

THE ORDER FOR THE READER TYPIKA SERVICE
WHEN WE ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND CHURCH

SUNDAY APRIL 11, 2021

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – Tone 3. St. John Climacus (of *The Ladder*). Hieromartyr Antipas, Bishop of Pergamum, disciple of St. John the Theologian (92). Ven. Jacob (James), Abbot of Zheleznobórovsk (1442), and his fellow ascetic, James. St. Varsonúfii (Barsanuphius), Bishop of Tver’ (1576). Martyrs Processus and Martinian of Rome (1st c.). Ven. Pharmuthius, Anchorite, of Egypt (4th c.). Ven. John, disciple of Ven. Gregory of Decapolis (9th c.). St. Callinicus of Cernica, Bishop of Rimnicului in Romania (1868).
The Appearance of the “FOOTPRINT” Icon of the Mother of God at Pochayev.

THE SERVICE TAKES PLACE IN FRONT OF OUR ICON CORNER

EVERYONE: O, God cleanse me a sinner and have mercy on me! (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. O, Heavenly King, the Comforter the Spirit of Truth, Who art everywhere present and fillest all things. Treasury of Blessings and Giver of Life. Come and abide in us and cleanse us from every impurity and save our souls, O Good One!

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Thy Name’s sake.

Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the Singing of the First Antiphon.

Bless the Lord, O my soul! Blessed are Thou, O Lord! Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. Who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases. The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long suffering and of great goodness. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name. Blessed art Thou, O Lord!

THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon.

The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Second Antiphon.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have being. Put not your trust in princes, in sons of men in whom there is no salvation. When his breath departs he returns to his earth, on that very day his plans perish. The Lord will reign forever; Your God, O Zion, to all generation.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Only-begotten Son and immortal Word of God, Who for our salvation didst will to be incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary, Who without change didst become man and wast crucified, Who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified with the Father and the Holy Spirit: O Christ our God, trampling down death by death, save us!

THE LITTLE LITANY is not said in the absence of a Priest or Deacon.

The reader continues:

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen. Followed by the singing of the Third Antiphon.

In Thy Kingdom remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

Followed by the singing of the appointed Troparia for the day:

TROPAR FOR THE RESURRECTION, TONE 3

Let the heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad! For the Lord has shown strength with His arm. He has trampled down death by death. He has become the first born of the dead. He has delivered us from the depths of hell, and has granted to the world// great mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Troparion for St. John Climacus – Tone 1

O dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body, thou wast a wonderworker, O our God-bearing Father John. Thou didst receive heavenly gifts through fasting, vigil, and prayer, healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to thee by faith. Glory to Him Who gave thee strength! Glory to Him Who granted thee a ^crown!// Glory to Him Who grants healing to all!

THE EPISTLE LESSON

READER: The Prokeimenon is in the 3rd Tone:

Sing praises to our God, sing praises! / Sing praises to our King, sing praises!

CHOIR: *Sing praises to our God, sing praises! / Sing praises to our King, sing praises!*

READER: Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy!

CHOIR: *Sing praises to our God, sing praises! / Sing praises to our King, sing praises!*

READER: The Second Prokeimenon is in the 7th Tone:

Let the saints exult in glory; / let them sing for joy on their couches!

CHOIR: *Let the saints exult in glory; / let them sing for joy on their couches!*

READER: THE READING IS FROM THE EPISTLE OF THE HOLY APOSTLE PAUL TO THE HEBREWS.

READER: Hebrews 6:13-20 and Ephesians 5:9-19 (St. John Climacus)

BRETHREN:

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute.

Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

BRETHREN:

(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.

READER: And to your spirit: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be put to shame!

CHOIR: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

READER: Be a God of protection for me, a house of refuge in order to save me!

CHOIR: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

READER: They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God

CHOIR: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE GOSPEL LESSON

READER: And that we may be accounted worthy of hearing the Holy Gospel, let us pray to the Lord God.

