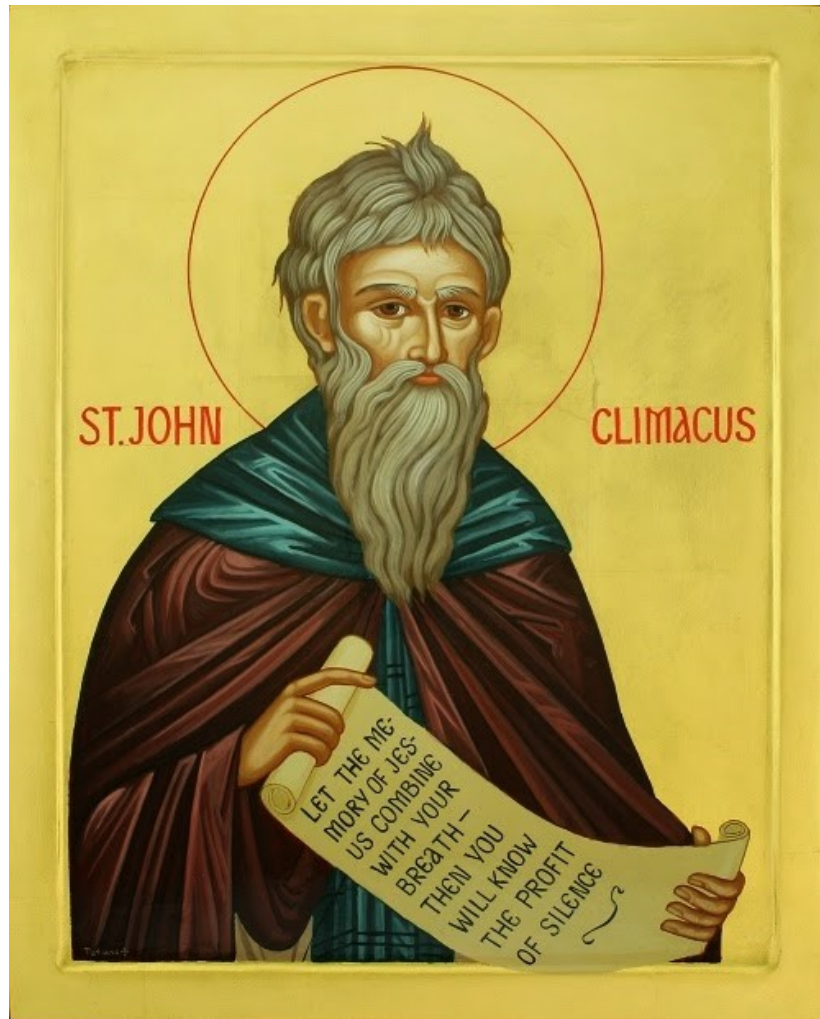


From the Divine Office for the Fourth Sunday of Great Lent

O venerable and holy father John, with full voice, you have unceasingly sung the praises of God. You have meditated upon His inspired words in the Scriptures that teach us how to make them wisely bear much fruit in the spiritual life. Having become rich in heavenly grace, you have deserved unending happiness and have overcome the plots of the ungodly. (Vespers)

Come, let us labor in the mystical vineyard, gathering the fruits of repentance within it; for we do not work to fill ourselves with food and drink, but to cultivate virtue through fasting and prayer. Thus we shall please the Lord, the Master of the Vineyard, who will give us recompense by redeeming our souls from the debt of sin; for He alone is rich in mercy (Orthros)



**FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
MARCH 27, 2022**



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church
256 Hamilton St.
Worcester, MA 01604
Rectory: (508) 752-4174 Hall: (508) 755-2199
Email: olphmelkite@gmail.com
Rev. Bryan McNeil, Pastor
Email: Brymc56@comcast.net Cell: (978) 314-1962
Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. BASIL

Antiphon (1st)

1: Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth, and sing praise to His name.

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

2: Say to God: How awesome are Your deeds! So great is Your power that Your enemies cringe before You.

Be shafa'ati Walidatil Eelah, ya Mukhallisu, khallisna.

3: Let all the earth worship You and sing praises to You; let it sing praises to Your name, O Most High!

Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Savior, save us.

Entrance Hymn

Priest: Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ.

People: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia!

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 3) pg. 39

Let all in heaven rejoice, and all on earth be glad, for the Lord has exerted power with His arm: By death He has trampled upon Death and has become the firstborn from the dead. He has delivered us from the bosom of Hades and has granted to the world great mercy.

Troparion of the St. John Climacus (Tone 8)

Your abundant tears made the wilderness to sprout and bloom, and your deep sighs of love made your labors fruitful a hundredfold; you became a shining star showering miracle upon the world. Holy Father John, pray to Christ God that He may save our souls.

Patronal Troparion (Tone 1) Pg. 15

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity and in falling asleep you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, save our souls from death.

Kondakion of The Annunciation (Tone 8-English this week)

We your servants ascribe to you O Mother of God: thank offerings of victory, O Champion Leader; for we have been liberated from terror; but as you have that invincible power; do you free us from danger; so that we may cry out to you: Hail, O Virgin and Bride ever pure.

“Forgetting the wrongs we have suffered is a sign of true repentance. But he who dwells on them and thinks that he is repenting is like a man who thinks he is running while he is really asleep.” *From the Ninth Rung* “He who has become aware of his sins has controlled his tongue, but a talkative person has not yet come to know himself as he should.” *From the Eleventh Rung* “He who has tasted the things on high easily despises what is below; but he who has not tasted the things above finds joy in possessions.” *From the Seventeenth Rung* “It is not darkness or the desolateness of place that gives the demons power against us, but barrenness of soul. Through God’s providence this sometimes happens in order that we may learn by it.” *From the Twenty- First Rung*

“Blasphemous thoughts, that deceiver and corrupter of souls, has often driven many out of their mind. No other thought is so difficult to tell in confession as this. That is why it often remains with many to the very end of their lives. For nothing gives the demons and bad thoughts such power over us as nourishing and hiding them in our heart unconfessed.” *From the Twenty-third Rung* “The natural property of the lemon tree is such that it lifts its branches upwards when it has no fruit; but the more the branches bend down, the more fruit they bear. Those who have the mind to understand will grasp the meaning of this.” *From the Twenty-Fifth Rung* “Before all else let us first list sincere thanksgiving on the scroll of our prayer. On the second line we should put confession and heartfelt contrition of soul. Then let us present our petition to the King of all. This is the best way of prayer, as it was shown to one of the brethren by an angel of the Lord.” “If you feel sweetness or compunction at some word of your prayer, dwell on it; for then our guardian angel is praying with us.” “Your prayer will show you what condition you are in. Theologians say that prayer is the mirror of the monk.” *From the Twenty-Eighth Rung*

And if You Are Not a Monk...

“Some people living carelessly in the world have asked me ‘We have wives and are beset with social cares, and how can we lead the solitary life?’ ‘I replied to them, ‘Do all the good you can. Do not speak evil of anyone. Do not steal from anyone. Do not lie to anyone. Do not be arrogant towards anyone. Do not hate anyone. Do not be absent from the divine services. Be compassionate to the needy. Do not offend anyone. Do not wreck another man’s domestic happiness and be content with what your own wives can give you. If you behave in this way, you will not be far from the Kingdom of Heaven.’” *From the First Rung*

“Let us observe and we shall find that the spiritual trumpet serves as an outward signal for the gathering of the brethren, but it is also the unseen signal for the assembly of our foes. Some of them stand by our bed and, when we get up, urge us to lie down again. ‘Wait,’ they say, ‘until the preliminary hymns are finished, then you can go to church.’ Others plunge those standing at prayer into sleep. Some produce severe, unusual pains in the stomach. Others urge us on to make conversation in church. Some entice the mind to shameful thoughts. Others make us lean against the wall as though from fatigue. Sometimes they involve us in fits of yawning. Some of them bring on waves of laughter during prayer... Some force us to hurry the reading or chanting merely from laziness; others suggest that we should chant more slowly for the pleasure of it, and sometimes they sit at our mouths and shut them so that we can scarcely open them. He who reckons with feeling of heart that he is standing before God in prayer shall be an unshakable pillar, and none of the aforesaid demons will make sport of him.” *From the Nineteenth Rung*

