

Orthodox Church in America + Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania

# Elevation of the Holy Cross

## Orthodox Church

### Williamsport, PA.



**St John Climacus**  
(of the Ladder)

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Great Lent*

**March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026**

# 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

***A warm welcome to ALL this morning! Everyone is invited to join us for some fellowship after the Liturgy in the Parish Hall!***

## **This Week at Holy Cross**

- + Church is open** on Tuesday morning from 7-9:30am for private prayer, quiet time and/or Confession. Kindly let Fr Seraphim know if you are coming for Confession.
- + Feast of the Annunciation - Vespertal Liturgy** – Wednesday March 25<sup>th</sup> \* 5:30pm
- + Great Canon of St Andrew** – Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup> \* 5:30pm
- + Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos** – Friday March 27<sup>th</sup> \* 5:30pm
- + Great Vespers** – Saturday March 28<sup>th</sup> \* 5pm
- + Hours, Divine Liturgy** – Sunday of St Mary of Egypt March 29<sup>th</sup> \* 9:40am - ***Lenten Potluck following!!***
- \*\* March Benevolence** – St. Tikhon seminarian Rdr. John Barrett

## **Our Giving – March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

Tithes/Offerings - \$3,271.00 / Online Giving - \$241.00  
Candle Offerings - \$67.00 / Benevolence - \$963.00

***Thank you all for your generosity to Our Parish!***

**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, are at peace with everyone**, and who were *at least present for the reading of the Epistle and Gospel* should approach to receive the Holy Eucharist. If you have any questions about Communion, please see Fr. Seraphim. 😊

✦ *If you have not already, please prepare to come for Confession during Lent. Please see Fr Seraphim to set up a day and time.*

### † *4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Great Lent: St. John 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 nineteen 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.

The inscription on his icon is from Step 7:2. It reads: "Compunction is a perennial trial of the conscience, which brings about the cooling of the fire of the heart through mental confession. And confession is a forgetfulness of nature, since someone because of this forgot to eat his bread."

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

[www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org)

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

His Eminence Archbishop Alexander, Hieroschemamonk Ambrose (Young), Abbot Tryphon, Mitred-Archpriest Nicholas (Harris), Mitred-Archpriest Daniel (Kovalak), Archpriest George, Fr Dcn John Wesner, Mat. Myra (Kovalak), Pres. Eva (Koutroulelis), Catharine Mann, Paul Beard, Harry Hiras, Evelyn Chabal, Amelia Kuzmiak, Juliana Matusiak, Isaac Bannister, Michael Lazorchak, Brian Gunter, Joanna Bohlander, John Dykes, Mary Fish, John Sam, Innocent Sam, Chris Gehret, Bridget Youmans, Jennifer Updegrove, Stephanie Raptis, & those suffering from the wars and unrest in Ukraine, Russia, & the Middle East. **Our Catechumens:** Melissa Czock, Jiselle Macari, Spencer Leoutsakos, Benjamin Zachariah (Military), Garette, Morgan, Charlotte & Nathaniel Fallon, Rick Lucas, Dean Johnson, Jennifer Benick, Joseph Fazio, Dallas Compton, Jonathan, Madison (& child to be born), Felicity & Edmund Race, Mason Hall, Andrew Gehret

### **Prayers for the Newly Departed: Memory Eternal**

His Holiness, Patriarch Illia II, +3/17, Archimandrite Luke (Majoros) +2/12, Archpriest John Ealy +3/5, Archpriest George Johnson +3/9, Monk Kyril (Yefimov) +3/1, Joan Lengel +3/3 and All those who have lost their lives in the wars & unrest in Ukraine, Russia, the Middle East and around the world.