EVERYONE: Lord have mercy (3x)

READER: Let us listen to the Holy Gospel. The Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint Mark.

EVERYONE: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

READER: Mark 9:17-31 and Matthew 4:25-5:12 (St. John Climacus)

Let us Attend!

Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."

He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me."

Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!"

Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it.

For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day."

Let us Attend!

Great multitudes followed Him - from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan. And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him.

Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

EVERYONE: Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee.

**READER: Remember us, O Lord, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.
Remember us, O Master, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.
Remember us, O Holy One, when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom.**

**THE LITANY OF FERVENT SUPPLICATION is not said
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.

EVERYONE: Amen.

READER: The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

READER: Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened; and your faces shall not be put to shame.

READER: The Heavenly Choir sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

READER: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

READER: The Choir of Holy Angels and Archangels, with all the Powers of Heaven, sings Thy praises and cries out: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord of Sabaoth, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.

THE SYMBOL OF FAITH (THE NICENE CREED)

EVERYONE: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages. Light of light; true God of true God, begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man. And He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried. And the third day He arose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father; And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets.

In One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**THE LITANY OF SUPPLICATION is not said
in the absence of a Priest or Deacon. The reader continues:**

READER: Amen. Lord have mercy (12x)

READER: **Through the Prayers of Our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, Have Mercy on us.**

EVERYONE: Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER: **Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us and save us.**

EVERYONE: Amen. (Followed by the singing of the appointed Kontakia)

Kontakion for The Resurrection - Tone 3

On this day Thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One, leading us from the gates of death. On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices; with the Prophets and Patriarchs// they unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power.

*Glory to the Father, and o the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.
Amen.*

Kontakion for St. John Climacus - Tone 4

The Lord truly set thee on the heights of abstinence, to be a guiding star, showing the way to the universe// O our father and teacher John.

READER: Lord have mercy (12x)

O All-Holy Trinity, Consubstantial Power, Undivided Kingdom, Origin of all Good: be graciously inclined unto me, a sinner. Make steadfast my heart and give it understanding, and take away from me every defilement. Enlighten my mind, that I may ever glorify, praise and worship Thee, and say: One is Holy, One is the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Blessed be the Name of the Lord, henceforth and forevermore. (3x)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.
Amen.

PSALM 34

READER: I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall be continually in my mouth. In the Lord shall my soul be praised; let the meek hear and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my troubles. Draw nigh unto Him, and be enlightened, and your faces shall not be put to shame. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The Angel of the Lord will encamp around those who fear Him, and will deliver them. O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that hopes in Him. O fear the Lord, all you His saints; for there is no want for

them that fear Him. The rich have become poor and have hungered; but they that seek the Lord shall lack no good thing. Come, O children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Who is the man that desires life, who loves to see days that are good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking deceit. Turn away from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears unto their supplication. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.

The righteous cried, and the Lord hear them, and He delivered them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are broken in heart, and will save them that are humble in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and out of them all shall the Lord deliver them. The Lord keeps all of their bones; not one of them shall be broken. The death of sinners is cruel, and they that hate the righteous shall do wrong. The Lord will redeem the soul of His servants, and none of them shall do wrong that hope in Him.

READER: More honorable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond than the Seraphim, without defilement, You gave birth to God the Word, True Theotokos, we magnify You.

CHOIR: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy, Lord have mercy. Lord, Bless!

READER: May He, Who rose from the dead, Christ our True God, through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, through the Prayers of the Most Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, by the Power of the Precious and Life-Creating Cross, through the protection of the Bodiless Powers of Heaven, through the prayers of the Holy Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist John, through the prayers of the holy glorious and all-laudable Apostles, through the Prayers of all the North American Saints, through the prayers of _____ the patron of this Holy Temple, through the prayers of St. John Climacus (of the *Ladder*), and Hieromartyr Antipas, Bishop of Pergamum, disciple of St. John the Theologian whom we commemorate today, of the holy and righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, O Lord Jesus Christ Our God, have mercy on us and save us.

CHOIR: Amen.

