

# Holy Apostles Orthodox Church

347 Ridge Rd Lansing NY

HolyApostlesLansing.org

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## MARCH 22, 2015

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT — Tone 8. St. John Climacus (of The Ladder).** Hieromartyr Basil of Ancyra (362-363). Martyr Drosida, daughter of Emperor Trajan (1st-2nd c.). Ven. Isaac, Founder of the Dalmatian Monastery at Constantinople (4th c.). Monk Martyr Euthymius of Prodromou (Mt. Athos—1814).

**EPISTLE:** EPHESIANS 5.9-19: Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light.

HEBREWS 6.13-20: The hope we have in God is the sure anchor of our soul.

**GOSPEL:** MATTHEW 4.25-5.12: Christ gives us the Beatitudes.

MARK 9.17-31: Prayer and fasting are mighty tools in overcoming evil and sickness.

**HOURS:** Eileen/Janet. **NEXT WEEK:** Eileen/Genevieve.

**EPISTLE READER:** Rdr Bob. **NEXT WEEK:** Ivan.

**COFFEE HOUR HOST:** Denais Family. **NEXT WEEK:** Worthington Family.

**LENTEN READERS:** There is a sign-up sheet for the readers that are needed for the Lenten services. All skill levels are invited to read at any of the services.

**KNOW YOUR FAITH:** The next class will be March 31<sup>st</sup> at Unwind Coffee Shop in the Ithaca Mall. We will be reading and discussing chapter 16 of the Gospel of St John: The Farewell Discourse (Part II - cont.), incl. Persecutions, Paraclete, Joy, Prayer, etc. Invite your friends to join us. The complete syllabus is available on the information table and online.

**LANSING FOOD PANTRY:** March & April are special grant months for the Lansing Food Pantry. All donations received between March 1st and April 30th help earn grant money from the Feinstein Foundation, which has committed to donating \$1 million to anti-hunger agencies throughout the country. The amount granted is in relation to the amount of food and money received during this period. Please consider donating, or bringing food to church to share with our neighbors.

**PASCHA FLOWERS:** To contribute to the purchase of flowers to adorn the church for Pascha, there are envelopes available at the information stand.

Fr James' contact information: Cell: 315-706-6185 Email: adelphotheos@gmail.com

**LENTEN STILLNESS:** The college students are organizing "The Lenten Stillness Project," which is their offering to parents. They are volunteering to watch the children for a few hours during this lenten period for the enjoyment of some peace and quiet. If you are interested, see Greg.

**FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE:** The first meeting will be on Sunday, March 29th, after the Divine Liturgy. The Agenda will be to establish purposes and goals/focus, plan for purchasing new altar server robes and to schedule future meetings.

**MEALS FOR THE JOHNSONS:** To help out the newborn and her family, Casey is organizing a schedule to bring meals to the Johnsons once the new baby arrives. If you would like to help prepare and deliver meals, see Casey.

**CONFESSIONS:** In this cleansing time of the year, it is good for us to partake of the sacrament of Confession. Please have your confession heard before the Vigil of PASCHA. An appointment can be made at any time that is convenient for you, or before and after most services.

**PASCHAL CHARITY:** Once again, we will be putting together a basket of Paschal treats to give to a special and deserving family. We will be mailing a basket of goodies to the Baker family. See Liane for more details and to offer something to give.

### LIVING:

Apr Timothy H	Mary & Susan	Constantine & Maria	Marie
Apr Herman S	John & Carmine	Gaetan	Joseph
Apr John C	Nathan	Jean	Laura
Apr Thomas E	Leah	Christine	Martha
Apr Michael T	Helen	Samuel	Stanley & Helen,
Apr Stephen M	Lindsey	Iconographer Helena	Taissia
Dn Symeon	Susanne H	<u>Catechumens:</u> Elliott &	Steluta
Abbess Silouana	Elizabeth	Daniel	Theophan
Mother Raphaela	Mary	<u>Children:</u> Caleb,	Lynda
Mother Christophora	Joe A	Christopher E, Anthony	Florence
Mat Cecelia	Daniel	Mia and Isabel,	James
Mat Katya	Andrew and family	<b>BIRTHDAYS:</b> None..	James R
Mat Dorothy	Harold	<b>ANNIVS:</b> None.	Vasily
Joshua	Wilhemina	<b>NAMESDAYS:</b> Patrick.	Modecai
Brittany & Isaac	Gordon	<b>REPOSED:</b>	<b>NEWLY REPOSED:</b>
Gretchen	Elizabeth	Priest John	Protopresbyter Thomas,
Peter	David	Apr Alexander	Priest Matthew.
Marriane	Madeline	Rdr Gregory	<b>ANNIVERSARIES:</b> None.
Terrence	Shirley	Daniel	
Helen	Larry	Ada	
Judy	Christina	Walter	
Gretchen	Jim & Kim	Lillian	
	Rachel	Joseph	

FB Check-in



## SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK

CONFESSIONS ARE HEARD BEFORE AND AFTER VESPERS AND AT ANY OTHER CONVENIENT TIME.

