Church present in our hearts.