

Ambo

ST. THEODOSIUS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL



733 Starkweather Ave.
Cleveland, Ohio 44113

Mailing:
733 Starkweather Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44113

T 216 741.1310
F 216 623 1092

www.sttheodosius.org

- Archpriest John Zdinak
Dean
- Dn. Daniel Boerio
- Subdeacon Theodore Lentz
Sacristan
- Reader Julius Kovach
Ecclesiarch & Choirmaster

Divine Services

Eve Sundays & Feast Days
5:00 PM Confessions
6:00 PM Great Vespers

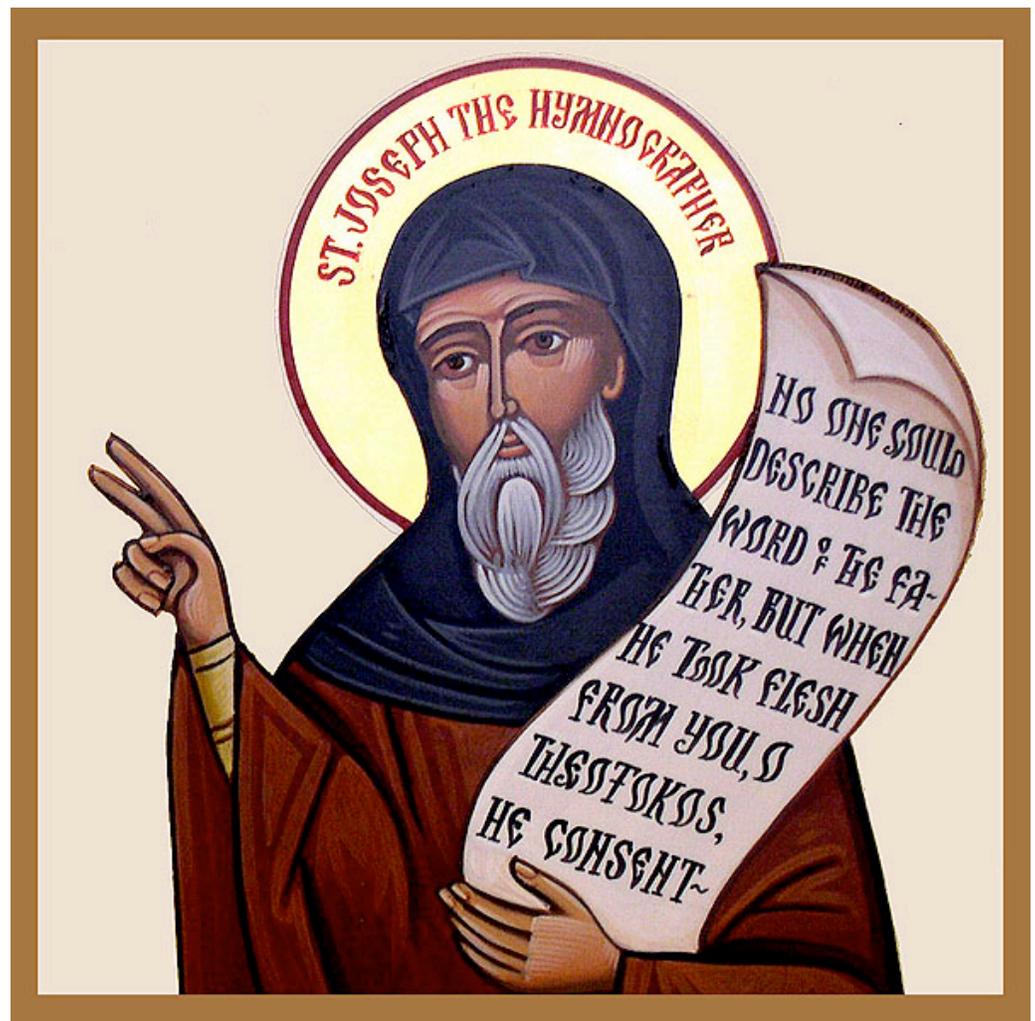
Sundays and Feast Days
8:40 AM 3rd and 6th Hour
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Fr. John Office Hours
Tuesday & Wednesday
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

*Articles for publication in
the AMBO should be sub-
mitted to:
AMBO@sttheodosius.org
by Wednesday of each week
before noon.

