



# The Sunday Messenger

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH - WILKES BARRE, PA

+ Sun, April 3rd, 2022 - The Sunday of St. John of the Ladder - 4th Sunday of Great Lent +



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.

## Epistle Reading - 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 Reading - 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

## Hymns for Today's Service

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!

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 you a crown! Glory to Him Who grants healing to all!

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!

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**DEAR GUESTS AND FRIENDS:** A most sincere and heartfelt welcome to you from our community. According to the ancient traditions of the Orthodox Church, the Sacrament of Holy Communion is to be administered only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared to receive the Holy Sacrament through prayer and fasting. If you have questions please let us know!

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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."

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## This Weeks Schedule Doly Trinity Orthodox Church

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### + **THIS WEEKEND - ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER** +

**SAT, April 2nd:** Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, NO Orthodoxy 101, Confessions @ 5:30 PM, Great Vespers @ **6 PM** (*Note the time change for this week*), Movie "Paul: The Apostle of Christ"

**SUN, April 3rd:** Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Coffee Hour, Church School, Adult Ed - 55 Maxims of Fr. Hopko @ 11:00 AM

### + **SCHEDULE FOR 5th WEEK OF LENT** April 3rd-9th

**WED @ 11 AM:** Private Prayer 11 AM-1:30 PM

**WED @ 6 PM:** Presanctified Lit., Lenten Meal

**THURS @ 6:30 PM:** Canon of St. Andrew

**FRI @ 6:30 PM:** Akathist w/ Lity for Departed

**SAT @ 9 AM:** Divine Liturgy of St. John

### + **NEXT WEEKEND - ST. MARY OF EGYPT** +

**SAT, April 9th:** Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Church Cleanup for Pascha @ 10:30 AM, Orthodoxy 101 @ 3:30 PM, Confessions @ 4:30PM, Great Vespers @ 5 PM, Movie & Popcorn

**SUN, April 10th:** Hours @ 8:40 AM, Divine Liturgy @ 9 AM, Parastas, Coffee Hour - Farewell for DeCarlos, Church School, Adult Ed - 55 Maxims @ 11:00 AM, Parish Council Meeting

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## Parastas - Sunday, April 10th

In Memory of Nancy Valletta,

Elizabeth, Charles Rovinski

Offered by Clement & Nikol Valletta

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### & Upcoming Parish Events

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### **ORTHODOXY 101 - NO CLASS THIS WEEKEND**

**APRIL 2nd:** Saturday's @ 3:30 PM we will learn and discuss Orthodox fundamentals for those who are new to the faith, interested in the faith, or would like to renew their understanding of the faith. Join us weekly!

**SATURDAYS: LENTEN MOVIE NIGHT:** Saturday evenings following Great Vespers Sherry Huntzinger & Louie Gianuzzi are hosting a Christian movie night. Popcorn provided. This week's movie is "Paul: Apostle of Christ".

**SUNDAYS: LENTEN ADULT EDUCATION:** Our study continues ... titled "How to live a Christian Life - 55 Maxims of Fr. Thomas Hopko". The class will be held Sundays following Divine Liturgy. Presented by SubDn Greg Polk.

**WEDNESDAYS: PRESANCTIFIED LITURGY w/ POTLUCK:** Make this Liturgy and Meal a part of your Lenten Journey. Presanctified begins at 6 PM. Sign up and see ideas for what you can bring in Vestibule.

### **SAT APRIL 9th - CHURCH CLEANUP FOR PASCHA:**

The Holy Trinity Community will come together to clean and prepare the church for Pascha. We could use help from any and all who are willing to offer a little time. Parish altar servers are needed to help prepare the altar by polishing the brass candle stands, removing wax from the carpets and general cleaning. Additionally, we are asking for help from youth and adults to help clean, dust, polish candles stands, etc. The day will begin with Divine Liturgy at 9 AM, followed by coffee, light snacks and cleaning. With enough help we should only have to work for a couple hours.

**SUN APRIL 10th - BABY SHOWER/FAREWELL FOR**

**DECARLOS:** As some of you may know, Catie & Dan DeCarlo are expecting a baby girl in June. They will also be moving to California immediately following Pascha. Next Sunday, April 10th at coffee hour we invite you to express your love and best wishes to the DeCarlo's as they begin their new family by bringing a "baby shower gift". We will miss Dan and Catie dearly and wish them all the best in their new family adventure. May God grant them many years! Please join us!