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today **People of Ukraine living and deceased**
HS of James Rahall. Requested by Nicholas Rahall
+Wayne Kallio (2yr.). Requested by Susan Aboody-Kallio and family

Today's Coffee Hr. is hosted by the Aboody-Kallio family

Next week's Coffe Hr. is hosted by Laurance & Saimon Aulo

Last Week's Collection

Weekly	\$751
Candles	\$ 31
Coffee Hr.	\$ 52
Easter Flowers	\$ 95
Diocesan	\$ 30
TOTAL	\$ 959

God bless you for your generosity!



St. Vincent de Paul Collection Box

We now have a collection box for St. Vincent de Paul in the parking lot. It is for **clothes and shoes only**. Feel free to put your donations in the box. Please do not leave them on the ground in front of the box. If the box is full, let me know and I'll have it emptied.

Thank you in advance for your generosity!

CHURCH CLEANING DAY

Please join us on Saturday April 9 at 10AM to clean the church and hall for Pascha.

If you can lend a hand for an hour or so, it will be much appreciated.

THIS WEEK'S LENTEN SEVICE SCHEDULE

Mon Mar 28, 6PM - Great Compline

Wed Mar 30, 6PM - Presanctified Liturgy

Fri Apr 1, 6PM - Akathist Hymn (Week 5)

Sun Apr 27, 10AM - Divine Liturgy of St. Basil. 5th Sunday of Great Lent. Commemoration of St. Mary of Egypt

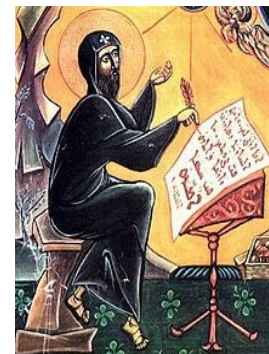
COFFEE HOUR

Please join us after the Divine Liturgy this morning for the Coffee Hour. It is a chance for us to catch up with each other and share Christian fellowship. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Hall. Please sign up to take a turn hosting. We are now in Great Lent, so there should be no meat or eggs. It will be nice to share food and fellowship once again. I have missed it! I hope you have as well!

Thanks be to God that Archie Opatka is now **cancer free!!** Joe and Christie send their heartfelt love and thanks for all your prayers and support during this difficult time. We look forward to seeing the family at Divine Liturgy again soon!

Please Remember in your prayers: Susan Arraje, George Arraj, Jr., Robert Ghiz, Archie Opatka, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, Ruth Welsh, and people of Ukraine.

If there are people for whom you would like me to pray, please reach out and give me their names. Part of our vocation as Christians is to pray for each other, especially when someone is sick or suffering in any way.



PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM THE SYRIAN

O Lord and Master of my life, grant that I not be infected with the spirit of slothfulness and inquisitiveness, the spirit of ambition and vain talking. Grant instead to your servant the spirit of purity and humility, the spirit of patience and neighborly love.

O Lord and King, bestow upon me the grace of being aware of my sins and of not thinking evil of those of my brethren, for You are blessed forever and ever.

Fruit of the Desert - Saint John Climacus

AT THE FOOT OF MOUNT SINAI, in the Egyptian peninsula of the same name, sits the monastery of St Catherine. It has been inhabited continuously for over 1700 years, making it one of the oldest such places in the world. Its unique climate has preserved icons and manuscripts from the first millennium AD that look as if they were just made. The greatest treasures it has produced, however, are its spiritual riches: over 170 saints honored in the Greek Orthodox and Catholic Churches, chief among them being St John Climacus.

A native of the region, St John lived in the sixth century. At 16 he became a monk and spent the rest of his life as an ascetic. For most of his life he lived in a hermitage at the foot of the mountain. When he was 75, he was chosen as abbot of St Catherine's Monastery but ended his life back in solitude, as a desert-dwelling ascetic.

In the early seventh century another John, abbot of the Raithu monastery on the shores of the Red Sea, asked our John to write a guide to the spiritual life for the monks of Raithu. The result was the *klimax* or *Ladder* by which John of Sinai has been known ever since. Using the imagery of Jacob's ladder (see Gen 28:10-19), he portrays the ascetic life as a climb to heaven with each rung on the ladder being a virtue to be acquired.

