

THE SUNDAY OF ST JOHN THE LADDER

Troparion of the Resurrection – TONE 8:

From on high didst Thou descend, O Compassionate One. / To burial of three days hast Thou submitted / That Thou might free us from our passions. / O our Life and Resurrection, O Lord, glory be to Thee.

Troparion for St John the Ladder – TONE 1:

O John our father, saint of God, / thou wast revealed as a citizen of the desert, / an angel in a body and a worker of miracles. / Through fasting, prayer and vigils thou hast received heavenly gifts of grace, / and thou healest the sick and the souls of those that turn to thee with faith. / Glory to Him who gave thee strength; / glory to Him who crowned thee; // glory to Him who through thee grants to all men healing.

From the Book “300 Sayings of the Ascetics of the Church”:

“Don't be deceived regarding the knowledge of what will be after your death: what you sow here, you will reap there. After leaving here, no one can make progress. Here is the work, there the reward; here the struggle, there the crowns.”

(St. Barsanuphius the Great, Instructions, 606)

Schedule of services for the following week:

- + Monday through Friday everyday - Lenten Hours from 8:30 am.
- + Monday – March 27 – Catechism from 6 pm
- + Tuesday – March 28 – Bible Studies from 6 pm.
- + **Wednesday – March 29 – Presanctified Liturgy from 5:45 pm.**
- + Friday – March 31 - Presanctified Liturgy at St Nicholas in Steelton from 6:30 pm
- + Saturday – April 1 – Vespers from 6 pm.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

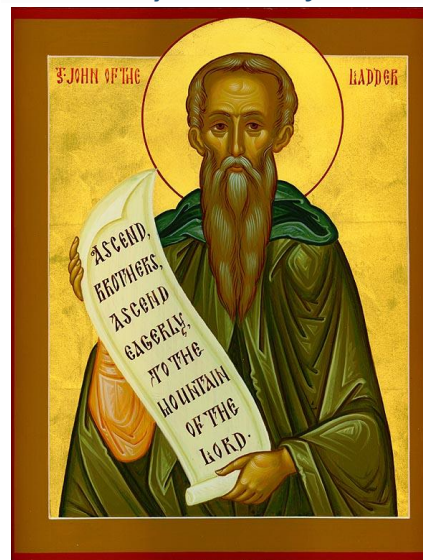
Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20.
Gospel: Mark 9:17-31.

In Our Prayers: Anna Marie Slovesko, Presbytera Lisa Wermedic, Peter and Monica Mikheil, Jovanka Ebling, Alejandro Gonzales, Noah Martinez, Katie Branding, Nick Dutko, Helen and John Gingrich, Ruth Yovanovich, Diann Bernie and Dominic & Destin, Daria Miletich, Joan Babinski, Amanda Rahalewich, Robert Sentz, Wayne Buchter, Jessica Clements.

May God remember the souls of the departed servants: Miroslav Pantelich, Gregory Anstine, Jan Zaprudnik, Cathy Brensinger, Nenad Pantlich, Tracy Stanovic, Thomas Vrcharich. William Yovanovich, Dorothy Kerestter, Jeffrey G. Butch, Protopresbyter Srboljub Jockovich.

Those that need special care: Antony Vrcharich, Stacy Stanovich, John Marinkov, Tom (Atanasij) Maransky, Dewey Yetter, Lillian and Bob Sentz.

From the Synaxarion of the Saints... The Fourth Sunday of Lent is



dedicated to Saint John Klimakos, the author of The Ladder of Divine Ascent. In this book the Igoumen of Saint Katherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai bears witness to the great effort which is required for entry into God's Kingdom (Matthew 10:12). The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is difficult since it is "not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places ..." (Ephesians 6:12). Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, as the Lord has said,

only "he who endures to the end will be saved" (Matthew 24:13).

Saint John was born around the year 525, the son of devout and wealthy parents. He received a very good education, but at the age of sixteen, he forsook the world and went to Mount Sinai, subjecting himself to the spiritual guidance of Elder Martyrios. When he was nineteen years of age,¹ his Elder reposed. Then Saint John entered the arena of hesychasm, visiting the monastic communities of Skētē and Tabénnisē in Egypt. For

another forty years, he lived in a cell at Thora in the Sinai Desert, which was a two hour (5 mile) walk from the Monastery of Saint Katherine.

Aflame with indescribable longing for God, he ate everything that was permitted by the monastic Rule, but only in very small quantities, and not unto satiety. By so doing, he overcame the vice of pride; and by eating just a little food, he humbled the stomach, which always wants more. He raised his body from death and paralysis by the remembrance of death, and he overcame the tyranny of anger with the sword of obedience.

Who can describe the fountain of his tears, which is now to be seen in very few individuals? He slept only as much as was necessary to prevent his mind from being distracted. Before going to sleep he prayed a great deal, and he also wrote books. This was how he subdued despondency. His entire life was spent in unceasing prayer, and incomparable love for God.

After writing *The Ladder* at the request of Abbot John of Raithu Monastery, and leading a God-pleasing life, Saint John fell asleep in the Lord when he was about seventy-five years old (ca. 603). He is also commemorated on March 30.

REFLECTION

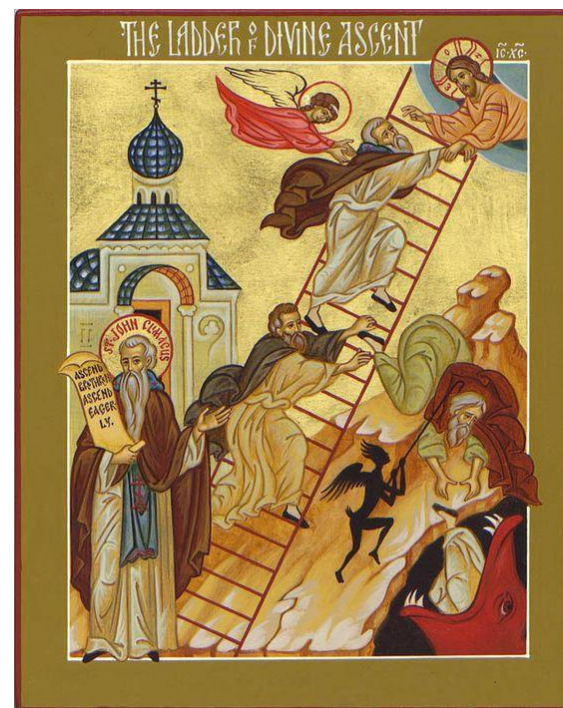
Great are those Christians who have a great love for Christ. Oh, in truth, how great were those Christians, those God-bearing fathers and martyrs! For so many in our time, this is impossible even to imagine. This is what one of them, St. Simeon the New Theologian, confessed before all the monks in his monastery. Speaking from his own personal experience about how the words of the Lord, *For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light* (Matthew 11:30), were realized in him, Simeon said: "Believe me, when I fled to God my Savior, I did not encounter anything sorrowful, difficult or unbearable. The only great and unbearable sorrow I had was that I could not find sufficient means to die for the love for Christ." Are not such souls like burning flames enclosed in earthen vessels? Burning flames are always upright, directed toward heaven. Only remove the covering and the flame will shoot upward.

St Nikolai Velimirovich

CHURCH BULLETIN

MARCH 26TH, 2023

THE SUNDAY OF ST JOHN THE LADDER



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