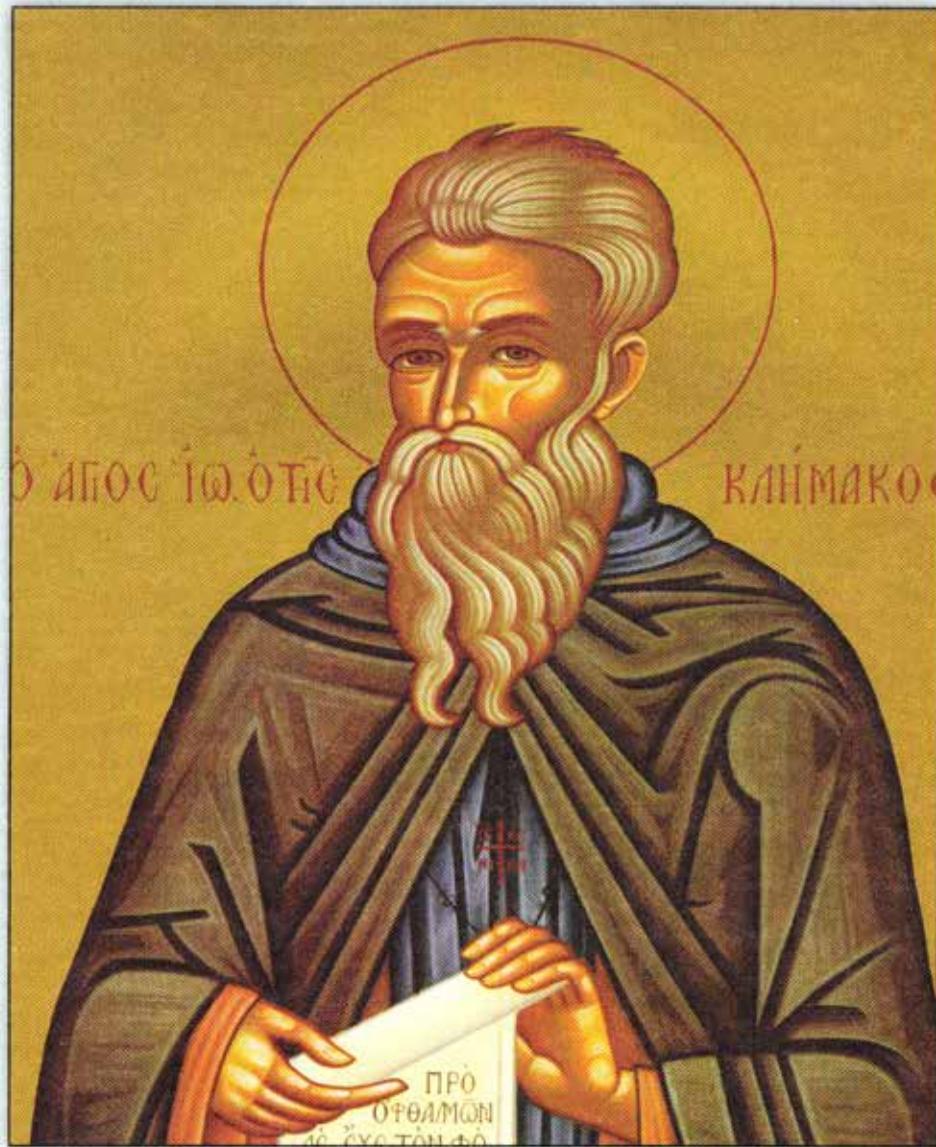


FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST
SUNDAY OF ST. JOHN CLIMACUS



Icon of Saint John Climacus

March 30, 2014

4TH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST – TONE 4

OUR VENERABLE FATHER JOHN CLIMACUS, AUTHOR OF “THE LADDER”

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 31– APRIL 6

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

6:30 PM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

THURSDAY, APRIL 3 – OUR VENERABLE FATHER AND CONFESSOR NICETAS, HEGUMEN OF THE MEDIKION MONASTERY

9:30 AM – Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete with Life of St. Mary of Egypt