(The faithful now come up and venerate the Precious Cross and Icons in our Icon Corner.)

READER: Through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers, O Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.

CHOIR: Amen. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy.

“THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK and NEW JERSEY EDUCATION CORNER”



THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT:

ST. JOHN CLIMACUS (Of The Ladder)

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== = Scriptural Readings for The Fifth Week of Great Lent = = =

Monday	Genesis 13:12-18	Proverbs 14:27-15:4
Tuesday	Genesis 15:1-15	Proverbs 15:7-19
Wednesday	Genesis 17:1-9	Proverbs 15:20-16:9
Thursday	Genesis 18:20-33	Proverbs 16:17-17:17
Friday	Genesis 22:1-18	Proverbs 17:17-18:5
Saturday	Heb. 9:1-7 and Heb. 9:24-28	Luke 10:38-42;11:27-28/Mark 8:27-31
Sunday	Gal. 3:23-29 and Heb. 9:11-14	Luke 7:36-50 and Mark 10:32-45

**Fourth Sunday of Lent
Only by Prayer and Fasting
Mark 9:17-31**

*From The Explanation of the Gospel of St. Mark
by Blessed Theophylact, Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria*

14-18. And when He came to His disciples, He saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld Him, were greatly amazed, and running to Him, saluted Him. And He asked the scribes, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto Thee my son, who hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever it taketh hold of him, it teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and wasteth away: and I spake to Thy disciples that they should cast it out; and they could not.

When He came to His disciples, that is, to the nine that had not gone up onto the mountain with Him, He saw that they were being questioned by the Pharisees. For the Pharisees had seized the opportunity of Jesus absence to attempt to turn the disciples away from the Lord. The multitude, however, suddenly caught sight of Him, and greeted Him. They had been longing to see Him, and now they caught sight of Him and greeted Him as if He had just returned from a long journey. Some say that even His appearance had become more beautiful from the light of the Transfiguration which drew the multitude towards Him to greet Him. A man in the crowd spoke in answer to the Lords question. This man was weak in faith, as even the Lord attests when He says, *O faithless generation*, and again, *all things are possible to him that believeth*. The man himself attests to his unbelief when he says, *Help Thou mine unbelief*. His complaints against the disciples clearly shows his unbelief. For he ought not to have accused them in front of everyone, but privately.

19-27. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him unto Me. And they brought him unto Him: and when He saw him, straightway the spirit tore him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming. And He asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Since a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if Thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And the spirit cried, and tore him much, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

The man who approached the Lord accused the disciples of not having the power to heal. But the Lord turns the blame onto him, all but saying, "It is your unbelief which is the cause of your sons not being healed." The Lord does not address only this man, but He directs this saying to all, reproaching all the Jews for their unbelief. For it is likely that many of the bystanders were also scandalized by the disciples inability to heal. The Lord shows that He welcomes death, when He says, *How long shall I be with you?* meaning, it is a torment to Me to live with you and your unbelief. But though He reproaches them, He grants the healing as well. He does not desire to heal the son as a show of His power, but rather He proceeds with great humility. See how He does not attribute the healing to His own power, but to the mans faith, when He says, *All things are possible to him that believeth*. As soon as He saw a crowd beginning to gather around, He rebuked the spirit, not wanting to heal in front of the multitude as though for show. When He rebuked the spirit and said, *Come out of him, and enter no more into him*, this suggests that because of the mans unbelief, the demon would have again entered into him if it had not been prevented by the Lords command. The Lord permits the spirit to rend the son, so that all

might recognize the attack of the demon, and understand that it would have killed the man if it had not been held in check by the hand of God. A man is thrown by a demon into the fire of anger and desire, and into water, meaning, into the pounding surf of worldly cares. This demon is both mute and deaf. It is deaf, not wanting to hear the words of God; and it is mute, not able to teach others what ought to be taught. But if Jesus, Who is the Word of the Gospel, should take him by the hand, that is, strengthen his power to act, then that man will be freed from the demon. See how God first helps us, and then we ourselves are required to work. For the Evangelist says that Jesus lifted him up – this is the divine help, and he arose – this is the effort of the man himself to do good.

