



St. John Chrysostom Church

A Mission of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
www.stjohngoldenco.org

17716 S Golden Rd
Golden, CO 80401
Church Phone: 303.278.8101

Fr. Seraphim Gisetti, Pastor

Phone: 720.938.1302

email: vrevsg@comcast.net

September 2012 SJCC News

My Joy in the Lord,

September 1st traditionally marks the start of the Liturgical New Year. In Jewish tradition, September (though not the 1st) was the beginning of the Jewish year and the time when they would change the number of the year. It is also the time for Jubilees.

This year, Masha and I celebrate our 40th anniversary as a married couple. I do not presume to tell anyone how we have done it, other than to say it has been a labor of love. I thank all of you for being part of our lives over the years – some longer than others but all of you being part of this celebration. I can't quite call it a Jubilee since that is 10 years in the future, but I am grateful that we're 80% there.

For me, the time has gone very quickly. I am amazed that it has been 40 years because it seems to me as if it were only 4. My hair is whiter, my body is larger, my eyes are dimmer, my children are grown, but, thanks to my wife, my children, and to all of you, my spirit is unchanged.

May God bless all of us in the coming years to complete the course of our lives with love of God and the blessings of His care for us.

With love, in Christ,
Fr. Seraphim

YAL Schedule: Please contact Kara Yakubik for details.

Day of Service signups: **PLEASE** continue to sign up for Coffee Hour and cleanup – this is an important aspect of what is meant by being one of the People of God- to help serve each other.

Please come to the special Liturgy with His Grace, Bishop Basil on Monday, September 3 (Labor Day) to celebrate our 5th anniversary as a parish and Fr. Seraphim and Masha's 40th anniversary. A delicious brunch and celebration will follow. Please bring your memories of our parish's first 5 years to share then. (Others can bring memories of Fr. Seraphim and Masha from whenever..... How far back do you go with them? Bishop Basil was in their wedding party....)

Pledges (Tithing) – it is time to think about tithing for next year. I will have more to say next month when we begin our pledge drive but you will see one change from past years – pledges will now be called tithes. Whether or not your financial tithe is an actual 10% or not is up to you, as always, but the form will speak of tithing, not pledging.

The Liturgy on September 2nd and the Vespers on September 1st will be **at St. Elias**, our mother church. There will be **no** Liturgy at St. John's on that day – but see above for Labor day Monday!

Ss. Peter & Paul Festival – Sept 7, 8, & 9. SS. Peter & Paul Church on Jay Rd. in Boulder.

Denver IOCC Pan-Orthodox 5K Run/Walk and Picnic at St. Catherine's on Saturday September 22.
Registration fee: \$25.00 Check in – 8:15 am. Lunch included.

Our Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Sunday, October 21, following Coffee Hour. Everyone is invited. Elections and next year's budget will be on the agenda. All formal members of the parish should receive all of the reports in the mail before the meeting. **PLEASE READ THEM!!!** As we will not be reading them during the meeting. Only answers to questions and/or necessary additional comments will be provided at the meeting.

Parishioner Celebrations in June & July

**NOTE: If you don't see your day listed OR see your day listed on the wrong day
PLEASE let Fr. Seraphim know – as soon as possible**

September

09/01	Namesday	Joshua Fox
09/03	Anniversary	Fr. Seraphim & Masha Gisetti
09/04	Anniversary	Jonathan & Larissa Spencer
09/04	Birthday	Micky Negreanu
09/07	Birthday	Sidney Gray-Kurtz
09/09	Namesday	Ahnna Rom
09/09	Namesday	Anna Gisetti
09/09	Namesday	Anne Emmons
09/09	Namesday	Kara Yakubik
09/09	Namesday	Miriam Fox
09/10	Birthday	Lisa DeLeo
09/15	Birthday	Eric Jerome
09/25	Birthday	Fanny Negreanu
09/25	Birthday	Jaime Rall
09/30	Birthday	Carolyn Baldwin

October

10/02	Birthday	Joy Jerome
10/02	Namesday	Joy Jerome
10/03	Birthday	Theodore Emmons
10/05	Namesday	Dana Berry
10/07	Birthday	Miriam Fox
10/08	Anniversary	Sean & Jaimy Weddingfeld
10/08	Namesday	Theodore Emmons
10/14	Namesday	Kelsey Perkins
10/15	Birthday	Anne Emmons
10/19	Birthday	Timothy Spencer
10/23	Birthday	Timothy Wretling
10/28	Anniversary	Ed & Paula Leshinski
10/30	Namesday	Lisa DeLeo