**LADDER SUNDAY, MARCH 22:** 9 AM Divine Liturgy and Social Hour

**MONDAY, MARCH 23:** 6 PM Great Canon

**TUESDAY, MARCH 24:** 8:30 Lenten Daily Matins

**ANNUNCIATION WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25:** 9 AM Vespers and Divine Liturgy

6 PM Akathist

7:45 Cornell OCF in Anabel Taylor Hall

**THURSDAY, MARCH 26:** 8:30 Lenten Daily Matins

8 PM Ithaca Collage OCF in Mueller Chapel

**FRIDAY, MARCH 27:** 8:30 Lenten Daily Matins

6 PM Akathist Matins

**SATURDAY, MARCH 28:** 6 PM Great Vespers

**MARY OF EGYPT SUNDAY, MARCH 29:** 9 AM Divine Liturgy and Social Hour, Fundraising

Committee Meeting

6 PM Mission Vespers with St Catherine's GOC at Holy Apostles

## Structure and Purpose of the Ladder of Divine Ascent

The aim of the treatise is to be a guide for practicing a life completely and wholly devoted to God. The ladder metaphor—not dissimilar to the vision that the Patriarch Jacob received—is used to describe how one may ascend into heaven by first renouncing the world and finally ending up in heaven with God. There are thirty chapters; each covers a particular vice or virtue. They were originally called *logoi*, but in the present day, they are referred to as "steps." The sayings are not so much rules and regulations, as with the Law that St. Moses received at Sinai, but rather observations about what is being practiced. Metaphorical language is employed frequently to better illustrate the nature of virtue and vice. Overall, the treatise does follow a progression that transitions from start (renunciation of the world) to finish (a life lived in love).

- Orthodoxwiki.org

## On the Sunday of the Ladder

On this day is commemorated *St. John Climacus*, abbot of Sinai (sixth-seventh century), who is assigned a special Sunday in Lent because, by virtue of his writings and his own life, he forms a pattern of the true Christian ascetic. St. John is the author of *The Ladder of Paradise*, one of the spiritual texts appointed to be read in church during Lent. His memorial, like that of St. Theodore, has been transferred to the movable from the fixed calendar, where he is remembered on 30 March. The first Canon at Mattins on this Sunday is based on the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-5): the repentant Christian is likened to the man who fell among thieves.

- From Met Kallistos Ware in the Lenten Triodion

# Holy Apostles Orthodox Church

Lansing, New York



SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2015

SUNDAY OF ST JOHN OF THE LADDER

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT: ST JOHN OF THE LADDER (CLIMACUS)

### Troparion Tone 8 (Resurrection)

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!  
You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//  
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

### Troparion Tone 1 (for St John Climacus)

O dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body,  
you were a wonderworker, O our God-bearing Father John.  
You received heavenly gifts through fasting, vigil and prayer,  
healing the sick and the souls of those drawn to you by faith.  
Glory to Him Who gave you strength!  
Glory to Him Who granted you a ^crown!//  
Glory to Him Who grants healing to all!

### Kontakion Tone 4 (for St John Climacus)

The Lord truly set you on the heights of abstinence,  
to be a guiding star, showing the way to the universe,//  
O our father and teacher John.

### Prokeimenon Tone 8 (Resurrection)

Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our God! (Ps 75/76:11)  
v: In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel. (Ps 75/76:1)

**Tone 7:** Let the saints exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their couches! (Ps 149:5)

### Alleluia Verses Tone 8

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v :Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior! (Ps 94/95:1)

v :Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise! (Ps 94/95:2)v: They that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. (Ps 91/92:13)

## Hymn to the Theotokos

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace:  
the assembly of Angels and the race of men.  
O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise,  
the glory of virgins,  
from whom God was incarnate and became a Child –  
our God before the ages.  
He made your body into a throne,  
and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens.  
All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace.  
Glory to you!

## Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest! (Ps 148:1)  
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings. (Ps 111/112:6b-7a) Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

## 5TH SATURDAY OF GREAT LENT: OF THE AKATHIST TO THE THEOTOKOS

On the Fifth Saturday of Great Lent, the Saturday of the Akathist, we commemorate the "Laudation of the Virgin" Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos.

In 625, when the emperor Heraclius was fighting the Persians, the Khan sent forces to attack Constantinople by land and by sea. Patriarch Sergius urged the people not to lose heart, but to trust in God.