MARCH 29, 2009
4TH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
ST. JOHN CLIMACUS

Glory to God for All Things!



VENERABLE JOSEPH THE HYMNOGRAPHER (APRIL 4)

Saint Joseph the Hymnographer, "the sweet-voiced nightingale of the Church," was born in Sicily in 816 into a pious Christian family. His parents, Plotinos and Agatha, moved to the Peloponnesos to save themselves from barbarian invasions. When he was fifteen, St Joseph went to Thessalonica and entered the monastery of Latomos. He was distinguished by his piety, his love for work, his meekness, and he gained the good will of all the brethren of the monastery. He was later ordained as a priest.

St Gregory the Dekapolite (November 20) visited the monastery and took notice of the young monk, taking him along to Constantinople, where they settled together near the church of the holy Martyrs Sergius and Bacchus. This was during the reign of the emperor Leo the Armenian (813-820), a time of fierce iconoclast persecution.

Sts Gregory and Joseph fearlessly defended the veneration of holy icons. They preached in the city squares and visited in the homes of the Orthodox, encouraging them against the heretics. The Church of Constantinople was in a most grievous position. Not only the emperor, but also the patriarch were iconoclast heretics.

At that time the Roman bishops were in communion with the Eastern Church, and Pope Leo III, who was not under the dominion of the Byzantine Emperor, was able to render great help to the Orthodox. The Orthodox monks chose St Joseph as a steadfast and eloquent messenger to the Pope. St Gregory blessed him to journey to Rome and to report on the plight of the Church of Constantinople, the atrocities of the iconoclasts, and the dangers threatening Orthodoxy.

During the journey, St Joseph was captured by Arab brigands who had been bribed by the iconoclasts. They took him to the island of Crete, where they handed him over to the iconoclasts, who locked him up in prison. Bravely enduring all the deprivations, he encouraged the other prisoners. By his prayers, a certain Orthodox bishop who had begun to waver was strengthened in spirit and courageously accepted martyrdom.

St Joseph spent six years in prison. On the night of the Nativity of Christ in 820 he was granted a vision of St Nicholas of Myra, who told him about the death of the iconoclast Leo the Armenian, and the end of the persecution.

St Nicholas gave him a paper scroll and said, "Take this scroll and eat it." On the scroll was written: "Hasten, O Gracious One, and come to our aid if possible and as You will, for You are the Merciful One." The monk read the scroll, ate it and said, "How sweet are Thine oracles to my throat" (Ps 118/119:103). St Nicholas bade him to sing these words. After this the fetters fell off the saint, the doors of the prison opened, and he emerged from it. He was transported through the air and set down on a large road near Constantinople, leading into the city.

When he reached Constantinople, St Joseph found that St Gregory the Dekapolite was no longer among the living, leaving behind his disciple John (April 18), who soon died. St Joseph built a church dedicated to St Nicholas and transferred the relics of Sts Gregory and John there. A monastery was founded near the church.

St Joseph received a portion of the relics of the Apostle Bartholomew from a certain virtuous man. He built a church in memory of the holy apostle. He loved and honored St Bartholomew, and he was distressed that there was no Canon glorifying the holy Apostle. He desired to adorn the Feast of St Bartholomew with hymns, but he did not dare to compose them himself.

For forty days St Joseph prayed with tears, preparing for the Feast of the holy apostle. On the eve of the Feast the Apostle Bartholomew appeared to him in the altar. He pressed the holy Gospel to Joseph's bosom, and blessed him to write church hymns with the words, "May the

right hand of the Almighty God bless you, may your tongue pour forth waters of heavenly wisdom, may your heart be a temple of the Holy Spirit, and may your hymnody delight the entire world." After this miraculous appearance, St Joseph composed a Canon to the Apostle Bartholomew, and from that time he began to compose hymns and Canons in honor of the Mother of God, of the saints, and in honor of St Nicholas, who liberated him from prison.