28-29. And when He was come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, Why could not we cast it out? And He said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

The disciples were afraid they had lost the grace which the Lord had given them, and this was why they had not been able to cast out the demon. See that out of respect they approached the Lord privately. This kind – what kind? The kind which may make their abode in lunatics, or, in general, the whole race of demons, does not come out except through prayer and fasting. Both the one suffering, and the one about to heal, must fast. Both are necessary. Good sense dictates that the one suffering must fast. He must not only fast, but also pray; and he must not only pray, but also fast, for true prayer is rendered when it is yoked to fasting. When the one who prays is not weighed down by the effects of food, his prayer is not burdened and ascends easily.

30-31. And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and He would not that any man should know it. For He taught His disciples, and said unto them, The Son of Man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill Him; and after He is killed, He shall rise the third day.

Whenever the Lord spoke of His passion on the cross, He would precede and follow His words with miracles, so that no one could think that He would suffer because He was powerless. And when He spoke sad words, such as, *they shall kill Him*, He would add words of joy, *He shall rise the third day*, teaching us that gladness always follows after grief, and that we should not anguish needlessly in our sorrows, but should hope for better things.

ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to St John of the Ladder (Climacus), the author of the work, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. The abbot of St 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).

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

ST. JOHN OF THE CLIMAX (Mark 9:17-31)

This Sunday commemorates St. John of the Climax (6th century) who is the writer of the book called *The Ladder (climax) of Paradise*. This book contains 30 chapters, with each chapter as a step leading up to a faithful and pious life as the climax of a Christian life. The spirit of repentance and devotion to Christ dominates the essence of this book, along with the monastic virtues and vices. He was an ascetic and writer on the spiritual life as a monk-abbot of Sinai Monastery. These steps of the ladder as set forth by St. John are to be practiced by the Christian especially during this period of the Great Lent.

Each step leading to the top step of the ladder, is the climactic essence of the true meaning of a Christian life.

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The Ladder of Divine Ascent

The Ladder of Divine Ascent is an ascetical treatise on avoiding vice and practicing virtue so that at the end, salvation can be obtained. Written by Saint John Climacus initially for monastics, it has become one of the most highly influential and important works used by the Church as far as guiding the faithful to a God-centered life, second only to Holy Scripture.

There is also a related icon known by the same title. It depicts many people climbing a ladder; at the top is Jesus Christ, prepared to receive the climbers into Heaven. Also shown are angels helping the climbers, and demons attempting to shoot with arrows or drag down the climbers, no matter how high up the ladder they may be. Most versions of the icon show at least one person falling.

The aim of the treatise is to be a guide for practicing a life completely and wholly devoted to God. The ladder metaphor – not dissimilar to the vision that the Patriarch Jacob received – is used to describe how one may ascend into heaven by first renouncing the world and finally ending up in heaven with God. There are thirty chapters; each covers a particular vice or virtue. They were originally called *logoi*, but in the present day, they are referred to as "steps." The sayings are not so much rules and regulations, as with the Law that St. Moses received at Sinai, but rather observations about what is being practiced. Metaphorical language is employed frequently to better illustrate the nature of virtue and vice. Overall, the treatise does follow a progression that transitions from start (renunciation of the world) to finish (a life lived in love).

