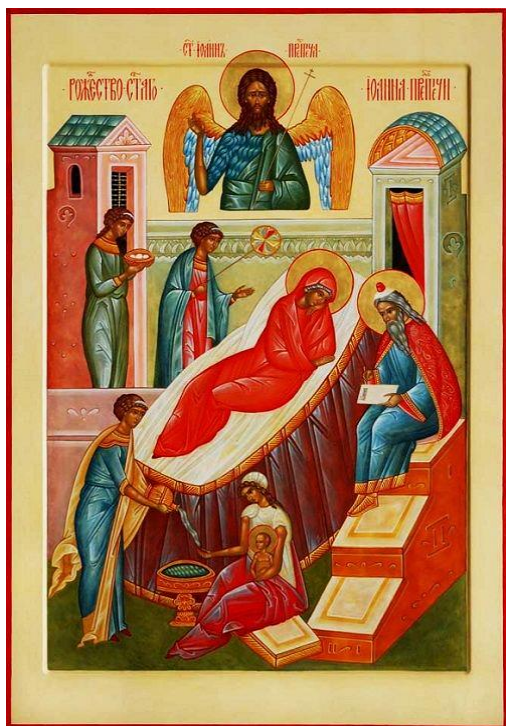


# Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church

1723 E. Fairmount Avenue, Baltimore, MD. 21231

410-276-6171 [www.HolyTrinityOrthodox.com](http://www.HolyTrinityOrthodox.com)



**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**Tone 2**

**June 24/July 7, 2019**

**Nativity of the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist of our Lord, John;** Martyrs Orentius, Pharnacius, Eros, Firmus, Firminus, Cyriacus, and Longinus, in Georgia (3rd c.); Venerable Anthony, abbot of Dymsk (Novgorod) (1224); Righteous Youths John (1566) and James (1569) of Meniugi (Novgorod); Celebration in Vologda of the venerable fathers of Vologda; Synaxis of Saints of Novgorod; Synaxis of Saints of Belorussia; Synaxis of Saints of Pskov; Synaxis of Saints of St. Petersburg. Korobeinikov-Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos.

**Today's Scriptural Readings:**

Romans 5: 1-10 / Mathew 6: 22-33

Romans 13:11 – 14:4 / Luke 1: 1-25, 57-68, 76, 80

[Fr. John's Sermons \(Video\): Click here](#)

*We magnify thee, O John, Forerunner of the Savior  
and we honor thy most glorious Nativity from the barren one.*

This Week's Liturgical Calendar	
<i>Apostles' Fast – No meat or dairy through July 12</i>	
Thursday, July 11 <sup>th</sup> – 6:00 PM	Vigil Service at the Chapel
Friday, July 12 <sup>th</sup> – 9:00 AM <i>Holy Apostles Peter &amp; Paul</i>	Divine Liturgy at the Chapel <i>Chapel's Altar Feast</i>
Saturday, July 13 <sup>th</sup> – 6:00 PM	Vigil Service in the Chapel
Sunday, July 14 <sup>th</sup> – 10:00 AM <i>Private Confessions start at 9:15 AM</i>	Divine Liturgy in the Chapel

**Saints Peter & Paul Chapel  
Holy Trinity Orthodox Cemetery at Cathedral Gardens  
6480 Elibank Drive, Elkridge, MD. 21075**

**Divine Services at Holy Trinity are live-streamed at**  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/HolyTrinitySermons>

**Please join us for coffee hour after services**  
Today's Sponsors: Elena Loyko and Tatiana Reva

**Parish Picnics at 'Cathedral Gardens' / Ray Zaitin Pavilion**

On the following days, Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at Sts. Peter & Paul Chapel located at Cathedral Gardens, our parish cemetery. Afterwards, we will conduct picnics at the Ray Zaitin Pavilion.

**Sunday, July 14** – Liturgy at the Chapel (10:00 AM) and Mid-Summer Picnic. Menu: Shaslik, hamburgers, hot dogs and picnic fare. We need donations of salads, side dishes and homemade desserts. To help contact Albert Blaszk 410-799-3226 or Vadim Radchenko 410-465-6172.

**Sunday, August 18** – Liturgy at the Chapel (10:00 AM) and our Annual 'Spas' Fish Fry – An expanded menu of various grilled fish and fish kabobs will be offered. More information to come...

**Cleaning Group – Group #2 / Join a Group – Help your brothers and sisters**

**Group #2** will clean the week of **July 15-20**: Natalie, Andrei Burbelo and family, Elena Terekhina and Valentina Bosaya. Please join a group. We always need more members. Thank you!