During the revival of the iconoclast heresy under the emperor Theophilus (829-842), St Joseph suffered a second time from the heretics. He was exiled to Cherson [Chersonesus] for eleven years. The Orthodox veneration of holy icons was restored under the holy empress Theodora (February 11) in 842, and St Joseph was made keeper of sacred vessels at Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. Because of his bold denunciation of the brother of the empress, Bardas, for unlawful cohabitation, the saint was again sent into exile and returned only after Bardas died in 867.

Patriarch Photius (February 6) restored him to his former position and appointed him Father-confessor for all the clergy of Constantinople.

Having reached old age, St Joseph fell ill. On Great and Holy Friday, the Lord informed him of his approaching demise in a dream. The saint made an inventory of the church articles in Hagia Sophia, which were under his official care, and he sent it to Patriarch Photius.

For several days he prayed intensely, preparing for death. He prayed for peace for the Church, and the mercy of God for his soul. Having received the Holy Mysteries of Christ, St Joseph blessed all who came to him, and with joy he fell asleep in the Lord (+ 863). The choirs of the angels and the saints, whom St Joseph had glorified in his hymnology, carried his soul to Heaven in triumph.

In 890, his biographer John the deacon of the Great Church wrote about the spirit and power of St Joseph's Canons: "When he began to write verses, then the hearing was taken with a wondrous pleasantness of sound, and the heart was struck by the power of the thought. Those who strive for a life of perfection find a respite here. Writers, having left off with their other versification, from this one treasure-trove, from the writings of St Joseph, began to scoop out his treasure for their own songs, or better to say, daily they scoop them out.

And finally, all the people carry it over into their own language, so as to enlighten with song the darkness of night, or staving off sleep, to continue with the vigil until sunrise. If anyone were peruse the life of a saint of the Church on any given day, they would see the worthiness of St Joseph's hymns and acknowledge his glorious life. Actually, since the lives and deeds of almost every saint are adorned with praises, is not he worthy of immortal glory, who has worthily and exquisitely known how to glorify them?

Now let some saints glorify his meekness, and others his wisdom, and others his works, and all together glorify the grace of the Holy Spirit, Who so abundantly and immeasurably has bestowed his gifts on him."

Most of the Canons in the MENAION are St Joseph's work. His name may be found in the Ninth Ode as an acrostic. He also composed many of the hymns in the PARAKLETIKE.

PRAYER REQUESTS

DEPARTED:

George Machaskee + 2/19/09

Edsel Smith + 3/6/09

Mat. Cindy's Uncle

Infant Briana Kimberly Warren + 3/7/09
Fr. John's Great Niece

Ill Afflicted & Special Intentions

Fr. Anthony Dimitri

Fr. Andrew Stevens

Fr. Jerry Hall

Helen Antonik

Dan Arangelovich

Jerry Arangelovich

Alice Artino

Helen Baldner

Carol Bohurjak

John Clements

John Conrad

Julia Grabowski

Maria Hanzel

Annaliese Jacak

Donna Jacak

Sarah Kersey

Dorothy Laskovich

Paul Laskovich

Shane, Sierra and Taylor McNeilly

Walter & Grace Parhamovich
(Karen Felon's parents)

David Roman *(Nephew of Margaret Rusynyk)*

Mary Ann Silberhorn

Elsie Sudnick

Sonia Vorell

Hannah Ward

(God Child of Fr. Andrew Stevens)

Harrison Ward

(God Child of Fr. Andrew Stevens)

Kimberly & Brian Warren

(Fr. John's Niece)

Helen Zawisza

(Joseph Rusynyk's sister)

Julia Zimmerman

Russell Carleton & Tanya Klimova & Unborn Child

Gianni & Nicole DeAngelis

& Unborn Child

(Friend of Nikol Zdinak)

CATECHUMENS:

Daniel McNeilly

Erik & Gwen Hasselquist



Dome Lighters

Donations to offset the cost of lighting the domes can be made for the health of or in memory of your loved ones.

Contact the Parish Office if you are interested.

