

# Ambo

ST. THEODOSIUS ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL



733 Starkweather Ave.  
Cleveland, Ohio

**Mailing:**

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

- Archpriest John Zdinak  
Dean
- Archpriest Pavel Soucek  
Retired/Attached
- Deacon Peter Homik
- 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

April 2, 2006

4th Sunday of Great Lent

St. John Climacus

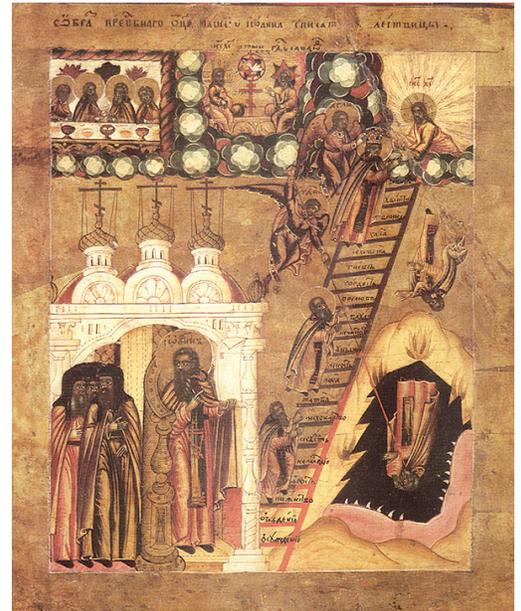
**4th Sunday of Great Lent St John Climacus (of the Ladder)**

**Troparion - Tone 1**

Dweller of the desert and angel in the body,  
you were shown to be a wonder-worker,  
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!

**Kontakion - Tone 4**

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.



The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to St John of the Ladder (Climacus), the author of the work, The Ladder of Divine Ascent. The abbot of St Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th century) stands as a witness to the violent effort needed for entrance into God's Kingdom (Mt.10: 12). The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is a real one, "not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places ..." (Eph 6:12). Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, according to the Lord, only "he who endures to the end will be saved" (Mt.24:13).

## Prayer Requests

### Departed:

Archpriest Victor Sokolov  
Ann Clifford

### Ill-afflicted:

Helen Baldner  
John Clements  
John Conrad  
Alex Dobay  
Eileen Eschuk  
Janet Franks  
Gayle & Joyce Franks  
Henry & Julia Grabowski  
Sergei Kluchnik & Family  
Mary Ann Mishko  
Margaret Rusnyk  
John & Ann Shuleva  
Jan Tkacz  
Jeanne Twitchell  
Wilma Trivanovich  
Alexander Kuzminec  
Billy J Spurlock

Michelle & Kiplan Zdinak &  
Unborn Child

## Parish News

### Pascha Flowers

Please consider contributing for the flowers to decorate the Tomb and for Pascha. Envelopes are in your mailing. Just like everything else, they keep going up in price!

### Information for the AMBO

should be emailed to

[ambo@sttheodosius.org](mailto:ambo@sttheodosius.org)

### 2006 Dues

**\$250.00 per**

**Adult member**

**(18 and older)**

**Pauline Timm and Jeanne Homik both wish to thank everyone for their cards, calls and prayers .**

## Lenten Mission Schedule

April 2 -  
Holy Cross Mission - Nashville/  
Wooster- 5:00 pm

April 9 -  
St. Nicholas - Mentor - 5:00 pm

### Directions to Holy Cross, Nashville, Ohio

I-71 South to Rt. 83 South (Lodi). 83 south in Wooster,

Take 83 south to Millersburg. When you come to the stop light in Millersburg, turn right and go 14 miles to Nashville. The old Church of Christ building is on the left.

I-77 South to Rt 21, 21. Take 21 south to 585, then take 585 west to 83 South in Wooster. When you come to the stop light in Millersburg, turn right and go 14 miles to Nashville. The old Church of Christ building is on the left.

## Prayer for the 4th Sunday of Lent

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

Hearken unto our meager supplications, O You Who that not despise the Publican when he humbled himself before You, but showed him more justified than the self-righteous Pharisee, whose boasting and vain, empty talk, root out from our hearts; but grant us the Publican's repentance and the humility that brings us closer to You, that lift up the humble, and 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 Your Christ, with Whom You are blessed, together with Your All-Holy, and Good, and Life-creating Spirit, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

## Parish Council News

👉 The next Parish Council Meeting is Thursday, April 27, 2006. Any parish member is welcome.

## Coffee Hour & Greeters Schedules

### Coffee Hour Hosts:

4/2 Sonya Vorrell & Donna Jacak  
4/9 Mat. Jeanne Homik & Mat. Cindy Zdinak  
4/16 Dan & Livinia Morris  
4/23 NO COFFEE HOUR  
4/30 Patti Sankovic & Natalie Pricinovskis  
5/7 Maca Tyler & Judy Schwind  
5/14 Joyce Tabeling

### Greeters:

Gindlesberger/L. Smotzer  
D. Pinta/D.Pinta  
P. Gindlesberger/L. Smotzer  
Pascha  
P. Gindlesberger/L. Smotzer  
D. Pinta/D. Pinta  
P. Pangrace/Pangrace

# St John Climacus and the Ladder of Divine Ascent

*by Blessed Metropolitan Philaret - Fourth Sunday in Great Lent*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

More than once, brethren, the fact has been mentioned that on each Sunday in the Great Fast (i.e., Lent) there are other commemorations besides that of the Resurrection. Thus, on this day, the Church glorifies the righteous John of the Ladder, one of the greatest ascetics, which the Church, in speaking of them, calls "earthly angels and Heavenly men."