The steps are:

1. On renunciation of the world
2. On detachment
3. On exile or pilgrimage; concerning dreams that beginners have
4. On blessed and ever-memorable obedience (in addition to episodes involving many individuals)
5. On painstaking and true repentance which constitutes the life of the holy convicts; and about the Prison
6. On remembrance of death
7. On joy-making mourning
8. On freedom from anger and on meekness
9. On remembrance of wrongs
10. On slander or calumny
11. On talkativeness and silence
12. On lying
13. On despondency
14. On that clamorous mistress, the stomach
15. On incorruptible purity and chastity, to which the corruptible attain by toil and sweat
16. On love of money, or avarice

17. On non-possessiveness (that hastens one Heavenwards)
18. On insensibility, that is, deadening of the soul and the death of the mind before the death of the body
19. On sleep, prayer, and psalmody with the brotherhood
20. On bodily vigil and how to use it to attain spiritual vigil, and how to practise it
21. On unmanly and puerile cowardice
22. On the many forms of vainglory
23. On mad pride and (in the same Step) on unclean blasphemous thoughts; concerning unmentionable blasphemous thoughts
24. On meekness, simplicity, and guilelessness which come not from nature but from conscious effort, and about guile
25. On the destroyer of the passions, most sublime humility, which is rooted in spiritual perception
26. On discernment of thoughts, passions and virtues; on expert discernment; brief summary of all aforementioned
27. On holy stillness of body and soul; different aspects of stillness and how to distinguish them
28. On holy and blessed prayer, the mother of virtues, and on the attitude of mind and body in prayer
29. Concerning Heaven on earth, or Godlike dispassion and perfection, and the resurrection of the soul before the general resurrection
30. Concerning the linking together of the supreme trinity among the virtues; a brief exhortation summarizing all that has said at length in this book

The Sunday of St. John Climacus

Do you know what an anchor does? An anchor is something that keeps a boat from drifting around a lake or a harbor. An anchor keeps the boat in one spot, right where the sailor or fisherman wants it to be.

In the epistle reading today, we hear about how we have an anchor too. Just like a boat's anchor, our anchor keeps us right where we want to be too. For us, that's close to God. The epistle tells us that our anchor is our hope in the resurrection. As Christians, we think about how our Lord, Jesus Christ has opened up heaven for us. We think about how one day we hope to be with Him there. This is our anchor. When we think about Christ, and when we think about all He has done for us, we will stay right where we want to be, close to God.

But why do we need an anchor? Well, sometimes things pull us away from God. Sometimes movies or things on the Internet or games might pull us away from God. Sometimes our own friends might even pull us away from God, getting us to do things that aren't right. These things might make us drift away from our Lord. But when we think about Jesus Christ, and when we think about what He has done for us, we won't drift away! Let's remember the epistle today: "We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul."

OUR JOURNEY TO PASCHA! 2021

Created by Fr. Jonathan Bannon (ACROD)

SUNDAYS	THEMES / GOSPEL READING	HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
Fast - Free Week FEBRUARY 21st	 <i>TRIODION WEEKS</i> Publican and the Pharisee Epistle: 2 Timothy 3:10-15 Gospel: Luke 18:10-14	Show compassion on the poor and distressed. Trust in God, not yourself and ask for His help before every task this week.
Normal Fast Week FEBRUARY 28th	 The Prodigal Son Returns! Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 Gospel: Luke 15:11-32	Schedule a Confession. Every morning say, "Today I will be humble." Use up/freeze meats this week.
Meatfare MARCH 7th FAREWELL TO MEAT TODAY	 The Last Judgement Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:8-9:2 Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46	Pray facing East this week. Christ is returning from the East and we wait for Him! Use up/freeze dairy this week.
Cheesefare MARCH 14th FAREWELL TO CHEESE TODAY	 Adam and Eve are cast from Paradise! <i>FORGIVENESS SUNDAY</i> Epistle: Romans 13:11-14:4 Gospel: Matthew 6:14-21	Ask each other for forgiveness each evening this week before bed.
1st Sunday of Lent MARCH 21st	 <i>GREAT LENT BEGINS WITH FORGIVENESS VESPERS</i> SUNDAY of ORTHODOXY Epistle: Hebrews 11:24-26, 32-12:2 Gospel: John 1:43-51	Bring an icon to church for a procession.
2nd Sunday of Lent MARCH 28th	 ST GREGORY PALAMAS Epistle: Hebrews 1:10-2:3 Gospel: Mark 2:1-12	Bring a prayer rope to be blessed today! Use it and pray the Jesus Prayer each day this week.
3rd Sunday of Lent APRIL 4th	 VENERATION OF THE HOLY CROSS <i>HALF WAY TO PASCHA!</i> Epistle: Hebrews 4:14-5:6 Gospel: Mark 8:34-9:1	Wear your cross to church and kiss the cross each morning with a bow!
4th Sunday of Lent APRIL 11th	 ST JOHN of the LADDER Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31	Every time you climb stairs this week ask St. John to help you reach Paradise with the sign of the cross!
5th Sunday of Lent APRIL 18th	 ST MARY of EGYPT Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45	Ask the Theotokos to offer you and the world pure thoughts and ideas this week.
FLOWERY (PALM) SUNDAY! APRIL 25th GREAT WEEK BEGINS	 <i>GREAT AND HOLY WEEK</i> ENTRY OF OUR LORD INTO JERUSALEM Epistle: Philippians 4:4-9 Gospel: John 12:1-18	Place your palm branches and pussywillows behind an icon at home and in your car!
GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY APRIL 30th	 GREAT AND HOLY FRIDAY <i>JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS</i> CHECK WITH YOUR PARISH FOR ROYAL HOURS AND VESPERS SCHEDULE	Refrain from TV, Internet & Phones to honor Christ's Death.
FEAST OF FEASTS! MAY 2nd NO FASTING!	 <i>BRIGHT WEEK</i> HOLY PASCHA! (CHRIST IS RISEN!) Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17	Greet everyone with "CHRIST IS RISEN!" & say it before good morning and goodnight!