PROSPHORA Baking Schedule

PLEASE make sure that you bring ONE (and only one) prospora with names for commemoration to church at least the night before the date on which it is due. You can bring it up to three weeks before and we'll freeze it until the date, but don't try to bring it that morning. I usually start the Proskmedia early and need the prospora to be there. If it's not there by the night before, I will defrost a spare to use. Thank you for your consideration. I don't need more than one. If you bake two or more, keep the rest and use them as you would any other home-made bread. Despite having a seal, they are not blessed and can be eaten just like regular bread.

September

2 Fr. Seraphim
9 Anna Gisetti
16 Eric Jerome
23 Jaime Rall
30 Dana Berry

October

7 Sean & Jaimy Weddingfeld
14 Anne Emmons
21 Timothy Spencer
28 Ed & Paula Leshinsky

REMINDER: when you are scheduled to provide the prospora for a Sunday, I expect and ask / plead – **give me a list of names of your family to commemorate.** Too often I have gotten a loaf but no names!!! This includes both living and departed. If some of the living or departed are not Orthodox, I want them anyway. Thank you for remembering this.

God, the Devil and Free Will

When we talk about God, one of the things we find mentioned is that God WILLED creation. He desired it to be. Christ often spoke of doing His Father's Will. If we read the Fathers, we often find references to God's Will as the foundation of life and the universe. We mention, usually in passing and without any real attention to, ourselves doing God's Will. But what does God's Will really mean?

In short, it means that God has the ability to choose anything. He, literally, can make anything happen. He can cause a flower to bloom out of season, He can make us do anything He wants, He can turn the rules of the universe upside down, make gravity go up instead of down, ANYTHING.

But He created the world. And He created it with rules, rules which He, Himself, decided to follow. (Yes, walking on water is within the rules God created for this world – we all have the capacity to do it, just not the holiness.) And then He created mankind and He created them in this world, subject to the same rules but with the same capability – to choose, to will – that He, Himself, has. He created us “in his image and likeness” meaning that He gave us a Will, like His, to choose. Our choices are more limited than God's because we are a creation not a divinity, and our knowledge is inconsequential in comparison to His, but we have the same ability to CHOOSE. Then He left it up to us whether to align our actions, our will, with His or to use our will for our own purposes.

But here comes the Devil. The one person who opposed God's Will to give us the freedom to choose. In the history of creation, I firmly believe that the Devil opposed God because He allowed us this choice. Like many people, the Devil's answer to all the evil in this world was very simple – take away our right to choose, take away our free will. If we have no free will, if we must follow the dictates of whoever is in charge, then good and evil has no meaning – it is all one because we only have one path to follow – that which is chosen for us.

The real history of Lucifer's opposition to God is, of course, much more convoluted and involved than this presentation can cover but the essence, I believe, is that simple: the Devil wants to control. He wants to make us do his will instead of God's will. In the Devil's battle with God, it is always the one who wants to control who is doing the Devil's work. It is the one who gives each person around them the free will to act as they wish that reflects the image of God. Note I don't say God's battle with the Devil because God is not the one battling. God even gives the Devil the right to his free will.

Throughout the history of Christianity there has been a temptation to control, to limit choices to “good ones” - either by law or by custom. Yes, there are those who cannot be allowed to exercise their free will – children, the ill and the aged. But the only reason they cannot be allowed to freely exercise the image of God is because they are too weak - spiritually, morally, physically – to counteract the effects of the fallenness of this world. The limits placed on them by their caregivers, whether they be children, parents or strangers, are to help them make wise decisions in the exercise of their will. When those caregivers exceed their responsibility and take over the will of those placed in their care, only evil follows. It is spiritually destructive for the caregivers and, often, those who are taken care of, to replace the will of others with their will because it removes the image of God from those in their care and from themselves. It is instructive that Christ rarely healed anyone without being asked!