A procession was made around the city with the Cross of the Lord, the robe of the Virgin, the Icon of the Savior not made by hands, and the Hodigitria Icon of the Mother of God. The Patriarch dipped the Virgin's robe in the sea, and the city's defenders beat back the Khan's sea forces. The sea became very rough, and many boats sank. The invaders retreated, and the people of Constantinople gave thanks to God and to His Most Pure Mother.

On two other occasions, in 655 and 705, the Theotokos protected the city from Saracen invaders. A feastday dedicated to the Laudation of the Virgin was established to commemorate these victories. The Akathist to the Mother of God is believed to originate from this period, and its use has spread from Constantinople to other Orthodox lands.

The icon before which the Akathist was sung was given to the Dionysiou Monastery on Mt. Athos by Emperor Alexius Comnenos. There, it began to flow with myrrh. There were at least three wonderworking copies of this icon in Russia before the Revolution.

This icon shows the Mother of God seated on a throne, and surrounded by Prophets with scrolls.

## **THE RUNGS OF THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT**

1. On renunciation of the world
2. On detachment
3. On exile or pilgrimage; concerning dreams that beginners have
4. On blessed obedience (in addition to episodes involving many individuals)
5. On painstaking repentance which constitutes the life of the holy convicts; and about the Prison
6. On remembrance of death
7. On joy-making mourning
8. On freedom from anger and on meekness
9. On remembrance of wrongs
10. On slander or calumny
11. On talkativeness and silence
12. On lying
13. On despondency
14. On that clamorous mistress, the stomach
15. On incorruptible purity and chastity, to which the corruptible attain by toil and sweat
16. On love of money, or avarice
17. On non-possessiveness (that hastens one Heavenwards)
18. On insensibility, that is, deadening of the soul and the death of the mind before the death of the body
19. On sleep, prayer, and psalmody with the brotherhood
20. On bodily vigil and how to use it to attain spiritual vigil, and how to practice it
21. On unmanly and puerile cowardice
22. On the many forms of vainglory
23. On mad pride and (in the same Step) on unclean blasphemous thoughts; concerning unmentionable blasphemous thoughts
24. On meekness, simplicity, and guilelessness which come not from nature but from conscious effort, and about guile
25. On the destroyer of the passions, most sublime humility, which is rooted in spiritual perception
26. On discernment of thoughts, passions and virtues; on expert discernment; brief summary of all aforementioned
27. On holy stillness of body and soul; different aspects of stillness and how to distinguish them
28. On holy and blessed prayer, the mother of virtues, and on the attitude of mind and body in prayer
29. Concerning Heaven on earth, or Godlike dispassion and perfection, and the resurrection of the soul before the general resurrection

30. Concerning the linking together of the supreme trinity among the virtues; a brief exhortation summarizing all that was said at length in this book

## THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE THEOTOKOS AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY

The Feast of the Annunciation is one of the earliest Christian feasts, and was already being celebrated in the fourth century. There is a painting of the Annunciation in the catacomb of Priscilla in Rome dating from the second century. The Council of Toledo in 656 mentions the Feast, and the Council in Trullo in 692 says that the Annunciation was celebrated during Great Lent.

The background of the Annunciation is found in the Gospel of St Luke (1:26-38). The troparion describes this as the “beginning of our salvation, and the revelation of the eternal mystery,” for on this day the Son of God became the Son of Man.

There are two main components to the Annunciation: the message itself, and the response of the Virgin. The message fulfills God’s promise to send a Redeemer (Genesis 3:15): “I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall lie in wait for his heel.” The Fathers of the Church understand “her seed” to refer to Christ. The prophets hinted at His coming, which they saw dimly, but the Archangel Gabriel now proclaims that the promise is about to be fulfilled. The Archangel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth in Galilee. There he spoke betrothed to St Joseph: “Hail, thou is with thee: blessed art thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and name Jesus. He shall be great, and High: and the Lord God shall give David: And he shall reign over the kingdom there shall be no end.”



In contrast to Eve, who was the Virgin did not immediately humility, she did not think she was actually troubled by them. The fact that she asked for an explanation reveals her sobriety and prudence. She did not disbelieve the words of the angel, but could not understand how they would be fulfilled, for they spoke of something which was beyond nature.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” (Luke 1:34).

“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: therefore also that which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.’ And Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.’ And the angel departed from her” (Luke 1: 35-38).”

In his Sermon 23 on the day of the Annunciation, St Philaret of Moscow boldly stated that “the word of the creature brought the Creator down into the world.” He explains that salvation is not merely an act of God’s will, but also involves the Virgin’s free will. She could have refused, but she accepted God’s will and chose to cooperate without complaint or further questions.

to the undefiled Virgin who was who art highly favoured, the Lord among women. And, behold, thou bring forth a son, and shalt call his shall be called the Son of the Most unto him the throne of his father house of Jacob for ever; and of his

readily deceived by the serpent, accept the Angel’s message. In her deserving of such words, but was