

## “ASCEND THE LADDER OF THE VIRTUES”

**O**n the 4th Sunday of Lent, we annually commemorate a 7th century monastic saint: ST. JOHN CLIMACUS. He is best remembered today for his spiritual writing entitled the “Ladder of Divine Ascent.” In this marvelous work, he compares the quest for spiritual perfection with climbing a 30-step ladder, with each rung corresponding to a year in the life of Christ that was hidden from the world. Even today, many Orthodox monasteries will begin the season of Great Lent with a public reading of Climacus’ book.

While the “Ladder of Divine Ascent” was written primarily for those living a monastic life, it offers wonderful spiritual advice from which we can all benefit. Listen to some of John’s profound comments in his spiritual work:

**“In a meek heart, the Lord will find rest.”**

**“Humility is a divine shelter to prevent us from seeing our achievements.”**

**“Those who wish to learn the will of God must first suppress their own will.”**

**“Run from places of sin as from the plague, for when fruit is not present, we have no frequent desire to eat it.”**

**“Let your prayers be completely simple. Remember that both the Publican and the Prodigal Son were reconciled with God by praying only one phrase.”**

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin . . . . . Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey . . . . . Litho in U.S.A.

### WELCOME VISITORS AND GUESTS

Please take a moment to fill out a Visitor Card. We invite you to join us for coffee hour in the Fellowship Hall following the Liturgy.

### RECEIVING COMMUNION

Only those Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves may approach the chalice for Holy Communion. Everyone is welcome to partake of the Holy Bread after the Liturgy.

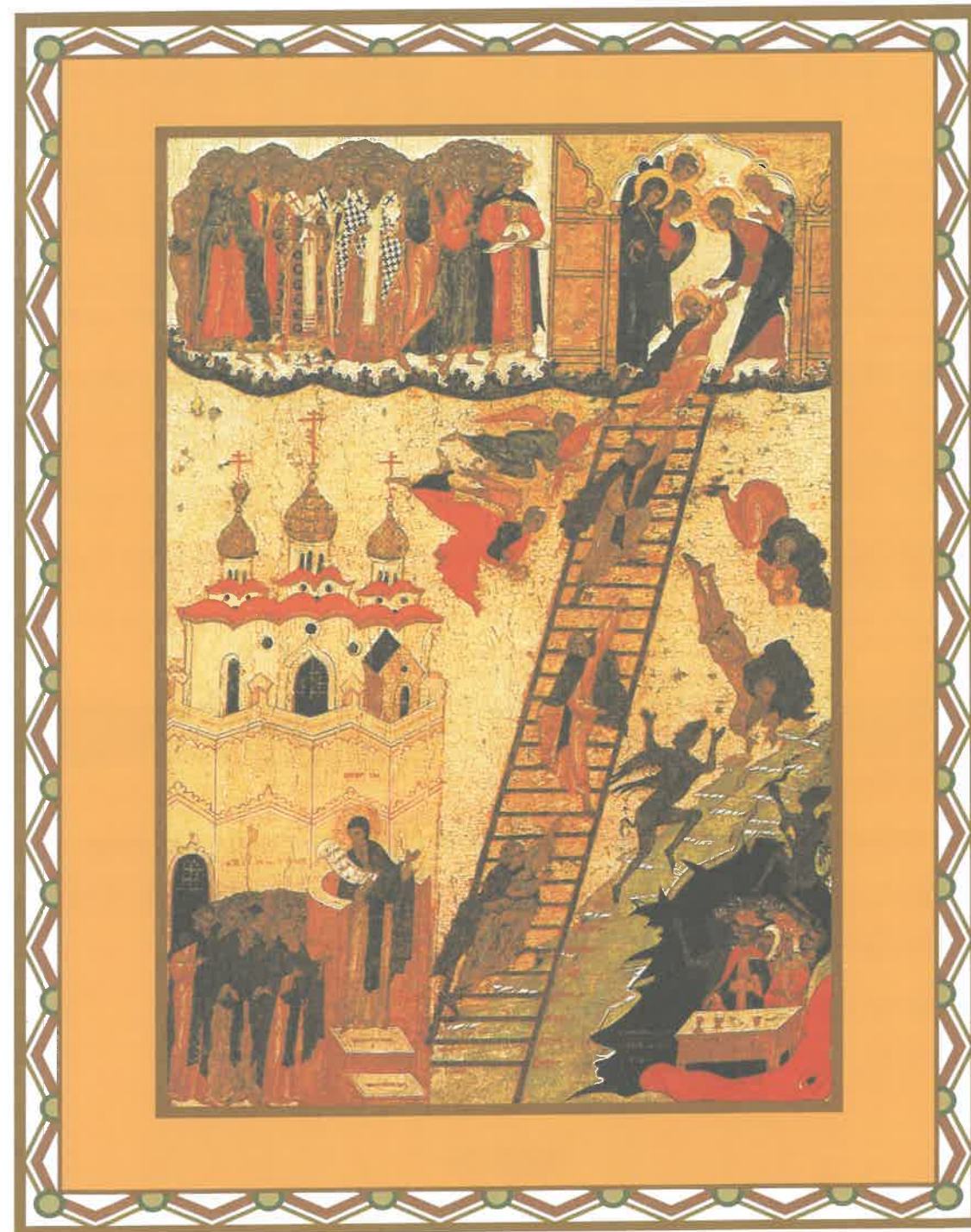
### HOLY OBLATION BREAD AND MEMORIAL WHEAT

