



GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF ATLANTA

Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople: www.patriarchate.org

Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Website: www.goarch.org

Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Atlanta Website: www.atlanta.goarch.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church Website: www.saintchristopherhoc.org

St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church



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Very Rev. Fr. George J. Tsahakis, *Chancellor*

Liturgical Guide for Sunday, March 26, 2017

ON THIS DAY, THE *FOURTH* SUNDAY OF LENT, WE COMMEMORATE OUR RIGHTEOUS FATHER JOHN OF THE LADDER (CLIMACUS), AUTHOR OF “THE LADDER OF DIVINE ASCENT” (649 A.D.). (SEE *TRIODION INSERT ON NEXT PAGE*). WE ALSO COMMEMORATE the Synaxis in honor of the Archangel Gabriel; 26 Martyrs in Crimea; and Irenaeus the Priest-Martyr of Hungary. *Through their holy intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.*

Welcome, Visitors and Newcomers, to our Parish!

We invite you to enter your name, mail/email addresses in our Guest Register (near the entrance) if you are interested in joining and assisting with our mission's development. We want to keep you informed of our schedule and location of services. *You and your family are welcome; we look forward to knowing you. We invite you and your family to join and assist us often!*

Please consider that only baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians in canonical good standing may approach for Holy Communion. All are invited to partake of the Antidoron ("instead of the gifts") distributed at the conclusion of today's Divine Liturgy.

TODAY'S Spiritual Theme From the Triodion:

On the *Fourth Sunday of Lent*, the Church commemorates the famous saint and ascetic *St. John of the Ladder (Climacus in Greek)*, who was head of the monastery located on Mt. Sinai for much of his life. St. John got his name from a famous book of spiritual exercises which he wrote and entitled *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, and which he intended to serve as a means of climbing spiritually from earth to heaven. His book of spiritual directions is read in monasteries during Lenten periods and is available to us in English.

Liturgy of St. Basil Used Every Sunday during Great and Holy Lent:

The Liturgy of St. Basil was, until the twelfth century, the chief Liturgy of Constantinople. Its 'Prayer of Consecration' or *Anaphora* is probably the most eloquent of all liturgies, east and west. Powerful in its unity of thought, theological depth and rich biblical imagery, it was celebrated every Sunday and Great Feast Days. Now it is used only ten times during the year: on the five Sundays of Great and Holy Lent; on the Vigils of Pascha, Christmas and Epiphany; on Holy Thursday and on the Feast of St. Basil, January 1.

SPECIAL HYMNS SUNG BEFORE/AFTER SMALL ENTRANCE

1./2. Resurrectional Hymn (Grave Tone) – (Hymnal-pp.122-125):

It is sung *before* and *after* the Small Entrance: By Your Cross, O Lord, You destroyed death; to the thief You opened paradise. The myrrhbearers' sorrow You transformed into joy, and You sent Your apostles forth to proclaim that You had risen from the dead, Christ our God, bestowing on all the world Your great mercy.

3. Hymn Commemorating St. Christopher – (see music distributed):

It is sung after the Small Entrance: Made comely with garments woven from your venerable blood, you stand before the Lord, the King of Heaven and earth, O famed Martyr Christopher. With the choirs of Angels and the Martyrs you

chant, singing the thrice-holy hymn and most awesome praises. Thus, by your intercessions with God, save us, your servants.

4. Kontakion sung for Lenten Sundays – (Hymnal-pp. 268-271):

It is sung after the Small Entrance: Victorious Lady, mighty champion, defending us, we your servants now inscribe to you this hymn of thanks, for you rescued us from suffering and tribulation. Theotokos, with your power that can never fail, keep us safe from every danger our whole life long that we may cry to you: Rejoice, O Bride unwedded.

5. Megalynarion (Hymn to the Theotokos) – (Hymnal-pp. 298-301)::

On the first five Sundays of Great Lent when we use the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil, a different hymn is sung instead of “Axion Estin” or “Truly it is proper to call you blessed...”: In you, O woman full of grace, all creation rejoices, the orders of angels and the race of mankind. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, glory of virginal souls, from you our God was incarnate and became a child, He who is God from all ages. By making your womb His throne He made you more spacious than all the heavens. In you, O woman full of grace all creation rejoices. Glory to you.

