

# SS. PETER AND PAUL

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Rev. Joseph McCartney, Rector

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**Gospel Reading ~ Mark 9:17-31**

**Epistle Reading ~ Hebrews 6:13-20**

***Repose of St Nikolai of Zhicha, Edward King of England***

### Gospel Meditation

Today is the day of Saint John of the Ladder, and I want to read to you a few phrases of his which are relevant to the particular time of the year in which we live:

“Repentance, that is our return to God is renewal of our baptism; it is our effort to renew our covenant with God, our promise to change our life. It is a time when we can acquire humility, that is peace; peace with God, peace with ourselves, peace with all the created world. Repentance is born of hope and rejection of despair. And one who repents, is one who deserves condemnation - and yet, goes away from the tribunal without shame, because repentance is our peace with God. And this is achieved through a worthy life, alien to the sins we committed in the past. Repentance is cleansing of our conscience. Repentance implies carrying off all sadness and pain.”

And if we ask ourselves how we can achieve it, how we can come to this, how we can respond to God Who receives us as the father received the prodigal son, a God Who has waited for us, longingly, Who, rejected, never turned away from us - how can we respond to Him? Here is a short word about prayer :

“Don't use in prayer falsely wise words; because it is often the simple and uncomplicated whispering of children that rejoices our heavenly Father. Don't try to say much when you speak to God, because otherwise your mind in search of words will be lost in them. One word spoken by the publican brought Divine mercy upon him; one word filled with faith saved the thief on the cross. The use of the multiplicity of words when we pray disperses our mind and fill it with imaginations. One word spoken to God collects the mind in His presence. And if a word, in thy prayer, reaches you deeply, if you perceive it profoundly - dwell in it, dwell in it, because at such moments our Angel guardian prays with us because we are true to ourselves and to God”.

Let us remember what Saint John of the Ladder because he was a man who knew what it means to turn to God, to stay with God, to be God's joy and to rejoice in Him. He is offered us in this time, when we are ascending towards the days of the Passion, he is offered us as an example of what grace Divine can do to transform an ordinary, simple human being into a light to the world.

### *This Week at a Glance*

#### **Wed, Mar 21st**

6:00 pm  
Pre-Sanctified Liturgy  
with meal to follow

#### **Sat, Mar 24th**

8:30 am - Easter Bake  
Sale  
6:00 pm - Great Vespers  
& Confessions

#### **Sun, Mar 25th**

Annunciation  
9:00 am - Hours  
9:30 am - Divine Liturgy

### **Panikhida**

Today's Panikhida is being said for the departed members of the **Kunakowsky Family**.

### *Thank You*

To everyone who volunteered their time, talents, & treasures to make our lenten pierogi dinners such a huge success! We not only met, but exceeded our goals! Also a huge thank you to our pierogi makers! It truly wouldn't be possible without you! Thank you for all the time that went into making the dough, filling, pinching & cooking all the pierogi for the dinners!

## Confessions

In the Sacrament of Confession, we each have the opportunity to hear the Lord say, “Your sins are forgiven.” Confessions are heard before and after each Lenten Service, or by appointment.



### Saint John of the Ladder

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to Saint John of the Ladder (Climacus), the author of the work, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. The abbot of Saint Catherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th century) stands as a witness to the violent effort needed for entrance into God’s Kingdom (Mt.10: 12). The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is a real one, “not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places ...” (Eph 6:12). Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, according to the Lord, only “he who endures to the end will be saved” (Mt.24:13).

### Input Wanted

Fr Joseph is seeking parishioner input on the service times for Pascha this year. Some parishes in the Cleveland Deanery have begun having all of the services early Sunday morning (beginning at 8am or 9am), as opposed to overnight Saturday. This enables those with young children and those who do not like to drive at night, the opportunity to celebrate the Resurrection with the whole community. If the consensus is to do the services Sunday Morning, the Children’s Easter Egg Hunt will take place following the festal meal. Please email ([frjosephmccartney@gmail.com](mailto:frjosephmccartney@gmail.com)) or call (440-668-2209) Fr Joseph to tell him your thoughts.

### Dishwasher Available

If you are in need of a dishwasher, Delane Ward has a slightly used, white, under the counter dishwasher. Please see her for more details if you could use it.

### Q&A

**Question:** While the deacon is censuring the interior of the church, I notice some people turn around and face him the whole time. Is this required?

**Answer:** No. It is neither required nor proper to do this for many reasons, but here are two. First if we follow the deacon because we do not want to turn our back on him, we will inevitably turn our back on the altar. Which is more holy and worthy of our reverence, the deacon or the altar? Of course it is the altar. In some churches the faithful never turn their back on the Holy Place even when exiting the church. Secondly, the deacon is doing his job. This job is not the focus of the service at that point, but only an aide to the focus, which is our prayer. If we are more concerned with the deacon and his censuring, then we risk not hearing the prayers, hymns and psalms of the Church. This is the focus and should be our primary goal.