FRIDAY, APRIL 4

9:30 AM – Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

SATURDAY, APRIL 5 – *AKATHIST SATURDAY; THE HOLY MARTYRS THEODULUS, AGATHAPODUS AND THEIR COMPANIONS*

PLEASE NOTE: No Vespers this evening

SUNDAY, APRIL 6 – *5TH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST – MARY OF EGYPT; OUR FATHER AMONG THE SAINTS EUTYCHIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE; THE FALLING ASLEEP OF OUR FATHER METHODIUS, BISHOP AND TEACHER OF THE SLAVS*

8:45 AM – Divine Praises

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy

For All Parishioners

Eastern Catholic Lenten Vespers

Let us join our Eastern Catholic brothers and sisters in coming together for Lenten Vespers on the following Sundays at 7:00 PM:

- **March 30** – at Holy Angels Byzantine Catholic Church, 2235 Galahad Rd, San Diego
Hosted by St. Jacob Melkite Greek-Catholic Community.

Looking Ahead:

- ❖ March 30th – “Soup’s On” Sunday
- ❖ April 2 – Paska Baking: 9:00 AM
- ❖ April 5 – Paska Baking: 9:00 AM
- ❖ April 13th – Easter Bake Sale
- ❖ April 20th – Pascha - Пасха
- ❖ April 27th – Parish Sviachenne Meal

Order your Paska for Easter!

Small: \$4.00

Medium: \$7.00

Large: \$10.00

See Olga Miller to place your order.

Scrip

We are in the process of establishing a “Scrip” program in the parish. We hope to have everything in place very soon.

Flower Collection

Special envelopes are available in the back of the church do help with the purchase of flowers for the Feast of Pascha.

Last Sunday’s Bulletin

If you haven’t yet picked up last Sunday’s bulletin, it is available in the church hall, or on our website, stjohnthebaptizer.org.

Please Note:

When you are away, please don’t forget that the church still relies on your contributions. Our bills do not go on vacation. Your absence on any Sunday does not negate your obligation to support your home parish.

ABOUT THE VICTORY OVER THE LAST ENEMY
From the Prologue of Ochrid /
St. Nikolai Velimirovich

**“The last enemy to be destroyed is death”
(1 Cor 15:26).**

Man’s first enemy is the devil, the second is sin and the third is death. The Lord Jesus conquered all three of these enemies of the human race. By His humility, He conquered the proud devil. By His death, He conquered sin and by His resurrection, He conquered death. In conquering all of our enemies, He invites us to be partakers in His glorious victory. Not only that we conquer but that we win together with Him. Only His power conquers, only His weapons triumph. Alone we are without power and weapons, and our enemies are fearsome. But with Him, we conquer those mightier than ourselves. What is the price that He offers to us for His victory? A meager price, my brethren; for a very paltry price He offers us the most precious victory. To humble ourselves and to submit ourselves to the will of God, that is the price He seeks in order to conquer the devil for us. To die unto ourselves, to die to fleshly desires and passions, that is the price which He seeks in order to conquer for us. To live for Him and not for ourselves, to receive Him into our hearts, that is the price He seeks in order to conquer death for us. He conquered all enemies openly and completely. This is the price for which He offers His victory to each of us. The Apostle Paul speaks: “But thanks be to God Who gives us the victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 15:57).

**THE ONE WHO IS PERFECTLY
“AT HOME” IN THIS WORLD
AND ITS LIFE, WHO HAS
NEVER BEEN WOUNDED BY
THE NOSTALGIC DESIRE FOR
ANOTHER REALITY, WILL
NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT
REPENTANCE IS.**

– FR. ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN



ABOUT THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT

In the sixth century, a monk of Mount Sinai named John wrote a book outlining the stages of the spiritual life. He based his entire work on the image of a ladder of thirty rungs, stretching from earth to heaven. Each rung described a step in the pursuit of virtue and the spiritual life. Since it was first written, The Ladder of Divine Ascent has been an essential part of the formation of Eastern Christian monastics, and a mainstay of Eastern Christian ascetic spirituality. However, The Ladder is not just for monks and nuns because all Christians are called to make an ascent to the heights of heaven. For this reason the Church places the commemoration of Saint John and his Ladder on the 4th Sunday of the Great Fast, as the faithful continue their ascent with the Lord to Golgotha and through Golgotha to His Heavenly Kingdom.