Which brings us to modern times. There are many movements all over the world to protect people from doing evil acts. But, sadly, those attempts are not in the image of God, because they are attempts to control. We follow God not because there is a law but because that is what we wish to do. Sometimes we fail. Then we repent and try again. When something becomes a law, it attempts to control our actions – giving the impetus not to love, but to fear. And while we do speak of the fear of God, that fear is the fear of losing His love, not of His punishment (“Turn not away Thy face from Thy child for I am afflicted. Hear me speedily, draw near unto my soul and deliver it.” as the Psalmist said.) Whether the matter is abortion, murder, killing, theft or any other evil act, we, as Christians, don't do it because we love God and follow His will, not because there is a law; just as we love God because we are Christians and not because we grew up that way or because there is a “law” that says we must.

Fr. Seraphim

Schedule of Services and Events

September

1	Sat	4:00 pm	<u>Vespers at St. Elias</u>	
2	Sun	9:00 am	<u>Liturgy at St. Elias</u> with Bishop Basil	
3	Mon	9:00 am	Liturgy with Bishop Basil	
8	Sat	9:00 am	Liturgy	Nativity of the Theotokos
		5:00 pm	Vespers	
9	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy	
14	Fri	6:30 pm	Liturgy	Elevation of the Cross
15	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
16	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy	
20	Thu	7:00 pm	Adult Discussion Group	
22	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
23	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy	
29	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
30	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy	

October

6	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
7	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy	
13	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
14	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy	
18	Thu	7:00 pm	Adult Discussion Group	
20	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
21	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy	
			Annual Parish Meeting w/ Elections and Budget	
24	Wed	6:00 pm	Prayer Service	
			Adult Discussion Group	
27	Sat	5:00 pm	Vespers	
28	Sun	9:00 am	Liturgy	

Looking ahead - 2012 General Schedule of Services

(see monthly newsletter for changes)

2012

November

13 Tue 6:30 pm Liturgy & Potluck **St. John Chrysostom (Patronal Feast)**
15 Thu *Nativity Fast begins*
21 Wed 6:30 pm Liturgy & Potluck **Entrance into the Temple of the Theotokos**

December

24 Mon 9:00 am Royal Hours *Nativity Eve*
Vespersal Liturgy
7:00 pm Vigil
25 Tue 9:00 am Liturgy **Nativity of our Lord**

2013

January

5 Sat 5:00 pm Vespers w/ Blessing of Water
6 Sun 9:00 am Liturgy **Theophany of our Lord**

February

2 Sat 9:00 am Liturgy & Brunch **Meeting of our Lord**

March

18 Mon *Great Fast begins*
25 Mon 9:00 am Liturgy **Annunciation**

April

28 Sun 9:00 am Liturgy **Palm Sunday**

May

5 Sun midnight Matins & Liturgy **PASCHA**
19 Sun 9:00 am Hierarchical Liturgy w/ Bishop Basil

June

6-8 Parish Life Conference in Kansas City.
13 Thu 6:30 pm Liturgy **Ascension of our Lord**
23 Sun 9:00 am Liturgy **Pentecost**
29 Sat 6:30 pm Liturgy **SS. Peter & Paul**

August

1 Thu *Dormition fast begins*
6 Tue 6:30 pm Liturgy **Transfiguration of Our Lord**
15 Thu 6:30 pm Liturgy **Dormition of the Theotokos**

September

8 Sun 9:00 am Liturgy **Nativity of the Theotokos**
14 Sat 6:30 pm Liturgy **Elevation of the Cross**

November

13 Wed 6:30 pm Liturgy **St. John Chrysostom (Patronal Feast)**
15 Fri *Nativity Fast begins*
21 Thu 6:30 pm Liturgy **Entrance into the Temple of the Theotokos**

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SEPTEMBER 2012

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2 9 am Liturgy AT St. ELIAS	3 Labor Day 9:00 am Liturgy with Bishop Basil	4	5	6	7 SS. Peter & Paul Festival Boulder	8 9 am Liturgy NATIVITY of the THEOTOKOS 5 pm Vespers																																																																																				
9 9 am Liturgy	10	11	12	13	14 ELEVATION of the CROSS 6:30 pm Liturgy Lenten Potluck	15 5 pm Vespers																																																																																				
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OCTOBER 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 5 pm Vespers
7 9 am Liturgy	8	9	10	11	12	13 5 pm Vespers
14 9 am Liturgy	15	16	17	18 7 pm Adult Discussion	19	20 5 pm Vespers
21 9 am Liturgy Annual Parish Assembly	22	23	24	25	26	27 5 pm Vespers
28 9 am Liturgy	29	30	31			

September 2012

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