**Cleaning Groups Need More Volunteers...please help!**

We need more volunteers for our cleaning groups. Only 38 individuals work in eight groups. With a new floor the cleaning responsibilities have changed. Please help you fellow brothers and sisters; join a group. Contact Larisa Hidar for more information: 443-986-0047.

**Challenge Grant – Matching Donations**

Three families in our parish have pledged to match all donations for the flooring and altar icons on a 1:1 ratio. For every dollar you donate, they will match one dollar, up to \$30,000, towards the Church Restoration Fund. Double the value of your donation: \$20 becomes \$40, \$50 becomes \$100, and \$100 becomes \$200! Special donation forms are on the candle stand in the vestibule of the church.

**Convocation of the Patriarchal Parishes**

The 14<sup>th</sup> Convocation of the Patriarchal Parishes is scheduled for September 30 – October 3, 2019 at Antiochian Village in Western PA. In addition to the parish clergy, one (1) lay delegate and one (1) alternate for each parish with up to 250 families/individuals shall participate in the convocation. Delegates are selected from the devout members of the parish. Active pledging members of our parish who are interested in participating in the convocation should submit their names to Victor Marinich 443-512-0985 who will then bring the list to the parish council at its regularly scheduled meeting in August for selection. Our registration must be received by Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>. Also, at this conference we will discuss plans for celebrating in 2020 the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Patriarchal

Parishes in the USA. All parishes are requested to present proposals on how best to mark this milestone. Please discuss your ideas with any member of the parish council. Contact Fr. John for more information.

### **Russian Festival Meeting – July 21<sup>st</sup>**

The Kick-Off Meeting of the 2019 Russian Festival will take place on Sunday, July 21<sup>st</sup> after Divine Liturgy. Everyone is asked to stay and offer your input to make this year's festival even better! Thank you.

### **Brotherhood Crab Fest – Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 PM**

The St. Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood will sponsor a **Crab Fest on Friday, July 19<sup>th</sup>** beginning at 6:30 PM at Cathedral Gardens Ray Zaitin Pavilion. All-you-can-eat fresh steamed crabs, corn on the cob and soft drinks will be served. **Reservations are strongly recommended.** Price: \$30/person if RSVP by Wednesday, July 17<sup>th</sup>; Price at the door: \$45/person. For reservations/information, call Albert Blaszak: 410-799-3226.

### **Please join the WhatsApp group!**

As many of you know, the Jerusalem pilgrimage group of 2019 created its WhatsApp group. It was a great decision promoting our Christian unity, human connections, allowing memories and information exchange, and simply bringing us a lot of joy. We stay in touch continuously to this day. During the Centennial celebration of our parish, the incredible feeling of unity of our church family gave birth to the idea- to create our own, independent, church WhatsApp group. We hope that this mode of communication will bring us all even closer together, and the multi-lingual beauty of our unique parish will continue to grow and blossom! Open this link to join the Holy Trinity WhatsApp Group: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/LCMO7XxsMgfBEDIwaHY13L> We sincerely thank Nikolai Shashev and Natalia Gerachenko for creating this for us! O Lord bless!

### **Birthday / Anniversary Celebrations: July 7-13**

We offer our best wishes and birthday congratulations to Larisa Hidar (7/07), Natallia Makarava (7/10) and John Bylen (7/11). May God bless them with health, prosperity and many years. To include your birthday /anniversary in the bulletin call Fr. John.

### **Water Park Trip – August 17**

Again this summer we will conduct a Sunday School trip to Guppy Gulch <http://guppygulchcamp.com> a water park north of Bel Air on a **Saturday August 17<sup>th</sup>** from 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Everyone in the parish is invited. Please make your reservations (\$22 per person) by July 28<sup>th</sup>. Contact Olga Hansen 410-967-6738.

### **Join the Brotherhood**

All men of our parish are encouraged to join the St. Alexander Nevsky Brotherhood. And we welcome your suggestions for organizing special activities. Please contact Fr. John or Albert Blaszak.

### **Amazon Smile & Popular Gift Cards**

Every time you shop on Amazon go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> log in as you usually do, select our church – Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church (Baltimore, MD) – as your targeted charity, and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase (every purchase) to our church.

### **Vigil Candles: On the Altar and near St. Barbara**

**July 7-13:** Candles offered by Marina Barton for the health/salvation of the servants of God: Valentina, Vladimir and Andrey. A \$15 donation will keep all three candles lit for one week. Please schedule your candle offering with Elena Loyko 443-537-8978.