A twelfth-century icon preserved at the monastery shows monks climbing this ladder. Some acquire all the virtues and complete the ascent to God; others fall off, pulled down by the passions, unable to endure the ascetic life to the end.

It has long been the custom in monasteries to read *The Ladder* each year during the Great Fast. This is turn gave rise to the commemoration of St John on the Fourth Sunday of the Fast.

The Rungs of the Ladder

The first seven rungs portray the most basic virtues necessary for an ascetic life: renunciation of the world, detachment from what was left behind, exile from all we have known, obedience (which is voluntary death of the ego), repentance, the remembrance of death, and cultivating a spirit of mourning. The remaining rungs detail steps needed to make progress on this way of life, such as freedom from anger and irritability, forgetting of wrongs suffered, avoiding gossip and slander, and conquering despondency. Battling gluttony, lust and greed through fasting from food, drink and sleep are depicted as the daily work of the monk. "The farmer's wealth is gathered on the threshing floor and in the wine-press, but the wealth and knowledge of monks is gathered during the evening and the night hours while standing in prayer and engaging in spiritual activity" (Step 20). On subsequent rings the monk confronts more dangerous enemies – pride and vanity – through humility and the revealing of one's inmost thoughts. Only through the acquisition of these virtues can the monk attain to prayer, love, and heaven on earth: the state of communion with God.

Some Excerpts from The Ladder

"Blessed is he who, though maligned and disparaged every day for the Lord's sake, constrains himself to be patient. He will join the chorus of the martyrs and boldly converse with the angels. "Blessed is the monk who regards himself as hourly deserving every dishonor and disparagement. Blessed is he who mortifies his own will to the end, and leaves the care of himself to his director in the Lord; for he will be placed at the right hand of the Crucified. He who will not accept a reproof, just or unjust, renounces his own salvation. But he who accepts it with an effort, or even without an effort, will soon receive the remission of his sins." *From the Fourth Rung*

Prokimenon

Reader: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.

People: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.

Verse: Give to the Lord. You sons of God, give to the Lord glory and praise.

People: The Lord will give strength to His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace.

Reader: The Lord will give strength to His people;

People: The Lord will bless His people with peace.

Epistle: Heb. 6:13-20

Alleluia Verses

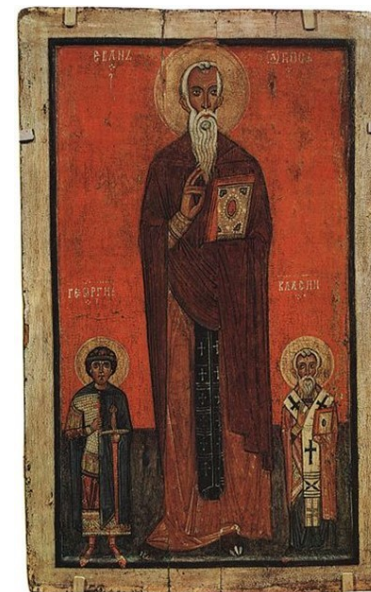
It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to Your name, O Most High!

Verse: To proclaim Your kindness at dawn and Your faithfulness throughout the night.

Gospel: Mk. 9:17-31

Hirmos of Saint Basil (Tone 3-Arabic this week)

In you, O Full of Grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of angels and the human race as well: O Sanctified Temple, Spiritual Paradise, and glory of Virgins, from whom our God, who exists before all eternity, took flesh and became a little Child! He has taken your womb as His throne, making it more spacious than the heavens. Therefore, Full of Grace, in you all creation rejoices: glory to you!



Fasting ends lust, roots our bad thoughts, frees one from evil dreams. Fasting makes for purity of prayer, an enlightened soul, a watchful mind, a deliverance from blindness. Fasting is the door of compunction, humble sighing, joyful contrition, and end to chatter, an occasion for silence, a custodian of obedience, a lightening of sleep, health of the body, an agent of dispassion, a remission of sins, the gate, indeed, the delight of Paradise.

-St. John Climacus

Eucharistic Virtue