

Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church Williamsport, PA.



4th Sunday of Great Lent

The Ladder of Divine Ascent

March 30th, 2025

Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church

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Today's Scripture Readings:

Epistle: *Ephesians 5:9-19; Hebrews 6:13-20*
Gospel: *St. Matthew 4:25-5:12; St. Mark 9:17-31*

Welcome to everyone! Please join us for some fellowship in the Parish Hall after the Liturgy!

**** Parish Announcements ****

- + The Church will be open Monday & Thursday from 7:00 – 10:00am for private prayer and/or Confession.
- + ***Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts - Lenten potluck following - Wednesday April 2nd at 5:20pm***
- + ***Great Canon of St Andrew – Thursday April 3rd at 5:30pm (Life of St Mary of Egypt following)***
- + ***Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos – Apr 4th Fri at 5:30***
- + ***Great Vespers - Saturday April 5th at 5pm***
- + ***Hours, Divine Liturgy – Sunday April 6th at 9:40 - Lenten Fellowship following in the Hall.***
- ** **April Benevolence – *Shepherd of the Streets* (Williamsport)**

Our Stewardship – March 23rd, 2025

Tithes/Offerings - \$1,398.00 / Online Giving - \$373.50
Candle Offerings – \$94.00 / Benevolence - \$20.00
Book Sales Donation - \$499.00 / Luncheon Donations - \$97.25

God loves a cheerful giver (1 Cor 9:7)

Regarding Holy Communion: Only those faithful who are Orthodox Christians and have properly prepared themselves by fasting, prayer [i.e., Prayers Before Communion], recent confession, and who were at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. We should all be at peace with everyone too. If you have any questions about Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim 😊

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

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to Saint John Klimakos, the author of *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. In this book the Igumen 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 thirty five years of age, his Elder reposed. Then Saint John entered the arena of hesychasm, visiting the monastic communities of Skētē and Tabénnisē 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 Igumen 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. (oca.org)

Quotes from the Ladder of Divine Ascent

Step 11 - On Talkativeness & Silence

“Talkativeness is the throne of vainglory on which it loves to preen itself and show off.”

“Deliberate silence is the mother of prayer.”

“The lover of silence draws close to God.”

Step 25 - On Humility

“Where there is humility there will be no sign of hatred, no kind of quarrelsomeness, no whiff of disobedience - unless of course some question of faith arises.”

“Birds fear the sight of a hawk. Those who practice humility fear the sound of an argument.”

Step 27 - On Stillness

“Let the remembrance of Jesus be present with your every breath.”

“Stay away from what does not concern you, for curiosity can defile stillness as nothing else can.”

Prayers For the Health and Salvation of those in need: Many Years!

His Eminence Archbishop Alexander, Hieroschemamonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Abbot Seraphim, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel & Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Mat. Mary Reynolds, Alexa Stover & Morgan Fallon (children to be born of them), Catharine Mann, Paul Beard, Harry Hiras, Evelyn Chabal, Michael & Amelia Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Isaac Bannister, Michael Lazorchak, Elizabeth & Paula Davis, Larissa Chapin, Brian Gunter, Parker Fox & those suffering from the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East ***Our Catechumens:*** Garrett Payer, Shyanne Vance, Melissa Czock, Kurt Schmitt (Military), & Jiselle Macari

Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal

Archpriest Paul Harrilchak +3/12, Archpriest Daniel Skvir +3/23, Priest Jonas Worhsam +3/8, Paula Daubert +2/20, Patricia Macy +2/25, David McHenry, All those who have lost their lives in the wars in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East