If you are offering Holy Bread, please pick up your portion on top of the chanter stand at the end of Liturgy.

If you are offering Memorial Wheat, please provide (300) 3oz Dixie cups.

Please notify the Church Office by end-of-day Tuesday.

**BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS ARE DUE TUESDAY END-OF-DAY.**



April 14, 2024

**ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

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**HOLY OBLATION & MEMORIAL** is offered in memory of Leila Saman Khalaf (6 months) by Khalaf Khalaf, Mutaz Khalaf, Tariq H. Khalaf, Sawsan Khalaf, her grandchildren: Leila Teresa, Saman, Tamara, Karim, Saman, and the Daba'i and Khalaf Families.

**HOLY OBLATION** is offered in memory of Leila, Hilweh, Helena, Jamil, Basil, Nadeem, Mufeed, Lamia & Yacoub and for the health of Joe, Jack, Tala, Dana, Karimeh, Nadi Sr., Jameel, Rania, Nadi, Nadeem, Maya, Liam, Leila, Leora, the Khoury, the Awwad, the Fawaz, the Auty, the Jallouq and the Chalhoub Families.

**HOLY OBLATION** is offered for the health of Anthony Kaim and Kh. Maggie Hock by Heidi Hock Kaim and family.

**HOLY OBLATION** is offered in memory of Mary Kayal and for the health of the Katrib family, the Muffarah family, the Castro family and the Canavos Family.

**HOLY OBLATION** is offered for the health of Moufid & Amal Abla and for the health of Hanna family, Issa family and Saad family by Elias & Isabelle Hanna.

**CHURCHING:** Michael Bajes Zayed son of Bajes & Julia Zayed.

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES**

Monday (4/15)	6:30p Great Compline
Wednesday (4/17)	6:30p Presanctified Liturgy/Lenten Potluck Dinner
Thursday (4/18)	6:30 Little Compline/Canon of St. Andrew/Life of St. Mary
Friday (4/19)	6:30p Akathist to the Theotokos
Saturday (4/20)	6:00p Great Vespers
Sunday (4/21)	8:45a Orthros 10:00a Divine Liturgy

**EVENTS**

**BIBLE STUDY:** Tuesday mornings at 10:00a. studying the Gospel of John.

**STUDY OF THE LITURGY:** With Fr. Mark on Thursday mornings at 10am.

**ASK ABOUNA** will meditate on Orthodox Spirituality during Lent.

**THE GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP:** will resume meeting once a month the last Sunday of every month after Ask Abouna at 12:30 PM in the Library. This month it will be on 4/21.

**ST. GEORGE 50 + BUS TRIP:** will be visiting the St. Paraskevi Monastery Thursday, 4/18. To reserve your seat please call Faika Zaid (713-213-3211). Bus leaves St. George @ 10:00 AM. Nice fellowship trip during lent.