*He who truly loves God, is devoted to His holy will; and no matter what might befall him, he accepts everything, as from the hand of God, with the firm faith that all this serves to his spiritual benefit. For the soul that is devoted to God, the misfortunes that befall it in this life serve as steps leading it up to perfection. **St. John Climacus***

**Preparing for Holy Communion?** *O Lord, Jesus Christ, before I partake of Thy most pure Body and Thy most precious Blood, I run to Thee in Confession to ask forgiveness and admit my fault because: I have angered others, been angry, impatient and resentful; I have not attended Sunday Divine Liturgy and missed other services; I have been harsh and judgmental toward others; I have been prideful, lustful, selfish and stubborn; I have neglected prayer, been lazy, ignored the fasts and have not been to Confession in several weeks... O Lord, help me to more worthily prepare to receive the Holy Mysteries...*

### **Special Petitions for the Unity of the Orthodox Church**

Again we pray to the Lord and our Savior to preserve the Orthodox Church abiding in the whole world in unity and right belief, and to grant her peace and tranquility, love and consent, let us all say, Lord, hearken and have mercy.

Again we pray to look upon the Holy Orthodox Church with the goodness of heart and with mercy, and to preserve her from divisions and schisms, from hostility and disorder, so her unity will not be diminished or shaken, but Thine Thrice-Holy name be glorified in her, let us all say, Lord, hearken and have mercy.

### **Submit your 2019 Pledge**

The mission of our parish is to spread the Word of God, to grow, to expand, to improve and not just to preserve our traditions. Our parish shouldn't become stale, but pursue holiness. We strive to fulfill the mission of our parish, through prayer, work and sacrifice. Prayer – because we are called to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17); work – because we are taught to increase the talents given to us (Matt. 25: 14-30); and sacrifice – because "everyone to whom much is given, from him will much be required" (Luke 12:48).

*When you are generous, you are not bestowing a gift, but repaying a debt. Everything you possess materially comes from God, who created all things. And every spiritual and moral virtue you possess is through divine grace. Thus you owe everything to God. More than that, God has given you his Son, to show you how to live: how to use your material possessions, and how to grow in moral and spiritual virtue. **St. John Chrysostom***

**Please Remember in Your Prayers...**

**Archpriest Michael** Hatrak; **Deacon Michael** Bishop; **Mat. Myra** Kovalak; **Mat. Klavdiya** Burbelo; **Kh. Frederica** Mathewes-Green; **Nun Elizabeth**; **Nun Magdalena**; **Mat. Natalia** Kosich; **Priest Gregory** and **Mat. Diane** Winsky; **Mat. Catherine** Kowalchik; **Marie** Vass; **Charles** Snipes; **Arthur-Stephen** Lisowsky; **Yelena** Radchenko; **Lydia** Zorina; **Tatiana**; **Katherine** Plaskowitz; **Philip** Plaskowitz; **Bernadine** Borawick; **Julia** Aymold; **Lilli Ann** Hoffman; **Lara** Marinich; **Oleg** Marinich; **Ioann** and **Galina** Zernetkin; **Monika-Anastasia & Stephanie** Handley; **Blanche-Julia** Stolkovich; **Ekaterina** Koroleva; **Nina** Lewis; **Maryann** Black; **Lyudmila, Anton & Aleksander** Karnup; **John Alexander** Bylen; **Katherine** Garrett; **Stephen** Kaminitsky; **John-Thomas** Planinshek; **Kenneth** Pukita; **William** and **Ann** Ferkile; **Irina** Kononova; **Petr** and **Lyudmila** Borodkin; **Anthony** Bakie; **Svetlana & Aleksey**; **Alla**; **Anna**; **Alla**; **Raisa, Zinaida**; **Joseph** Germano; **Pavel, Vladimir, Valentina, Nina, and Maria**; **Maria** Pappas; **Bonnie** Duke; **Joseph** Lacomy; **Diana** Radchenko; **Aleksey & Lidia** Potapov; **Oleg** and **Andrei**; **Vitaliy, Tatiana, Olena & Nicholas** Berchuk; **David, Selina-Sophia, John, Maryann, David, Joseph, Lisa Ann** Eichelberger; **Cynthia** and **Bill (Basil)** Popomaronis; **Andrei, Marina, Valentina and Vladimir**; **Archpriest Cezar, Mat. Christina, Cezara-Maria, Darius, Justina, Christian**; **Victoria** Lardiero; **Richard** Wright; **Valentina** Shultieva; **Shanna, Stephen, Trent-Michael, Grant-Alexander, Adalynn** Lisowsky; **Julie** Smith; **Tayisia** Solvieva; **Lubov** Pavuk; **Leonid** and **Zoya**; **Jayne** Sudol; **Rita** and **Richard** Herber, **Mary** Orzolek, **Shane-Michael** Sierakowski; **George** Matassov; **Janice** DesLauriers; **John** DesLauriers.

