



# Weekly Bulletin

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Ancient Faith in Trumbull County for over 80 Years

**Father Brian Crivella**, Pastor

2021

Number 15

**The Friend of the Bridegroom: "He Must Increase and I Must Decrease."**

<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Apr 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Hieromartyr Artemon, Presbyter, of Laodicea in Syria</i>
		5:00 pm      Adult Class
		6:00 pm      Small Compline followed by Confessions
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Apr 14<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>St. Martin the Confessor, Bishop of Rome</i>
		4:00 pm      Confessions
		6:00 pm      Presanctified Liturgy
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Apr 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Apostles of the Seventy: Aristarchus, Pudens and Trophimus</i>
		4:00 pm      Confessions
		6:00 pm      Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete with the Reading of the Life of Saint Mary of Egypt
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Apr 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Virgin Martyrs Agape, Irene and Chionia, in Illyria</i>
		4:00 pm      Confessions
		6:00 pm      Akathist to the Theotokos
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Apr 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Hieromartyr Simeon, Bishop in Persia, and those with him</i>
		5:00 pm      Great Vespers followed by Confessions
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Apr 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<i>Tone 4 / 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent / St. Mary of Egypt</i>
		Readings:    Galatians 3:23-29      Luke 7:36-50
		9:30 am      Divine Liturgy

**ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / April 4<sup>th</sup>**

Attendance: (Adults: 49, Children 17)	66
Weekly Offering	\$3731.00
Candle Offerings	\$183.00
St. Tikhon's Seminary	\$575.00

**Palm Sunday Soup Kitchen**

After Liturgy on Palm Sunday there will be a Lenten meal of soup, bread, salad, and other dishes in place of coffee hour. All free will offerings made during the meal will be used to fund future Youth Group activities. If you'd like to make a soup or dish for meal please sign up at the candle stand.

**Church School**

Church School for the Children will be this month on Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup> from 3:30 – 4:30pm

**Parish Council Meeting**

The Parish Council meeting will be Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> in the parish Social hall at 6:00pm. All are welcome!

**PRAYER CORNER + + + + +**

Archpriest Peter / Fr. Basil & Mat. Patty / Fr. Dcn Paul & Mat. Marsha Mitchell / The Zylka Family / Dana Lutz / Ellen

Marie / Trista Tutoki / Paul Bakich / Leslie / Joanne Kaschak / Lilian / Miles Cuckovich / Alice & Matthew / Brother Andrew / James Johnson / Magie & Kenny Sanders / Michael (Michelle Reinhart's dad) / Bill Paluch / Nina Lowry / Alyssa Angle / Josephine Grabko / Peter Bolock / James Livermore / Helen Skovan / Helen Bobosh / Sarah Crivella / Harry Ramsey (Fr. Brian's Friend) / Karen & Keith (Fr. Brian's Aunt & Uncle) / The Faculty, Teachers, and Students of Holy Trinity Orthodox Academy / Maria & Juliana and their unborn children (Fr. Andrew's Daughters)

**Newly Baptized & Illumined:** Lily Carpenter

**Memory Eternal:** Brad Ronyak (4/1) / Peter Truta (4/10)

**Birthdays:** Isabella Carkido (Tues), Anthony & Christine DiGiacobbe & Tammi Krafft (Wed), Clyde McKenzie (Thurs), Nolan Brown, Anthony Howell, & Chloe Miklos (Fri)

**Candle Commemorations**

**Theotokos** For the Birthday of Clyde McKenzie  
**Altar** For the Birthday of Clyde McKenzie  
**Christ** For the Birthday of Chris DiGiacobbe

## Saint John of the Ladder (Climicus)

Saint John of the Ladder is honored by Holy Church as a great ascetic and author of the renowned spiritual book called THE LADDER, from which he is also called “of the Ladder” (Climacus).

There is almost no information about Saint John’s origins. One tradition suggests that he was born in Constantinople around the year 570, and was the son of Saints Xenophon and Maria (January 26).

John went to Sinai when he was sixteen, submitting to Abba Martyrius as his instructor and guide. After four years, Saint John was tonsured as a monk. Abba Strategios, who was present at Saint John’s tonsure, predicted that he would become a great luminary in the Church of Christ.