Orthodox Christian Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God. A primary goal of Stewardship is to promote spiritual growth and strengthen faith. Becoming a Steward begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. As Stewards, we affirm that every aspect of our lives comes as a gift from Him. Stewardship calls on the faithful to cheerfully offer back to God a portion of the gifts with which they have been blessed. **Orthodox Christian Stewardship is a way of life, which acknowledges** accountability, reverence, and responsibility before God by teaching and giving examples of a virtuous life to all (St. John Chrysostom). A primary goal of Stewardship is to strengthen our understanding of the teachings and dogmas of The Orthodox Faith through supporting the work of The Church. This can be found in The Divine Services as reiterated by St. John of San Francisco: "The Divine Services in their composition contain all the fullness of the dogmatic teaching of the Church and set forth the path of salvation." Fulfilling our responsibility of continual learning begins when we believe in God, to whom we give our love, loyalty and trust and act on those beliefs. Through being Stewards of the Gospel and of The Orthodox Church, Education calls on the faithful to cheerfully receive instruction given to the Church by Our Lord, Holy Scripture, The Divine Services, and The Holy Fathers of the Church. Through Orthodox Christian Stewardship, The Church promotes spiritual growth and strengthened faith and calls on all of us to bring the faith and love of Our Lord to every aspect of our lives as gifts from Him through our time, talents, and treasures. During this year, let us come together as a Diocesan Family and recommit ourselves to both spiritual growth of our Life in Christ as well as through Orthodox Christian Stewardship by attending the Divine Services, attending the many opportunities of Education for both Adults and Children through Parish Education, gatherings, and fellowship and by supporting our Parishes and Diocese in the many endeavors through which, by the Grace of God, we will bring the light and love of Our Lord to all!

LET ALL THAT YOU DO BE DONE IN LOVE. 1 Cor.16:14

YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND. Matt. 22:37

YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF. Matt. 22:39

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES AND PRAY FOR THOSE WHO PERSECUTE YOU. Matt. 5:44

LOVE IS PATIENT, LOVE IS KIND, LOVE DOES NOT ENVY, LOVE DOES NOT BOAST, LOVE IS NOT PROUD, LOVE IS NOT SELFISH, LOVE IS NOT PROVOKED. 1Cor. 13:4

LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS, LOVE ALWAYS HAS FAITH, LOVE ALWAYS HAS HOPE, LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS. LOVE NEVER FAILS! 1Cor. 13:7,8