These great ascetics were extraordinary people. They commanded the elements; wild beasts willingly and readily obeyed them. For them, there were no maladies they could not cure. They walked on the waters as on dry land; all the elements of the world were subject to them, because they lived in God and had the power of grace to overcome the laws of terrestrial nature. One such ascetic was St. John of the Ladder.

He was surnamed "of the Ladder" (Climacus) because he wrote an immortal work, the "Ladder of Divine Ascent." In this work, we see how, by means of thirty steps, the Christian gradually ascends from below to the heights of supreme spiritual perfection. We see how one virtue leads to another, as a man rises higher and higher and finally attains to that height where there abides the crown of the virtues, which is called "Christian love."

Saint John wrote his immortal work especially for the monastics, but in the past his "Ladder" was always favorite reading in Russia for anyone zealous to live piously, though he were not a monk. Therein the Saint clearly demonstrates how a man passes from one step to the next.

Remember, Christian soul, that this ascent on high is indispensable for anyone who wishes to save his soul unto eternity.

When we throw a stone up, it ascends until the moment when the propelling force ceases to be effectual. So long as this force acts, the stone travels higher and higher in its ascent, overcoming the force of the earth's gravity. But when this force is spent and ceases to act, then, as you know, the stone does not remain suspended in the air. Immediately, it begins to fall, and the further it falls the greater the speed of its fall. This, solely according to the physical laws of terrestrial gravity.

So it is also in the spiritual life. As a Christian gradually ascends, the force of spiritual and ascetical labors lifts him on high. Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Strive to enter in through the narrow gate." That is, the Christian ought to be an ascetic. Not only the monastic, but every Christian. He must take pains for his soul and his life. He must direct his life on the Christian path, and purge his soul of all filth and impurity.

Now, if the Christian, who is ascending upon this ladder of spiritual perfection by his struggles and ascetic labors, ceases from this work and ascetic toil, his soul will not remain in its former condition; but, like the stone, it will fall to the earth. More and more quickly will it drop until finally, if the man does not come to his senses, it will cast him down into the very abyss of Hell.

It is necessary to remember this. People forget that the path of Christianity is indeed an ascetical labor. Last Sunday, we heard how the Lord said: "He that would come after Me, let him take up his cross, deny himself, and follow Me." The Lord said this with the greatest emphasis. Therefore, the Christian must be one who takes up his cross, and his life, likewise, must be an ascetic labor of bearing that cross. Whatever the outward circumstance of his life, be he monk or layman, it is of no consequence. In either case, if he does not force himself to mount upwards, then, of a certainty, he will fall lower and lower.

And in this regard, alas, people have confused thoughts. For example, a clergyman drops by a home during a fast. Cordially and thoughtfully, they offer him fast food (i.e., food prepared according to the rules of the Fast), and say: "For you, fast food, of course!" To this, one of our hierarchs customarily replies: "Yes, I am Orthodox. But who gave you permission not to keep the fasts?" All the fasts of the Church, all the ordinances, are mandatory for every Orthodox person. Speaking of monastics, such ascetics as St. John of the Ladder and those like him fasted much more rigorously than the Church prescribes; but this was a matter of their spiritual ardor, an instance of their personal ascetic labor. This the Church does not require of everyone, because it is not in accord with everyone's strength. But the Church DOES require of every Orthodox the keeping of those fasts, which She has established.

Oftentimes have I quoted the words of Saint Seraphim, and once again shall I mention them. Once there came to him a mother who was concerned about how she might arrange the best possible marriage for her young daughter. When she came to Saint Seraphim for advice, he said to her: "Before all else, ensure that he, whom your daughter chooses as her companion for life, keeps the fasts. If he does not, then he is not a Christian, whatever he may consider himself to be." You see how the greatest saint of the Russian Church, Saint Seraphim of Sarov, a man who, better than we, knew what Orthodoxy is, spoke concerning the fasts?

Let us remember this; Saint John Climacus has described the ladder of spiritual ascent: then let us not forget that each Christian must ascend thereon. The great ascetics ascended like swiftly-flying eagles; we scarcely ascend at all. Nonetheless, let us not forget that, unless we employ our efforts in correcting ourselves and our lives, we shall cease our ascent, and, most assuredly, we shall begin to fall. Amen.

*From St. John Climacus, "The Ladder of Divine Ascent," (Boston: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1978), pp. xxxi -*

# Weekly Schedule

## Sunday April 2, 4th Sunday of Lent - St. John

### Climacus

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

5:00 PM Deanery Mission Vespers - Holy Cross

Mission - Nashville, Ohio (*Wooster*)

## Monday April 3

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Daily Vespers

## Tuesday April 4

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Daily Vespers

## Wednesday April 5

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Liturgy Presanctified Gifts & Potluck

## Thursday April 6

11:00 AM Faith Enrichment

Cleveland Deanery Meeting @ Monastery

**NO CONFESSIONS TODAY**

6:00 PM Liturgy Presanctified Gifts @ Monastery in  
Hiram

## Friday April 7

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Liturgy Presanctified Gifts & Potluck

## Saturday April 8 Akathist Saturday

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

5:00 PM Confessions

6:00 PM Great Vespers

## Sunday April 9, 5th Sunday of Lent - St. Mary of

### Egypt

9:00 AM Divine Liturgy

5:00 PM Deanery Mission Vespers - St. Nicholas -  
Mentor

*Fr. John is also available for Confession after  
Services for those who cannot come earlier.*



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*Addressee*