## LENTEN & PASCHAL FLOWER DONATIONS

Donations towards adorning the church this Lenten season and Pascha continue to be collected so that our parish will be beautifully adorned for all of the feasts. General Donations for Palm Sunday may be given to Deborah Mills. Please write "Flowers for Lent" in the memo. If you would like to honor a loved one by making a donation for Holy Pascha flowers "In Memory of" or "For the Health of" a loved one, please sign up in the Church Vestibule/Narthex. Please leave donations at the candle stand, mail them to the Church, OR drop it off in the rectory mailbox. The names of your loved ones will be listed in the Holy Pascha Church Bulletin and remembered in prayer. If you wish to have your offering listed in the Holy Pascha Bulletin, your loved ones name(s) and donation must be received by Palm Sunday.



## AID FOR UKRAINE OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING

In this Lenten season especially we are called to give without hesitation to those who are in need. Please give generously so that we might be a coworker with our Lord in caring for our Ukrainian brothers and sisters.

**For details on ways you can give please see the bulletin board in the Vestibule / Narthex.**

**WEEKLY GIVING UPDATE:** We thank you for your continued giving in gratitude for all that our loving God does for each of us, for His Holy Church, and all the blessings we receive through her.

**Weekly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$2,840**  
**Monthly Cost to Keep the Church Open: \$12,305**  
**Collections last Sunday: \$3,488.50**

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

**April Birthdays:** Miriam Clark (4/6), Marie Dutko (4/6), Pearl Tutko (4/8), Alec Breisch (4/9), Alex Holoviak (4/9), Vladimir Holoviak (4/19), Eli King (4/21), Jordan Dutko (4/23), Debbie Greenward **Anniversaries:** Fr. Innocent & Mat. Melanie Neal (4/22), Dave & Dolores Voda, Eva & Stephen Nealon (4/29)

**This Week's Birthdays:** Could it be yours? Let us know!



## Words of Wisdom From the Saints & Teachers

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### Sunday of St. John of the Ladder

*from oca.org*

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to Saint John Climakos, 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).

**PARISH PRAYER LIST Living:** Cynthia Dulsky, Theodore & Elenor Sovryda, Nadine Breisch, Sonja & Leanne Kay, Josie Bissett, Lisa & Scott Harvey, Daniel & Shannon Bissett, Delores Karas, Archpriest Daniel & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Violet Filipi, Catherine, Danny Gobish, Lorraine Pace, Peter Holoviak & Family, Evelyn Kosmiski, Joe Sloan, Matushka Elizabeth, Karen Maier, John Metz, Tim, Jeri Basarab, Fr. Theodore Orzolek, Bernie Elko, Delores Voda, Mary Ann Lepa, Eric, Mat. Delores Donlick, Archpriest Vladimir Fetchko, Dorothy Sysak, James Clark, Vasilli (Bill) Talpash, Barbara, Jodi, Diane, David **Departed:** Dolores Karas, Tina, Alfred, Nathaniel

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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,<sup>1</sup> 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 Igoumen 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.

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## QUOTES FROM ST. JOHN (CLIMACUS) OF THE LADDER

*“Humility is the only thing that no devil can imitate.”*

*“Do not make judgments, and you will travel no quicker road to the forgiveness of your sins. 'Judge not, so that you may not be judged' (Lk. 6:37).”*

*“The friend of silence comes close to God.”*

*“Do not regard the feelings of a person who speaks to you about his neighbor disparagingly, but rather say to him: 'Stop, brother! I fall into graver sins every day, so how can I criticize him? In this way you will achieve two things; you will heal yourself and your neighbor with one plaster. This is one of the shortest ways to the forgiveness of sins; I mean, not to judge. 'Judge not, and ye shall not be judged.'”*

*“God belongs to all free beings. He is the life of all, the salvation of all ~faithful and unfaithful, just and unjust, pious and impious, passionate and dispassionate, monks and laymen, wise and simple, healthy and sick, young and old just as the effusion of light, the sight of the sun, and the changes of the seasons are for all alike; 'for there is no respect of persons with God.'”*

*“Become aware of God, in whose presence you are while you pray . . . Then take a formula of prayer and recite it with perfect attention both to the words you are saying and to the Person to whom you are saying them.”*

*“God rests within gentle hearts. The gentle and merciful shall sit fearless in His regions, and will inherit Heavenly glory.”*

*“As with the appearance of light, darkness retreats; so, at the fragrance of humility, all anger and bitterness vanishes.”*

*“It can happen that when we are at prayer some brothers come to see us. Then we have to choose either to interrupt our prayer or to sadden our brother by refusing to answer him. But love is greater than prayer. Prayer is one virtue among others, whereas love contains them all.”*

*“Fire and water do not mix, neither can you mix judgment of others with the desire to repent. If a man commits a sin before you at the very moment of his death, pass no judgment, because the judgment of God is hidden from men. It has happened that men have sinned greatly in the open but have done greater deeds in secret, so that those who would disparage them have been fooled, with smoke instead of sunlight in their eyes.”*

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