**Next Council Meeting: Tuesday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> – 7:00 PM in the Church Hall**

<b>Fr. John Vass, Rector</b> 443-527-7067	Fr. Deacon Michael Bishop: 410-563-0472
Victor Marinich, <i>Council President</i> : 443-512-0985	Vadim Radchenko, <i>Vice President</i> : 410-465-6172
Andrei Burbelo, <i>Recording Secretary</i> : 443-567-6031	Albert Blaszak, <i>Treasurer</i> : 410-799-3226
Oxana Chumak-Strianese, <i>Stewardship Chair</i> : 831-673-1937	Anna-Zumrat Shkurba <i>Member-At-Large</i> : 443-857-8541
Natallia Makarava <i>Sisterhood President</i> : 443-625-8470	Michael Mickel, <i>Cemetery Manager</i> : 410-666-2870

**Romans 5:1-10 (Sunday)**

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

**Romans 13:11-14:4 (Epistle, Forerunner)**

And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now, our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. Who are you to judge

another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand

**Matthew 6:22-33 (Sunday)**

The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore, I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

**Luke 1:1-25, 57-68, 76, 80 (Gospel, Forerunner) or Luke 1:5-25, 57-68, 76, 80**

Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed. There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years." And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place,



because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time. And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people. Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her. So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John." But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." So, they made signs to his father-what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So, they all marveled. Immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God. Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him. Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people, And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

### **The Nativity of the Holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John June 24 / July 7**

The Nativity of the Holy Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John: The Gospel (Lk. 1: 57-80) relates that the righteous parents of Saint John the Baptist – the Priest Zachariah and Elizabeth, lived in the ancient city of Hebron, and reached old age being childless, since Elizabeth was barren. One time, Saint Zachariah was making Divine services at the Jerusalem Temple and saw the Archangel Gabriel, standing on the right side of the incense offertory. He predicted that Saint Zachariah would father a son, who would announce the Savior – the Messiah, awaited by the Old Testament Church. Zachariah was troubled, and fear fell upon him. He had doubts that in old age it was possible to have a son, and he asked for a sign. And it was given to him – it appeared at the same time as a chastisement for his unbelief: Zachariah was struck speechless until the time of the fulfillment of the archangel's words.

Saint Elizabeth came to be with child, and fearing derision over the lateness of her pregnancy, she kept it secret for five months, until there came visiting her distant relative the All-Blessed Virgin Mary, to share with her Her own joy. Elizabeth, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, was the first to greet the Virgin Mary as the Mother of God. And together with her Saint John also – in the womb of his mother Righteous Elizabeth – did greet "with leaps as in song" the Most Holy Virgin Mary and the Son of God incarnated within Her.

It became time, and Saint Elizabeth gave birth to a son, and all the relatives and acquaintances rejoiced together with her. On the eighth day, in accord with the law of Moses, was made the circumcision. His mother named him John. Everyone was amazed, since no one in their

family had been named such. When they asked Saint Zachariah about this, he motioned for a tablet and wrote on it: "John is his name" – and immediately the binding of his tongue at the prediction of the archangel was unbound, and Saint Zachariah, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, glorified God and pronounced the words of prophecy about the Advent-Coming into the world of the Messiah, and about his own son John – the Forerunner of the Lord.

After the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ and the worship of the shepherds and the Magi, wicked king Herod gave orders to kill all the infants. Hearing about this, Saint Elizabeth fled into the wilderness and hid in a cave. Saint Zachariah as a priest was at Jerusalem and was doing his priestly service in the Temple. Herod sent soldiers to him to find out the abode of the infant John and his mother. Zachariah answered, that their whereabouts were unknown to him, and he was killed right there in the Temple. Righteous Elizabeth continued to live in the wilderness with her son and she died there. The lad John, protected by an Angel, dwelt in the wilderness until such time, when he came preaching about repentance and was himself vouchsafed worthy to baptize the Lord Who was come into the world. © 1996-2001 by translator Fr. S. Janos.

### **Why the Apostles Peter and Paul are Called the "Chief Apostles"**

As the word of God testifies, the Apostles occupy a special place in the Church—Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God(1 Cor. 4:1).