For the week of March 29 - April 4:

In memory of **George Machaskee** by Roger & Debby Pinta

Apropos Great Lent, we have a project that we are hoping you will support. We are asking that you donate clean, white, men's dress shirts (good used, or new, ANY size) for use at the Stokes Academy of the Cleveland School system. Russell Carleton has made us aware of a project targeting African-American boys, and the shirts are a part of an attempt to remove these youths from a negative culture that may be the only one they know. Russell can answer further questions on this, and shirts can be given to him or Daniel Morris. As the hymn says, "Let us give alms"; here's an opportunity.

Thank you for your help; this will run through April 5.

Welcome Visitors

Our parish welcomes you and thanks you for joining us at today's Divine Liturgy. While only Orthodox Christians may approach the chalice for Holy Communion, everyone is welcome to partake of the Holy Bread after Liturgy. You are also invited to join us for fellowship in the Parish Hall following Liturgy.



COFFEE HOUR & GREETERS SCHEDULES

Coffee Hour Hosts:

03/29/09 Donna Jacak
04/05/09 Mary Swit/Tammy Ponomarenko
04/12/09 William & Maura Oprisko
04/19/09 Holy Pascha - NO COFFEE HOUR
04/26/09 Chanda Czaruk/Lauren Miklos

Greeters:

Sonia Vorell, Maca Tyler
Darrell Felon/Virginia Medvec
Linda Smotzer/Tom Broslawik
Debby Pinta/Michael Tabeling
Linda Smotzer and
Phyllis Gindlesperger

For your convenience, we will have **HOMEMADE APRICOT, NUT and POPPYSEED ROLLS** for sale at every Sunday's *Coffee Hour*.

The price is **\$8.00**.

Homemade rolls are also available at the Ridge Manor Party Center. Please call Sharon Glagola at 216-749-5509.

GOD'S GIFTS TO US - OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Weekly expenses: \$ 6,538.00
Last week's collection \$ 2,517.00
Over/Under < \$ 4,021.00 >

ATTENDANCE

Members 140 Visitors 8
Total 148

**Finance Committee
Meeting
Monday, April 6
4:30 PM
@Ridge Manor**

👉 Parish Council News

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Tuesday,
April 7, at 6:00 PM
@ Ridge Manor

PRAYER FOR THE 4TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Having been granted to stand in Thy holy place, O Lord our God, we Thine unworthy servants, having no good works to bring before Thee, offer up to Thee a contrite heart and an humble spirit, to Thee Who hast no need of our goods; and we ask from Thy bounty, the pardon of our sins.

Hearken unto our meager supplications, O Thou Who didst not despise the Publican when he humbled himself before Thee, but didst shew him more justified than the self-righteous Pharisee, whose boasting and vain, empty talk, do Thou root out from our hearts; but grant us the Publican's repentance and the humility that brings us closer to Thee, Who liftest up the humble, and dost humiliate the exalted; and make us worthy of that bliss which is stored up for the poor in heart, in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Through the mercies of Thy Christ, with Whom Thou art blessed, together with Thine All-Holy, and Good, and Life-creating Spirit, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

SCHEDULE OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

APRIL - CLEVELAND DEANERY
MAY - ST. JOHN MONASTERY
JUNE - WALL
JULY - PARISH CENTER ROOF
AUGUST - ST. JOHN MONASTERY
SEPTEMBER - OCF
OCTOBER - YOUTH ACTIVITIES
NOVEMBER - ROSE WINDOWS
DECEMBER - WALL

Climbing the Ladder Together

This weekly bulletin insert complements the curriculum published by the Department of Christian Education of the Orthodox Church in America. This and many other Christian Education resources are available at <http://dce.oca.org>.



"Can the writing of a hermit and monk who lived 1500 years ago say something to us today?"

Pope Benedict asked this question last month at a general audience in Vatican City. The monk he referred to was Saint John Climacus, whom we celebrate on this fourth Sunday of Great Lent. The Pope answered his own question by saying that Saint John's great work, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, most certainly has something to say because it teaches us to be humble and charitable, both necessary attributes for Christians.