SCRIPTURAL PASSAGES FROM TODAY'S ORTHROS & DIVINE LITURGY

<p>The Scriptures were not given us for this only, that we might have them in books, but that we might engrave them on our hearts. – St. John Chrysostom</p>
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Gospel Reading During Orthros Service (John 20:1-10)

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him.” Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other

disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that He must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Epistle Reading (Hebrews 6:13-20)

When God made a promise to Abraham, because He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by Himself, saying, “I will surely bless you and multiply you.” And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Human beings, of course, swear by someone greater than themselves, and an oath given as confirmation puts an end to all dispute. In the same way, when God desired to show even more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of His purpose, he guaranteed it by an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God would prove false, we who have taken refuge might be strongly encouraged to seize the hope set before us. We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Gospel Reading (Mark 9:17-31)

Someone from the crowd answered Him, “Teacher, I brought You my son; he has a spirit that makes him unable to speak; and whenever 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, but they could not do so.” He answered them, “You faithless generation, how much longer must I be among you? How much longer must I put up with you? Bring him to Me.” And they brought the boy to him. When the spirit saw Him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. Jesus asked the father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. It has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if You are able to do anything, have pity on us and help us.” Jesus said to him, If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes.” Immediately the father of the child cried out, “I believe; help my unbelief!” When Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You spirit that keeps this boy from speaking and hearing, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again!” 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 was able to stand. When He had entered the house, His disciples asked Him

privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” He said to them, “This kind can come out only through prayer.” They went on from there and passed through Galilee. He did not want anyone to know it; for He was teaching His disciples, saying to them, “The Son of Man is to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill Him, and three days after being killed, He will rise again.”

MEMORY VERSE *(TRY TO COMMIT TO MEMORY):*

“Pursue peace with everyone, and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.” *(Hebrews 12:14)*

Join us Friday, March 31, 6:00 p.m for the Akathist Hymn



Do we consciously seek to be God-bearers - to use God's heavenly virtues in our everyday life? Do the recesses of our souls - the deep, inner core of our beings - reflect the divine light? Can we recall our last attempt to use our heavenly gifts to heal the weak and sick (both physically and spiritually) that God sends our way? *Join us for this final Friday service during Great Lent as we contemplate the*

power of God in the Life of the Theotokos, the Mother of God, and let us in turn respond to His call to us!

PASTORAL REFLECTION FROM FR. GEORGE:

There is a little church on the Appian Way not far from Rome that bears the interesting name “The Church of the Quo Vadis.” Those Latin words, *Quo Vadis* mean “*where are you going?*” I read a beautiful legend that reveals that a few years after the crucifixion of Jesus, St. Peter had been in Rome and was under the threat of persecution again. He was fleeing for his life – leaving the city in fear, when he met Jesus. Jesus was headed into the city, so St. Peter asked Him the question “Lord, where are you going?” And the Master answered: “I go to Rome, to be crucified again.”

The legend has it that the answer so pierced the heart of St. Peter that it turned this cowardly fugitive into a hero, and he followed his Lord back into Rome,

where he gladly died. Recall that St. Peter was crucified upside down on a cross at his own request, because he felt that he was not worthy to die as the Lord.

So, a little church has been built on the Appian Way, on that spot where St. Peter fleeing Rome met the Lord coming back into the city. He asked the Lord *Quo Vadis*, “where are you going?”

It is a legend – but the church is there...the “Church of the Quo Vadis” – to tell a moving story. I share it because the question that St. Peter asked is the same as our Lord asks us each and every day, “*Where are you going?*” *Quo Vadis?*

Jesus knows all that is in our minds and hearts. Undoubtedly, He wonders whether we will lay down our life for His? It is a commitment question for all of us. It is relevant for us today, especially relevant as we are moving rapidly toward Holy Week and the vivid memory of Jesus’ passion and death: “Will you lay down your life for me?”

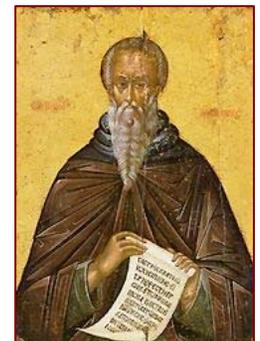
Let us remember our Lord’s words in the full context in which they were offered in John 13:36-38: “*Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, where are You going? Jesus answered, ‘Where I am going, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow afterward.’ Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for You.’ Jesus answered, ‘Will you lay down your life for Me? Very truly, I tell you, before the cock crows, you will have denied Me three times.’”*

My brothers and sisters in Christ, as we contemplate the journey we’ve been engaged in during Great Lent, I ask you, “*Where are you going?*” I pray it is to our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ and commend you for your efforts.