Vested with equal power from above and with equal authority to absolve sins, all the Apostles will sit on the twelve thrones next to the Son of Man (cf. Mt. 19:28)

Although certain Apostles are distinguished in Scripture and tradition, for example, Peter, Paul, John, James, and others, none of them were chief, or even superior in honor to the rest.

But because in the Acts of the Apostles the labors of the Apostles Peter and Paul are the most told, the Church and the holy fathers, while revering the name of each of the Apostles, call these two Apostles chief. Calling these two Apostles chief in rank and labors, the Church impresses upon us that its head is Jesus Christ alone, and all the Apostles are His servants (cf. Col. 1:18).

The Holy Apostle Peter, who bore the name Simon before being called, was the elder brother of the Apostle Andrew the First-Called, and a fisherman. He was married, and had children. As St. John Chrysostom expressed it, he was a man who was fiery, unlearned, simple, poor, and God-fearing. He was brought to the Lord by his brother Andrew; when the Lord saw the simple fisherman for the first time, He named him Cephas, in Syrian, or Peter, in Greek, which means, a rock. After receiving Peter as one of the Apostles, the Lord visited his humble home and healed his mother-in-law of a fever (Mt. 1:29–31).

Peter was vouchsafed by the Lord to be one of the three of His disciples to witness His divine glory on Mt. Tabor, His divine power at the resurrection of Jairus's daughter (Mk. 5:37), and His humiliation according to His human nature in the Garden of Gethsemane.



Peter washed away his denial of Christ with bitter tears of repentance; he was the first of the Apostles to enter the Savior's tomb after His resurrection, and the first of the Apostles to be vouchsafed to behold the Risen One.

The Apostle Peter was an outstanding preacher. The strength of his word was so great that he turned now three, now five thousand people to Christ. At the Apostle Peter's word, those accused of crimes fell dead (Acts. 5:5, 10), the dead returned to life (Acts 9:40), the sick were healed (Acts 9:3–34), even just by touching his shadow as it passed by (Acts 5:15).

But he did not rank first in authority. All church matters were decided by the common voice of the Apostles and presbyters of the whole Church. When the Apostle Paul spoke of the Apostles who are honored as the pillars of the faith, he assigned first place to James, and then Peter and John (Gal. 2:9), and places himself amongst them (2 Cor. 11:5), comparing himself to Peter. The apostolic synaxis sends Peter to serve, just like the other Disciples of Christ.

The Apostle Peter made five journeys, preaching the Gospels and converting many to the Lord. He finished his final journey in Rome, where he preached the faith of Christ, multiplying the number of disciples. In Rome, the Apostle Peter rebuked the deceit of Simon the magician, who was calling himself Christ, and converted two women, favorites of Nero.

At Nero's command, the Apostle Peter was crucified on June 29, A.D. 67. He asked his tormenters to crucify him upside-down, wishing by this to portray a difference between his own sufferings and the sufferings of his Divine Teacher.

The miraculous story of the conversion of the Apostle Paul, formerly Saul  
Saul was educated in the Judaic Law, hated and persecuted the Church of Christ, and even requested authority from the Sanhedrin to find and persecute Christians. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison (Acts 8:3). One day, Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink (Act. 9:1–9).

The stubborn persecutor of Christianity becomes an indefatigable preacher of the Gospels. The life, deeds, words, and epistles of Paul all witness to him as a chosen vessel of God's grace. Neither afflictions, nor want, nor persecution, nor hunger, nor nakedness, nor danger, nor sword, nor death could weaken the love in Paul's heart for God.

He travelled continually in various countries in order to preach the Gospels to the Jews, and especially to the pagans. These travels were accompanied by amazingly powerful preaching, miracles, tireless labor, inexhaustible patience, and very holy life. The labors of Paul's apostolic service were incomparable. He said of himself, I laboured more abundantly than they all (1 Cor. 15:10). The Apostle endured countless sorrows for his labors. In A.D. 67, on June 29, he received a martyr's death in Rome, at the same time as the Apostle Peter's death. As a Roman citizen, he was beheaded by the sword.

The Orthodox Church honors the Apostles Peter and Paul as having enlightened the darkness of the West; the Church glorifies Peter's steadfastness and Paul's wisdom, and sees in them an image of ones who sinned and corrected themselves: in the Apostle Peter—as one who denied the Lord and then repented; in the Apostle Paul—as one who resisted the preaching of the Lord, and then believed. <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/47547.htm>