The 30 Steps of the Ladder of Divine Ascent

- ❖ Steps 1–4: renouncement of the world and obedience to a spiritual father
- ❖ Steps 5–7: penitence and affliction as paths to true joy
- ❖ Steps 8–17: the defeat of vices and acquisition of virtue
- ❖ Steps 18–26: avoidance of the traps of asceticism (laziness, pride, mental stagnation)
- ❖ Steps 27–29: acquisition of stillness or peace of the soul, of prayer, and of dispassion
- ❖ Step 30: the union of faith, hope, and love

Why I Would Never Force my Kids to go to Church

Posted by Ruth Meyer in Encouragement, Family life, Witness

truthnotes.net

My parents forced me to eat three times a day growing up. No joke. Three times. Every. Single. Day. And it wasn't always stuff I liked, either. Matter of fact, I complained a lot about what my mom made. "Ewww, gross! Sauteed zucchini? Seriously? Mom, you know we hate this stuff!" So as I approached adulthood I made an important decision. Since my parents forced me to eat while I was growing up, I decided I was done with meals. Oh, here and there I'll eat out of obligation. I mean, family traditions like Thanksgiving and Christmas, yeah, I'm there. But daily eating? No way. I'm done.

Set in any other context, excuses people make for not going to church sound completely ridiculous. But set in the context of Christianity, people say these things in all seriousness while others nod sagely in somber agreement.

My son told me a few weeks into school that he didn't like the teacher. He wasn't getting excited enough about learning, and he didn't really feel connected to the other kids in his class, so I told him he never had to go back to school again. Who wants to waste their time going somewhere where they aren't being fulfilled?

We've never forced our daughter to stay off the road when playing. We don't want to restrict her imagination. We allow her the freedom to make her own choices in life.

Okay, Ruth. Come on. That one was just ridiculous. No loving parent would ever say that. That's a safety issue- a matter of life and death. Exactly. And that's just my point.

Church isn't a place you go to get pumped up about life. It isn't entertainment like a movie or concert. It is literally a life and death matter. Eternal life. Just as a loving parent wouldn't

allow their child to wander in the road or to quit school, a loving Christian parent also does not give the option to their children about going to church, learning Bible stories at home, and praying together. Do your kids always jump for joy when they hear you say, "Time to get up! Let's get ready for church!" No. They won't. Do they get excited for school every morning? Hardly. But you still make them go. Why? Because you are the parent and you know what's best. Even when they complain, you serve them healthful meals and limit their junk food intake. You set boundaries for their own safety when playing outside. You insist they go to school because you're looking at the long term picture. And you are right to do those things. How much more so are you responsible for doing all you can to secure their eternal well being?

Yes, kids can be brought up in a loving Christian home and still turn away later. That's on them. But you, parents, have a task of the utmost importance. God has placed these precious children into your homes for such a brief while. You have them with you for perhaps 1/5 of their lives. Set a strong foundation while they are under your roof. Take them to church. Make sure they understand that they are sinners and that Jesus is their Savior. They are never too young to learn this. My one-and-a-half year old sees a cross and excitedly shouts, "Jesus!" Don't use the excuse that "they wouldn't understand this." Try them. I don't understand it all myself, but I still believe. And you'd better believe that the Holy Spirit works in their hearts effectively. My children sometime amaze me with the insights they pick up during devotions or Bible readings. The strength of their faith often humbles me.

Once when I was having a terrible day, my oldest asked, “Can I pray with you?” He was nine at the time. He knows there is power in prayer. He perceives that sometimes there’s nothing he can say that will make it better, so he’ll just go straight to the One who does have that power. Do my own kids complain about church? Yes. Do they tell me it’s boring? Sometimes, yes. They say the same things about school. But church and school are different environments for a reason. School is centered around learning and thus has its own schedule and structure. Church is a hospital for sinners. That would be all of us, mind you. You, me, the drug dealer a few streets away- all of us are sinners in need of a Savior. So what do we do at church? We confess our sins. Why do we do this at the start? To “wipe our feet” before entering God’s house, so to speak. Then we are assured of forgiveness. We hear God’s Word. We sing hymns proclaiming what Christ has done for us. We hear sermons where our pastors preach Christ. We don’t go to church to hear what we have to do to gain heaven. No,

Christ did it all. 100%. We can’t do one thing to merit salvation for ourselves. That’s why we hear sermons about Jesus and not about us. We take the body and blood of Jesus in Holy Communion for the strength of our souls. And we depart refreshed to serve God by serving our families, friends, and neighbors in Christian love.