For nineteen years Saint John progressed in monasticism in obedience to his spiritual Father. After the death of Abba Martyrius, Saint John embarked on a solitary life, settling in a wild place called Thola, where he spent forty years laboring in silence, fasting, prayer, and tears of penitence.

It is not by chance that in THE LADDER Saint John speaks about tears of repentance: “Just as fire burns and destroys the wood, so pure tears wash away every impurity, both external and internal.” His holy prayer was strong and efficacious, as may be seen from an example from the life of the God-pleasing saint.

Saint John ate the food which is permitted by the monastic rule, but only in moderation. He did not sleep very much, only enough to keep up his strength, so that he would not ruin his mind by unceasing vigil. “I do not fast excessively,” he said of himself, “nor do I give myself over to intense all-night vigil, nor lay upon the ground, but I restrain myself..., and the Lord soon saved me.”

The following example of Saint John’s humility is noteworthy. Gifted with discernment, and attaining wisdom through spiritual experience, he lovingly received all who came to him and guided them to salvation. One day some envious monks reproached him for being too talkative, and so Saint John kept silence for a whole year. The monks realized their error, and they went to the ascetic and begged him not to deprive them of the spiritual profit of his conversation.

Concealing his ascetic deeds from others, Saint John sometimes withdrew into a cave, but reports of his holiness spread far beyond the vicinity. Visitors from all walks of life came to him, desiring to hear his words of edification and salvation. After forty years of solitary asceticism, he was chosen as igumen of Sinai when he was seventy-five. Saint John governed the holy monastery for four years. Toward the end of his life, the Lord granted him the gifts of clairvoyance and wonderworking.

Knowing of the wisdom and spiritual gifts of Saint John of Sinai, the igumen of Raithu requested him to write down whatever was necessary for the salvation of those in the

monastic life. Such a book would be “a ladder fixed on the earth” (Gen. 28:12), leading people to the gates of Heaven.

Saint John felt that such a task was beyond his ability, yet out of obedience he fulfilled the request. The saint called his work THE LADDER, for the book is “a fixed ladder leading from earthly things to the Holy of Holies...” The thirty steps of spiritual perfection correspond to the thirty years of the Lord’s age. When we have completed these thirty steps, we will find ourselves with the righteous and will not stumble. THE LADDER begins with renunciation of the world, and ends with God, Who is love (1 John 4:8).

Although the book was written for monks, any Christian living in the world will find it an unerring guide for ascending to God, and a support in the spiritual life. Saints Theodore the Studite (November 11 and January 26), Sergius of Radonezh (September 25 and July 5), Joseph of Volokolamsk (September 9 and October 18), and others relied on THE LADDER as an important guide to salvation.

The twenty-second step of THE LADDER deals with various forms of vainglory. Saint John writes: “When I fast, I am vainglorious; and when I permit myself food in order to conceal my fasting from others I am again vainglorious about my prudence. When I dress in fine clothing, I am vanquished by vanity, and if I put on drab clothing, again I am overcome by vanity. If I speak, vainglory defeats me. If I wish to keep silence, I am again given over to it. Wherever this thorn comes up, it stands with its points upright.

A vain person seems to honor God, but strives to please men rather than God.

People of lofty spirit bear insult placidly and willingly, but only the holy and righteous may hear praise without harm.

When you hear that your neighbor or friend has slandered you behind your back, or even to your face, praise and love him.

It is not the one who reproaches himself who shows humility, for who will not put up with himself? It is the one who is slandered by another, yet continues to show love for him.

It often happens that God humbles the vainglorious, sending a sudden misfortune. If prayer does not destroy a proud thought, we bring to mind the departure of the soul from this life. And if this does not help, let us fear the shame which follows dishonor. “For whoever humbles himself shall be exalted, and whoever exalts himself shall be humbled” (Luke 14:11). When those who praise us, or rather seduce us, start to praise us, let us recall our many sins, then we shall find that we are not worthy of what they say or do to honor us.”

The steps of THE LADDER proceed gradually from strength to strength on the path of perfection. The summit is not reached suddenly, but gradually, as the Savior says: “The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force” (Mt.11:12).

Saint John Climacus, pray for us!