

**Week of
March 19th
2017**

You can reach Fr. Luke at
frlukacs@gmail.com
or at
(613) 925-3004

Please leave a clear
message and include your
phone number

**Divine Liturgy
of the Presanctified
Gifts
and
Pastoral Visit
of Archbishop Michael**

**Wednesday,
March 22nd
7:00 pm**

Next Divine Liturgy

**March 19th
Sunday of St. John of
the Ladder
10:00 am**

**Lenten lunch
and fellowship
to follow**

**Both services at
St. Olympia Chapel
123 Main Street**



Flowers for
Sunday of the Cross at our
St. Olympia Chapel thanks
to two generous donors

Opportunities to Give:

Our church would like the following items for Holy Week and Pascha. If you would like to contribute, please contact suchyjr@potdam.edu

**Palm buds for Palm Sunday
Flowers for Holy Friday
and Pascha**

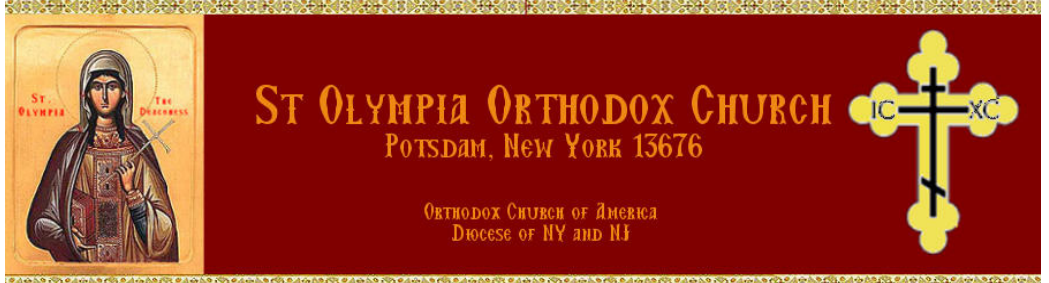
**Lenten Prayer
of St. Ephraim the Syrian**

**O Lord
and Master of my life,
take from me
the spirit of slothfulness,
faint-heartedness,
lust for power
and idle talk.**

**But give rather the spirit of
chastity,
humility,
patience
and love
to your servant.**

**Yea, O Lord and King,
grant me to see my own errors
and not to judge my brother,
for Thou art blessed
unto ages of ages.**

Amen.



Welcome to St. Olympia Orthodox Church, a young and, God willing, growing community of worshippers.

Join us for prayer and fellowship. Divine Liturgies are held every Sunday and are primarily in English.

Visit us on Facebook or www.saintolympiaorthodoxchurch.org

The Fourth Sunday of Great Lent - St. John Climacus

O holy father, hearing the voice of the Gospel of the Lord, you have forsaken the world, counting as nothing its riches and its glory; and so you have cried out to all:
“Love God, and you shall find eternal grace.
Set nothing higher than His love,
that, when He comes in glory, you may find rest with all the saints....”

(From Great Vespers of Sunday)

The fourth week of Great Lent culminates remembering St. John Climacus (St. John of the Ladder), so called because he authored a famous and often-read text, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. St. John entered monastic life at the age of 16 in c. 595 AD and lived at St. Catherine’s Monastery, Mount Sinai. *The Ladder* is his most widely-read book by monastics and also people living “in the world,” especially during Great Lent. Inspired by Jacob’s vision of a ladder, it is divided into thirty chapters, each dealing with a specific vice or virtue, but rather than being a series rules, it is a collection of pearls of wisdom such as:

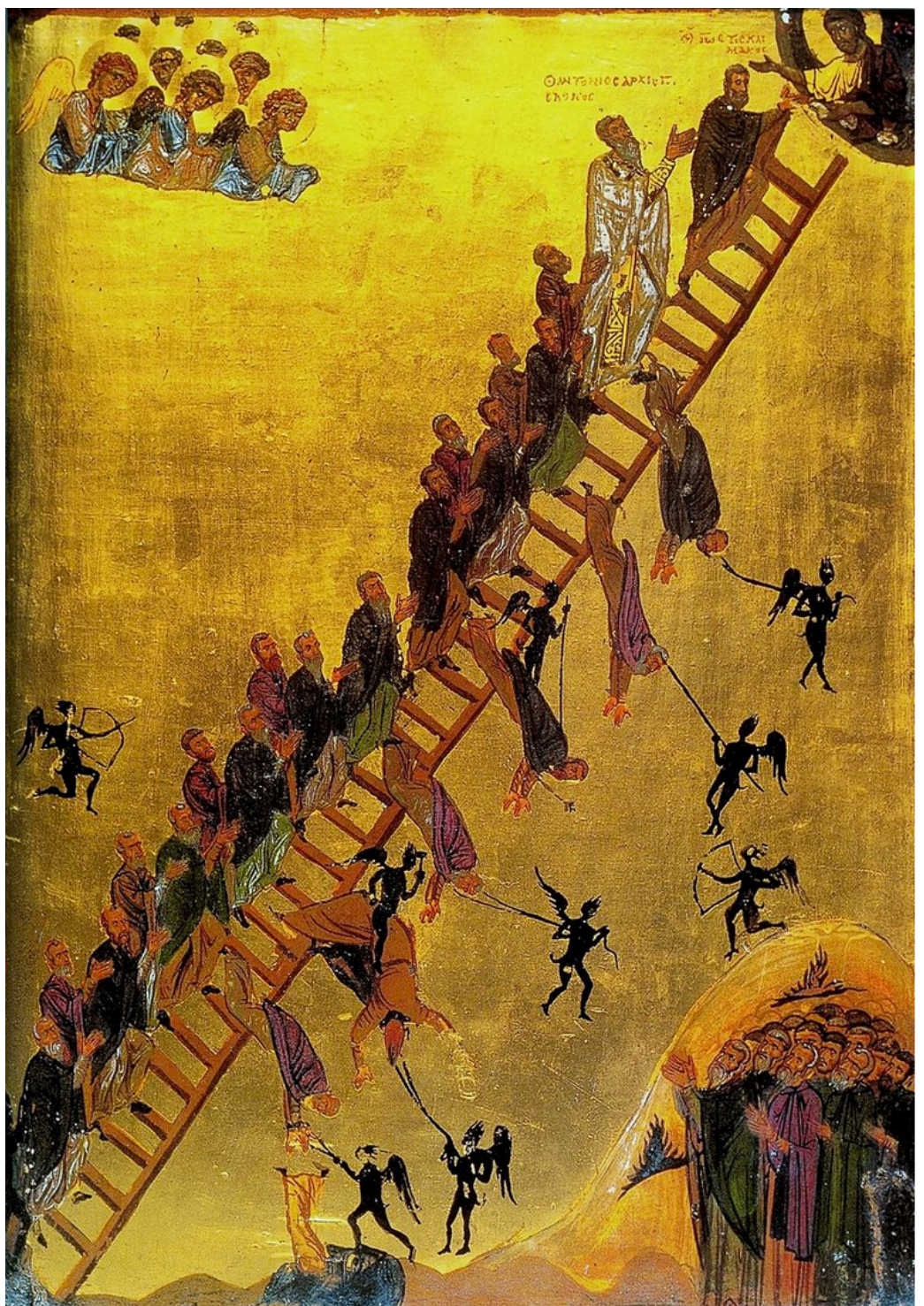
“Nothing equals or excels God’s mercies. Therefore, he who despairs is committing suicide. A sign of true repentance is the acknowledgment that we deserve all the afflictions, visible and invisible, that come upon us, and ever greater ones. Moses, after seeing God in the bush, returned again to Egypt, that is, to darkness and to the brick-making of Pharaoh, who was symbolical of the spiritual Pharaoh. But he went back again to the bush, and not only to the bush, but also up the mountain. Whoever has known divine vision will never despair of himself. Job became a beggar, but he became twice as rich again.”

“Repentance is the renewal of baptism.... A penitent is a buyer of humility. Repentance is constant distrust of bodily comfort. Repentance is self-condemning reflection, and carefree self-care. Repentance is the daughter of hope and the renunciation of despair.... Repentance is reconciliation with the Lord by the practice of good deeds contrary to the sins. Repentance is purification of conscience. Repentance is the voluntary endurance of all afflictions.... Repentance is...a striking of the soul into vigorous awareness.”

“Let us charge into the good fight with joy and love without being afraid of our enemies. Though unseen themselves, they can look at the face of our soul, and if they see it altered by fear, they take up arms against us all the more fiercely. For the cunning creatures have observed that we are scared. So let us take up arms against them courageously. No one will fight with a resolute fighter.”

“Do not be surprised that you fall every day; do not give up, but stand your ground courageously. And assuredly, the angel who guards you will honor your patience.”

Two copies of the Ladder of Divine Ascent are available in our library.



This twelfth-century icon is inspired by the book and is also from the Monastery of St. Catherine. It shows a thirty-rung ladder (one rung for each chapter in the book) that stretches from earth to heaven. On it, monks can be seen ascending to be welcomed by Christ with open arms. On the top part of the icon, angels are encouraging the climbers; on the lower part, demons can be seen tempting the monks and attempting to pull them off the ladder. The monastery is shown lower right corner with monks raising their hands in prayer for their brethren. The violence of this icon can be unsettling, as is the knowledge that the spiritual struggle is real but “not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers of the present darkness, the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12).