So parents, don’t give in to outside pressures telling you not to force your kids to go to church. Don’t give in to them, either, when they complain about it. Because at some point an amazing thing happens- that kid who complains about church grows up and takes his or her own kids to church every Sunday. Going back to my opening analogy, believe it or not, there came a point in my own life where I realized I actually liked sauteed zucchini (although I never would have admitted that to my mother). Keep at it, parents. Just as we need three meals a day for physical strength and nourishment, so do we need regular worship to refresh and strengthen our souls. Now, if you’ll excuse me, I need to go make breakfast.

Educators can distinguish between the programs of study suitable for beginners, for the intermediate, and for teachers. And we ought to ensure that we do not spend an unduly long time at the beginner’s stage, for it would be a disgrace to have an old man going to kindergarten.

– St. John of the Ladder – 7th Century

What is tithing?

In Sacred Scripture, tithing is the setting aside of 10% of the “first fruits” of one’s labors. Many Protestant congregations strongly encourage and sometimes even require their faithful to tithe. While we don’t require it, I certainly encourage you to consider tithing. If not 10%, perhaps 5%.

If your monthly income is:

**A 10% tithe would be
per month**

**A 5% tithe would be
per month**

\$1,000
\$2,000
\$4,000
\$6,000
etc...

\$100
\$200
\$400
\$600

\$50
\$100
\$200
\$300

Preparation for Confession

by St. John of Kronstadt

I, a sinful soul, confess to our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, all of my evil acts which I have done, said or thought from baptism even unto this present day.

I have not kept the vows of my baptism, but have made myself unwanted before the face of God.

I have sinned before the Lord by lack of faith and by doubts concerning the Orthodox Faith and the Holy Church; by ungratefulness for all of God's great and unceasing gifts; His long-suffering and His providence for me, a sinner; by lack of love for the Lord, as well as fear, through not fulfilling the Holy Commandments of God and the canons and rules of the Church.

I have not preserved a love for God and for my neighbor nor have I made enough efforts, because of laziness and lack of care, to learn the Commandments of God and the precepts of the Holy Fathers. I have sinned: by not praying in the morning and in the evening and in the course of the day; by not attending services or by coming to Church only halfheartedly.

I have sinned by judging members of the clergy. I have sinned by not respecting the Feasts, breaking the Fasts, and by immoderation in food and drink.

I have sinned by self importance, disobedience, willfulness, self-righteousness, and the seeking of approval and praise.

I have sinned by unbelief, lack of faith, doubts, despair, despondency, abusive thoughts, blasphemy and swearing.

I have sinned by pride, a high opinion of myself, narcissism, vanity, conceit, envy, love of praise, love of honors, and by putting on airs.

I have sinned: by judging, malicious gossip, anger, remembering of offenses done to me, hatred and returning evil for evil; by slander, reproaches, lies, slyness, deception and hypocrisy; by prejudices, arguments,

stubbornness, and an unwillingness to give way to my neighbor; by gloating, spitefulness, taunting, insults and mocking; by gossip, by speaking too much and by empty speech.

I have sinned by unnecessary and excessive laughter, by reviling and dwelling upon my previous sins, by arrogant behavior, insolence and lack of respect.

I have sinned by not keeping my physical and spiritual passions in check, by my enjoyment of impure thoughts, licentiousness and unchastity in thoughts, words and deeds.

I have sinned by lack of endurance towards my illnesses and sorrows, a devotion to the comforts of life and by being too attached to my parents, children, relatives and friends.

I have sinned by hardening my heart, having a weak will and by not forcing myself to do good.

I have sinned by miserliness, a love of money, the acquisition of unnecessary things and immoderate attachment to things.

I have sinned by self-justification, a disregard for the admonitions of my conscience and failing to confess my sins through negligence or false pride.

I have sinned many times by my Confession: belittling, justifying and keeping silent about sins.

I have sinned against the Most-Holy and Life-Creating Mysteries of the Body and Blood of our Lord by coming to Holy Communion without humility or the fear of God.