Saint John lived in a monastery on Mount Sinai in the sixth century, and was known for his piety and wisdom. Having long been urged to write his thoughts on spiritual growth, he finally did so in this book. "Climacus" means "of the ladder," and Saint John chose to divide the book into thirty chapters, each of which is a step on the ladder, guiding us in practicing a particular Christian virtue. One virtue leads to another, again like the steps of a ladder, taking us closer to communion with God.

The book was written for John's fellow monks, but as part of the first step of the ladder, he addresses those who live in the world and might protest that the life he describes is impossible for them because "we have wives and are beset with social cares, and how can we lead the solitary life?" He replies:

"Do all the good you can; do not speak evil of anyone; do not steal from anyone; do not lie to anyone; do not be arrogant towards anyone; do not hate anyone; do not be absent from the divine services; be compassionate to the needy; do not offend anyone; do not wreck another man's domestic happiness, and be content with what your wife can give you. If you behave in this way, you will not be far from the Kingdom of Heaven."

Centuries before Saint John Climacus wrote, another John—the great Chrysostom—also asserted, but with his typical forcefulness, that every Christian, monastic or lay, must strive to live a godly life. He particularly applied his words to those raising children:

"Don't say, 'Bible reading is for monks; am I turning my child into a monk?' No! It isn't necessary for him to be a monk. Make him into a Christian! Why are you afraid of something so good? It is necessary for everyone to know Scriptural teachings, and this is especially true for children. Even at their age they are exposed to all sorts of folly and bad examples from popular entertainments. Our children need remedies for all these things!"

(From Homily 21 on Ephesians 6: 1-4 in *St. John Chrysostom on Marriage and Family Life*, trans. Catherine P. Roth and David Anderson, SVS Press, 1986.)

So, according to all three of these men of the Christian Church, from very different eras, it doesn't matter whether we live in the world or in the monastery. Our climb on the ladder and our glorious destiny are the same.

**AN EVENING AT THE
MONASTERY**

Tuesday, March 31st
7-9 p.m.

MONASTERY MARCHA

5095 Broadview Rd.
Richfield, OH

Presenter: REV. FR. COSTAS KEARES
St. Paul Greek Orthodox Church
North Royalton, OH

**“REFLECTING ON THE LIVES OF
CONTEMPORARY ELDERS IN
GREECE AND THEIR IMPACT ON
THE CHURCH”**

(Elder Joseph the Hysachist of Mt. Athos,
Fr. Paisios of Mt. Athos, Fr. Porfyrios
and Fr. Ephrem of Kantounakia.
All of blessed memory)

**INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES
17TH ANNUAL IOCC BANQUET
MONDAY, MAY 11**

St. Constantine and Helen Church
3352 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Hts., Ohio 44118
216-932-3300

Donation: \$30 Doors Open at 6:00 PM Dinner Begins at 7:00 PM
See Frank Tkacz for tickets in bookstore or call 216-351-1011

Sunday, March 29

St. John Climacus
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

Monday, March 30

Ven. John Climacus
St. Sophrony
Bishop Of Irkutsk
4:30 PM Special Finance
Committee Meeting
@Ridge Manor

Tuesday, March 31

Repose St. Innocent,
Metr. Of Moscow
and Apostle. To Americas
6:00 PM Presanctified
@St. Innocent
7:00 PM Lecture Monastery Marcha

Wednesday, April 1

Ven. Mary Of Egypt
Ven. Euthymius Of Suzdal'
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
5:00 PM Confessions
6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy
Potluck Dinner

Weekly Schedule

Thursday, April 2

Ven. Titus The Wonderworker
11:00 AM Faith Enrichment
@Ridge Manor
6:00 PM Great Canon
Presanctified Liturgy
@St. John's Monastery

Friday, April 3

Ven. Nicetas The Confessor
5:00 PM Confessions
5:30 PM Hours
6:00 PM Presanctified Liturgy
Potluck Dinner

Saturday, April 4

Akathist to the Most-Holy Theotokos
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy
5:00 PM Confessions
6:00 PM Great Vespers

Sunday, April 5

St. Mary Of Egypt
9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

**SPECIAL APRIL
COLLECTION
CLEVELAND
DEADERY**



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