**ANNUAL MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATIONS:** St. George Ladies Altar society is hosting the annual Mother's Day celebration on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at 12pm at the church hall. Tickets are \$50 and \$75. For reservation, please contact Yolla Jabbour at 281-468-2219.



**PALM SUNDAY HADDOCK FISH FRY:** On Sunday 4/28, St Nicholas Men's Group will have its annual Fish Fry. Plates will be sold for \$20.00. All meals are to-go. Tickets can be purchased either by scanning the QR code (please pay in \$20 increments) or in the Hall after Sunday Liturgy. There will be no tickets sales on the day of the event.

**OUR PARISHIONER JASMINE HUNTER** is doing a photoethnography project for a class at Rice U. She will be snapping pictures of how the hall space is used as the church. Her project will not be published. All faces will be blurred. Questions (jasminehunter@gmail.com).

**FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITY CENTER**

**FAC TOWN HALL ON MAY 19TH:** Do you have any questions, concerns or just looking for additional information? Immediately following services on May 19th, meet us in the hall to get the answers you're looking for. Reach out to Zach Abercia zach.abercia@gmail.com for additional questions.

**HOUSTON MED FEST 2024:** Save the date (10/26) for this year's Med Fest! Stay tuned on additional information on how you can help make this year a success! Reach out to Rana Abercia rdeeba@gmail.com for additional information.

**STEWARDSHIP**



**2024 PLEDGE STEWARDSHIP "NEW BEGINNINGS":** Our 2024 Pledge Campaign is now open, please prayerfully commit to your home of St. George.

**Please scan the QR code to the left to submit your 2024 Pledge Commitment.** In an effort to simplify the pledging process, a new system (Tithe.ly)

has been implemented.

**To donate, give towards your 2024 pledge or to set up recurring payments, scan QR code to the right.**



**YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT EVENTS**



**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL:** is back at Saint George and registration is now open! Scan the QR code to register before May 1st for the early bird price of \$35 per kid (\$40 each after the deadline). Volunteers also need to fill out a form.

**TEEN SOYO MONASTERY TRIP:** Saturday, April 20th, Teen SOYO will be going to Saint Paraskevi Monastery. We will leave from Saint George around 8:30am. Please RSVP with Chris (chrisaldehyeh@gmail.com) since a final headcount will be needed to make sure there are enough cars.

**LAZARUS SATURDAY PICNIC:** 4/27 beginning with Liturgy at 10a followed by our annual picnic, Easter egg hunt, lunch, and petting zoo! To volunteer (chrisaldehyeh@gmail.com).

# FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST

Commemoration of our Venerable Father John of the Ladder  
(The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great)

I. *The Antiphons and Psalm verses as in the service book.*

II. *After the Little Entrance, the following are chanted:*

*-The troparion of the Resurrection in tone 4:*

Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation. And proudly broke the news to the Disciples, saying: Death hath been spoiled; Christ God is risen, granting the world Great Mercy.

*-The troparion of John of the Ladder in tone 8:*

The barren wilderness thou didst make fertile with the streams of thy tears; and by thy deep sighing thou hast given fruit through thy struggles a hundredfold. Accordingly, thou hast become a star for the universe, sparkling with miracles. Therefore, O righteous Father John Climacus, intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

*-The troparion of St. George in tone 4:*

As deliverer of captives, and defender of the poor, healer of the infirm, champion of kings, victorious Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ our God, for our souls' salvation.

*- The kontakion of Lent in tone 8:*

To thee the champion leader do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free, from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.

## The Epistle

O Lord, how magnified are Thy works. In wisdom hast Thou made them all.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

*The reading is from the Holy Apostle Paul to the Hebrews (6:13-20).*

"Brethren: When God made a promise to Abraham, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore to Himself, saying, 'Surely I will bless you and multiply you.' And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of His purpose, He interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

## The Epistle in Arabic

ما أعظم أعمالك يارب، كلها بحكمة صنعت.

باركي يا نفسي الرب.