St. John Climacus the Righteous

Author of The Ladder of Divine Ascent

This Saint gave himself over to the ascetical life from his early youth. Experienced both in the solitary life of the hermit and in the communal life of cenobitic monasticism, he was appointed Abbot of the Monastery at Mount Sinai and wrote a book containing thirty homilies on virtue. Each homily deals with one virtue, and progressing from those that



deal with holy and righteous activity (praxis) unto those that deal with divine vision (theoria), they raise a man up as though by means of steps unto the height of Heaven. For this cause his work is called "The Ladder of Divine Ascent." The day he was made Abbot of Sinai, the Prophet Moses was seen giving commands to those who served at table. Saint John reposed in 603, at eighty years of age. St. John is remembered on the day of his death, March 30th, and today, the Fourth Sunday of Great and Holy Lent.



HANDS OF LOVE

Hands of Love: March

"For the poor will never cease from the land; therefore, I command you to do this word which says, You shall surely open your hands to your brother, to your poor and needy in your land." (Deut. 15:11)



**All Sundays in March: One Roof Outreach Ministry
of Coweta County**

*(People serving the Lord in a unified way to meet the spiritual
and physical needs in our community.)*

We will be collecting **personal hygiene items** and **non-perishable foods**. For the thrift store, they will accept any gently used items that someone can wear or use to make a home.

One Roof is an alliance of churches of many different denominations, as well as community organizations and businesses. Through their joint efforts, they hope to improve the goodwill of the community. This ministry offers help in emergency financial situations, runs a food pantry, and a thrift store. One Roof's goal is to bring community resources together to meet the financial and spiritual needs of those struggling in our community.

Needs:

Cereal, Grits, Oatmeal, Jiffy cornbread mix, peanut butter, jelly, canned spaghetti sauce, spaghetti pasta, rice, mac & cheese, instant potatoes, evaporated milk, juice, tea, sugar, corn, green beans, sweet peas, beans, peas, white potatoes, yams/ sweet potatoes, tomatoes, tomato sauce, greens (collards/turnip/spinach), mixed vegetables, fruit, soup, ramien noodles, tuna, salmon, canned meat

Requested Items:

Toilet tissue, paper towels, bar soap, toothpaste, shaving cream, disposable razors, lotion, shampoo, dishwashing liquid, laundry detergent, feminine products, disposable diapers, wet wipes, and trash bags. We are accepting anything; the requested items are things that cannot be bought with Food Stamps.

Through your generosity, the Fayette Samaritans have an overflowing "stock pot" from Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday. As we begin our journey through Great Lent to Holy and Great Pascha, lets open our hearts, and kitchen cabinets, to share as generously with One Roof. Thank you for your support of all our Hands of Love endeavors.

Kim Poolos, Hands of Love Coordinator





["Follow" & "Like" our Facebook page](#) – St. Christopher Hellenic Orthodox Church.

Be sure to check our status for updates and photos.

And on this 650th Sunday of our St. Christopher's parish community, we continue to thank each of you for your presence and support. Although it may seem like we are just a handful of men, women and children, if we commit ourselves to serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we will experience the miracle of growth as the Holy Spirit brings others into His service to help us build His new church in the Peachtree City, Georgia area for the glory of God!

COMMUNITY SCHEDULE

Today is the 4th Sunday of Great & Holy Lent.

Sunday, March 26 (4th Sunday of Great Lent – Sunday of St. John Climacus)

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros Service**
- 9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy/Coffee Fellowship Reception**
- 10:45 a.m. Religious Education Classes**
- 11:45 a.m. Let's Eat!**

Wednesday, March 29 (5th Wednesday of Great Lent):

- 6:00 pm Service of the 9th Hour & Presanctified Liturgy**
- 7:15 pm Community Family Dinner & Lenten Program (*Please Bring fasting food to share and join us for our Lenten Program series that concludes each Wednesday by 8:30 p.m.*)**

Thursday, March 30:

- 6:30 pm Choir Practice – *please join us!***

Friday, March 31:

- 6:00 p.m. Akathist Hymn Service**

Sun., April 2 (5th Sun. of Great Lent – Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt):

- 7:45 a.m. Orthros Service**
- 9:00 a.m. 40 Day Service of Churching – Katie & Baby Wilson, Divine Liturgy, Philoptochos Reception Honoring Wilson Family New Baby!**
- 10:45 a.m. Religious Education Classes (*for all ages*)**

Your continued support and mutual encouragement are essential and appreciated!