



Archpriest Thomas Soroka, *Rector*
Deacon Luke Loboda, *Attached*
Deacon John Skowron, *Attached*

Sunday of St John of "The Ladder"

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA
OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

April 3, 2022

Welcome!

Whether you are searching for a new church home or just visiting, we are glad you're with us today. If you have a prayer request, are looking for more information about the Orthodox Faith, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr Thomas, we invite you to fill out a visitor's card and drop it in the offering basket as your offering today. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

Schedule This Week

- Sunday, April 3
10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School after
- Monday, April 4
5:00 pm Lenten Vespers
- Tuesday, April 5
9:00 am Lenten Matins (Morning Service)
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours/Church Open
- Wednesday, April 6
6:00 pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
Lenten Fellowship Meal following Liturgy
- Thursday, April 7
9:00 am Lenten Matins (Morning Service)
9:30 am-12:00 pm Office Hours/Church Open
- Friday, April 8
7:00 pm Akathist to St Nicholas
- Saturday, April 9
10:00 am Parish Clean-up Day
5:00 pm Vespers with Cathedral Vigil
- Sunday, April 10
10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Church School after

➤ Important upcoming dates:

April 17 - Palm Sunday (*Western Easter*)

April 24 - Pascha: Resurrection of Christ

Announcements

➤ Thank you to everyone who made the visit of the St Tikhon's Seminarian Mission Choir and the myrrh-streaming icon of St Anna such a wonderful success. The nearly 200 people who attended from all over Pittsburgh to listen to the beautiful singing of the seminarians and to pray before St Anna's wonder-working icon. Through your generosity, we presented a gift to St Tikhon's Seminary of \$5,000. We want to especially thank Clayton Harris for the incredible meal he prepared and served for everyone in attendance. His dedication and willingness to lead is exemplary and we are grateful to him. To all who helped - Thank you!

➤ This coming Saturday, April 9, we will hold our annual Cleanup Day in preparation for Holy Pascha. We will be taking up several major projects including cleaning the chandelier and installing a new security system outside. Our efforts will begin at 10:00 am. Please join us to give a few hours to clean, beautify, and secure our property.

➤ Donations for flowers are needed to adorn the tomb of our Lord for Holy Week. Please consider giving a small donation. Every bit helps!

To our Visitors: Holy Communion is reserved for Orthodox Christians who prepare themselves by prayer and fasting. Non-Orthodox visitors are welcome to come forward to venerate the cross and receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) at the conclusion of the service.

Prayers

➤ Ill and infirm: *Known to be hospitalized:* (none) *Home:* George Shaytar. *Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home:* Eleanor Kovacs, Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka

➤ Vigil Lights From Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From Marsha Wasilko for the health of the Wasilko family. From Charles A. Wasilko for the health of sisters, Doris & Marsha. From Doris Wasilko for the departed servants from Dyczko and Wasilko families; for the health of the Wasilko family. From Albena Ivanova for her departed relatives. From John Mahalchak family for the health of friends & family, John, Cheryl, Gregory, Kayla, and baby Roh. From Irene Kulchock for the departed servants, Bridget Kulchock and Dottie Discovich.

Thank You

➤ to our April donors, Matushka Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell (Bulletin \$60, Holy Bread \$50, Altar Candles \$50, Communion Wine \$40, and Incense \$10) for the health of and for the departed members of the Mell and Karavlan families.



As long as anger lives,
it continues to be the
fruitful parent of many
unhappy children.

-*"The Ladder of Divine Ascent"*

This Week in Church School

Today's lesson: The Last Supper

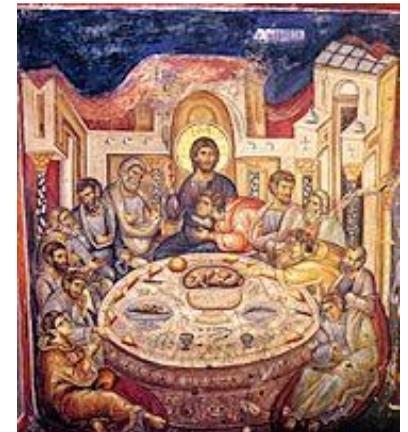
Questions to ask/review:

- What were Jesus and His disciples celebrating at the Last Supper? (the Passover)
- Jesus is often called the lamb of God. How is He like the Passover lamb? (he is sacrificed for the sins of others and saves them from death)
- Why do we celebrate the Eucharist? (Christ instructs us to do so at the Last Supper)
- How does the bread and wine become Christ's body and blood? (the Priest prays that God changes them)
- Are they truly His body and blood? (yes!)

Suggested activities at home:

- Review with your child the Eucharist, how to prepare in fasting and prayer, and how to receive.
- Wash your child's feet each evening before supper, and have him wash yours.
- Read the scripture at bedtime: Matthew 26: 17-75, Mark 14:12-72, Luke 22:1-65, John 13 and 18:1-27.

Prayer: Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, Creator of the Universe, Who gives us the fruit of the vine. Amen.



Hymns and Readings for Sunday, April 3

Tone 8 Troparion (Resurrection)

Thou didst descend from on high, O Merciful One!
Thou didst accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to Thee!

Tone 1 Troparion (St. John Climacus)

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!

Glory to the Father...

Tone 8 Kontakion (Resurrection)

By rising from the tomb, Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam.
Eve exults in Thy Resurrection,//
and the world celebrates Thy rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

Now and ever...

Tone 4 Kontakion (St. John Climacus)

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.

Tone 8 Prokeimenon (Resurrection)

Pray and make your vows / before the Lord, our God!

Epistle of the Sunday (Hebrews 6:13-20)

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.

Gospel of the Sunday (Mark 9:17-31)

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.”

Communion Hymn of Sunday

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps. 148:1) The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance! He shall not fear evil tidings! (Ps. 111:6) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

“The Ladder” Today

During Great Lent, we commemorate the great monastic saint and writer, John Climacus (of the

Ladder). Saint John, who fell asleep in the Lord in the mid-seventh century, was the abbot of one of the most ancient monasteries in the Christian world, at the foot of Jebul Musa—Moses’ Mount—on the Sinai Peninsula. An austere ascetic, he wrote what may be the classic work of our spiritual tradition: The Ladder of Divine Ascent.

According to Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, “With the exception of the Bible and the service books, there is no work in Eastern Christendom that has been studied, copied and translated more than The Ladder of Divine Ascent by Saint John Climacus.” It is a work, then, that has nurtured endless generations of Christian believers seeking to deepen their relationship with God in and through Christ.

Commemorating Saint John on the Fourth Sunday of Great Lent reminds us that a major component of our lenten effort is focused on being ascetical to some degree, and that any ascetical effort must be placed within a larger context of warfare against the passions and the attainment of those key virtues that mark the life of a committed Christian. Saint John provides an example and a body of teaching both through his mode of life and again, through his enduring spiritual classic, The Ladder of Divine Ascent—something to keep in mind as our lenten efforts may be starting to sag at this point in the season.

There is no doubt, from the beginning of his work, that Saint John is writing as a monastic, for fellow monastics. But that hardly limits Saint John’s scope of intended readers. To again turn to Metropolitan Kallistos, “Yet does it therefore follow that The Ladder is of no interest to those in the ‘world’? Surely not. It has in fact been read with the utmost profit by many thousands of married Christians, and whatever the author’s original intention, there is nothing surprising in that.... Whether monastic or married, all the baptized are responding to the same Gospel call; the outward conditions of their response may vary, but the path is essentially one.”