I have sinned in deed, word and thought, knowingly and unknowingly, willingly and unwillingly, thoughtfully and thoughtlessly, and it is impossible to enumerate all of my sins because of their multitude. But I truly repent of these and all others not mentioned by me because of my forgetfulness and I ask that they be forgiven through the abundance of the Mercy of God.



ST ANDREW, ARCHBISHOP OF CRETE
From the Prologue

Born in Damascus of Christian parents, he was dumb until the age of seven. When his parents took him to church for Communion, the power of speech was given to him. Such is the divine power of Communion.

He went to Jerusalem at the age of fourteen and was tonsured in the monastery of St Sava the Sanctified. In his understanding and asceticism, he surpassed many of the older monks and was an example to all. The Patriarch took him as his secretary.

When the Monothelite heresy, which taught that the Lord had no human will but only a divine one, began to rage, the Sixth Ecumenical Council met in Constantinople in 681, in the reign of Constantine IV. Theodore, Patriarch of Jerusalem, was not able to be present at the Council, and sent Andrew, then a deacon, as his representative. At the Council, Andrew showed his great gifts: his articulateness, his zeal for the Faith and his rare prudence. Being instrumental in confirming the Orthodox faith, Andrew returned to his work in Jerusalem.

He was later chosen and enthroned as archbishop of the island of Crete. As archbishop, he was greatly beloved by the people. He was filled with zeal for Orthodoxy and strongly withstood all heresy. He worked miracles through his prayers, driving the Saracens from the island of Crete by means of them. He wrote many learned books, poems and canons, of which the best-known is the Great Canon of Repentance which is read in full on the Thursday of the Fifth Week of the Great Fast.

Such was his outward appearance that, 'looking at his face and listening to the words that flowed like honey from his lips, each man was touched and renewed'. Returning from Constantinople on one occasion, he foretold his death before reaching Crete. And so it happened. As the ship approached the island of Mitylene, this light of the Church finished his earthly course and his soul went to the Kingdom of Christ, in about the year 740.

Today is **"Soup's On"** Sunday. On the last Sunday of each month we will have a soup lunch available. A freewill offering is asked with the proceeds going to help pay the mortgage. If you would like to volunteer to provide the soup for a future Sunday, please talk to Olga Miller or Olena Bankston.



Goal: \$120000	2014
Pledges: \$39116	<i>Stewardship Pledges</i> Pledges received: 18
	<i>It is impossible to plan any sort of budget until all pledge forms are turned in. If you haven't returned your pledge, please do so.</i>

Pastor:	
Fr. James Bankston:	(619) 905-5278
Pastoral Council:	
Frank Avant:	(760) 805-1667
Vladimir Bachynsky:	(619) 865-1279
Mark Hartman:	(619) 446-6357
Luke Miller:	(858) 354-2008
Jeanine Soucie:	(718) 674-4529
Social Committee Chairpersons:	
Olga & Michael Miller:	(858) 483-3294
Finance Committee:	
Bohdan Knianicky:	(619) 303-9698
Frank Avant:	(760) 805-1667



**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква
Святого Йоана Хрестителя
St. John the Baptizer
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

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Counsel from Saint John Climacus

Repentance is the renewal of baptism. Repentance is a contract with God for a second life. A penitent is a buyer of humility. Repentance is constant distrust of bodily comfort. Repentance is self-condemning reflection, and carefree self-care. Repentance is the daughter of hope and the renunciation of despair. A penitent is an undisgraced convict. Repentance is reconciliation with the Lord by the practice of good deeds contrary to the sins. Repentance is purification of conscience. Repentance is the voluntary endurance of all afflictions. A penitent is the inflicter of his own punishments. Repentance is a mighty persecution of the stomach, and a striking of the soul into vigorous awareness.

Do not be surprised that you fall every day; do not give up, but stand your ground coura-

geously. And assuredly the angel who guards you will honor your patience. While a wound is still fresh and warm it is easy to heal, but old, neglected and festering ones are hard to cure, and require for their care much treatment, cutting, plastering and cauterization. Many from long neglect become incurable. But with God all things are possible.

Have all courage, and you will have God for your teacher in prayer. Just as it is impossible to learn to see by word of mouth because seeing depends on one's own natural sight, so it is impossible to realize the beauty of prayer from the teaching of others. Prayer has a Teacher all its own - God - who teaches man knowledge, and grants the prayer of him who prays, and blesses the years of the just.