(6:13-20) فصل من رسالة القديس بولس الرسول إلى العبرانيين

يا إخوة إن الله لما وعد إبراهيم إذ لم يمكن أن يقسم بما هو أعظم منه أقسم بنفسه \* قائلاً لأباركك بركة وأكثرتك كثيراً \* وذلك إذ تأتى نال الموعد \* وإنما الناس يقسمون بما هو أعظم منهم ويتقضي كل مشاجرة بينهم بالقسم للتثبيت \* فلذلك لما شاء الله أن يزيد ورثة الموعد بياناً لعدم تحول عزمه توسط القسم \* حتى تحصل بأمرين لا يتحولان ولا يمكن أن يخلف الله فيهما على تعزية قوية نحن الذين التجأنا إلى التمسك بالرجاء الموضوع أضماماً \* الذي هو لنا كمرساة للنفس أمانة راسخة، تَدْخُلُ الى داخلِ الحجاب \* حيث دخل يسوع كسابقٍ لأجلنا وقد صار على رتبة ملكيصادق رئيس كهنة الى الأبد.

## The Gospel

*The reading is from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark (9:17-31).*

"At that time, a man came to Jesus and kneeling said to Him, 'Teacher, I brought my son to You, for he has a dumb spirit; and wherever it seizes him, it dashes him down; and he foams and grinds his teeth and becomes rigid; and I asked Your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able.' And He answered them, 'O faithless generation, how long am I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to Me.' And they brought the boy to Him; and when the spirit saw Him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, 'How long has he had this?' And he said, 'From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if You can do anything, have pity on us and help us.' And 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, 'I believe, Lord; help my unbelief!' And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit saying to it, 'You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again.' And after crying out and convulsing him it came out, and the boy was like a corpse; so that most of them said, 'he is dead.' But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when He had entered the house, His disciples asked Him privately, 'Why could we not cast it out?' And He said to them, 'This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting.' They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And He would not have any one know it; for He was teaching His disciples, saying to them, 'The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He is killed, after three days He will rise.'"

## The Gospel in Arabic

فصل شريف من بشارة القديس مرقس الإنجيلي البشير والتلميذ الطاهر (9 : 17-30)

في ذلك الزمان دنا إلى يسوع إنسانٌ وسجد له قائلاً يا معلم قد أتيتك بابني به روح أحم \* وحيثما أخذه يصرعه فيرذ ويصرف بأسنانه ويبيس. وقد سألت تلاميذك أن يخرجوه فلم يقدرُوا \* فأجابته قائلاً أيها الجيل الغير المؤمن إلى متى أكون عندكم حتى متى أحتملكم هلم به إلي \* فأتوه به. فلما رآه للوقت صرعه الروح فسقط على الأرض يترنخ ويترذ \* فسأل أباه منذ كم من الزمان أصابه هذا \* فقال منذ صباه \* وكثيراً ما ألقاه في النار وفي المياه ليهلكه. لكن إن استطعت شيئاً فتحتن علينا وأغننا \* فقال له يسوع إن استطعت أن تؤمن فكل شيء مستطاع للمؤمن \* فصاح أبو الصبي من ساعته بدموع وقال إني أومن يا سيد. فأعث عدم إيماني \* فلما رأى يسوع أن الجمع يتبادرون إليه انتهر الروح النجس قائلاً له أيها الروح الأحم أنا أمرك أن اخرج منه ولا تغد تدخل فيه \* فصرخ وخبطه كثيراً وخرج منه فصار كالميت حتى قال كثيرون إنه قد مات \* فأخذ يسوع بيده وأنهضه فقام \* ولما دخل بيتاً سأله تلاميذه على انفراد لماذا لم نستطع نحن أن نخرجه \* فقال لهم إن هذا الجنس لا يمكن أن يخرج بشيء إلا بالصلاة والصوم \* ولما خرجوا من هناك اجتازوا في الجليل ولم يريد أن يدري أحد \* فإنه كان يعلم تلاميذه ويقول لهم إن ابن البشر سيلم إلى أيدي الناس فيقتلونه وبعد أن يقتل يقوم في اليوم الثالث.