

Bulletin sponsors for this week are for:**The health of:**

Nicholas Zimmerman on his 24th birthday, offered with love by his family.

The memory of:

Olga Romanofsky, offered by Andrew and Maribeth

Readings: **Hebrews 6:13-20** (*4th Sunday of Great Lent, St. John of the Ladder*)
Mark 9:17-31 (*4th Sunday of Great Lent, St. John of the Ladder*)

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.

At that time, a man came to Jesus kneeling and saying: "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! All things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; 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 terribly, 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."

Sunday Service:

Hours - 9:40 AM **Divine Liturgy – 10:00 AM**
General Confession – 9:45 AM on the first Sunday of each month
Private Confession - by appointment, contact Fr Matthew
Pannikidas – after Divine Liturgy 3rd Sunday of each month

With COVID cases falling , mask wearing will again be optional. Unvaccinated persons should continue to mask up, however. Thank you for caring about your fellow parishioners!

Coffee hour - after Divine Liturgy.

We would like to welcome all parish visitors and invite you to join us after the Liturgy, downstairs, for Coffee hour.

Church School

Schedule for this month: April 3 & April 17

Announcements:

- The Sisterhood is sponsoring their annual **Paschal basket raffle**. Chances are \$1.00 each. The raffle will be held on **April 10th**. To purchase chances, make your check payable to the Sisterhood, place in an envelope marked "Raffle", and leave at the candlestand. If you wish to list individual names for your entries, enclose the list of names in your envelope. Entries may also be mailed c/o Maribeth Romanofsky, 8 Willowbrook Lane, Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234.
- **Please remember the citizens of Ukraine in your prayers.**
- **Presanctified Liturgy** services are at 6:30 PM every Wednesday during lent.
- Donations are being accepted for an outdoor chairlift to be used on our steps.

Reminders:

- Please consider mailing your weekly donation to our treasurer:
Church of the Mother of God, c/o Holly Dawson, treasurer,
111 Main Ave, Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
Thank you to everyone who has been sending in their donations.
- Announcements or Prayer Requests for the bulletin, should be **submitted by email to: Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org** (there is no longer a sign up sheet at the candle stand).
- The Living Clean Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Friday from 8-9:15 pm downstairs in the community room.
- The Grey Book Step Meeting Group of Narcotics Anonymous meets every Tuesday from 7-8:00 pm downstairs in the community room.

4th Sunday of Great Lent: St John Climacus (of the Ladder):

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

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,¹ his Elder reposed. Then Saint John entered the arena of hesychasm, visiting the monastic communities of Skētē and Tabēnnisē 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.

¹ This was his monastic age. He was, in fact, thirty-five years old.

*The Lord truly set you on the height of abstinence,
O our instructor and Father John,
as an unerring star, guiding the ends of the earth by your light.*

Kontakion – Tone 4

To read more about Great Lent, see:

<https://churchmotherofgod.org/articleschurch/about-services-and-prayers/420-great-lent-its-meaning-for-orthodox-christians.html>

To read more about the saints remembered today, see:

<https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2022/04/03>

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and the website of the Orthodox Church in America: www.oca.org/

See us on the web at: ChurchMotherOfGod.org/bulletin

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Email us at: Bulletin@ChurchMotherOfGod.org

Orthodox Church of the Mother of God

"The Joy of All the Sorrowful"

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Dn. Edward Dawson

Attached Deacon



**Christ is in our
midst!**

**He is and
ever shall be!**

4th Sunday of Great Lent:

St John Climacus (of the Ladder)

*Dweller of the desert and angel in the body,
you were shown to be a wonderworker, 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, through you, grants healing to all.

Troparion – Tone 4

April 3, 2022

Today the Church remembers:

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT • St. John Climacus (of The Ladder) • Ven. Nikētas the Confessor, Abbot of Medikion (824) • Virgin Martyr Theodosia of Tyre, and Martyr Irene (307-308) • St. Illyricus of Mt. Myrsinon in the Peloponnesus. Martyrs Elpidophorus, Dius, Bithonius, and Galycus • “Unfading Flower” Icon of the Mother of God

God

4th Sunday of Great Lent

St John of the Ladder

Triodion week 8

Tone 8 of the Octoechos.