



# The Forerunner

OCA - Diocese of the Midwest

V. Rev. Archpriest Andrew Bartek - Rector



## MARCH BULLETIN SPONSORS

In memory of Nadine (Rusnak) Pallai – Given by Nadine Sabo

In memory of His Eminence, Metropolitan Nicholas, my ordaining Bishop – Given by V.R. Andrew Bartek

### Liturgical and Events Schedule

#### Sunday, March 26

9:35 AM: Hours followed by Divine Liturgy /  
Monthly Panachida / Social  
5:00 PM: Lenten Vespers @ St. Peter & Paul  
Ukrainian Youngstown

#### Monday, March 27

10:00 AM: Lenten morning Prayers / Confessions

#### Tuesday, March 28

10:00 AM: Lenten morning Prayers / Confessions

#### Wednesday, March 29

10:00 AM: Lenten morning Prayers / Confessions  
5:30 PM: Confessions  
6:00 PM: Pre-Sanctified Liturgy / Social

#### Thursday, March 30

10:00 AM: Lenten Morning Prayers / Confessions  
5:30 PM: Confessions  
6:00 PM: Full Canon Of St. Andrew

#### Friday, March 31

10:00 AM: Lenten Morning Prayers / Confessions  
5:30 PM: Confessions  
6:00 PM: Akathist

#### Saturday, April 1

5:30 PM: Confessions  
6:00 PM: Vespers / Confessions

#### Sunday, April 2

9:35 AM: Hours  
10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Social  
5:00 PM: Lenten Vespers at St. Nicholas Greek  
Orthodox Church in Youngstown

### PRAYER OF ST EPHRAIM

O Lord and Master of my life! Take from me the spirit of sloth, despair, lust of power and idle talk. *(Prostration)*

But give rather the spirit of Chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant. *(Prostration)*

Yea, O Lord and King! Grant me to see my own transgressions and not to judge my brother, for blessed art Thou unto ages of ages. *(Prostration)*

O God, cleanse me, a sinner. *(12 time with deep bow after each)*

*Then, read the entire prayer again with only one prostration at the end. Note: If you can not do a prostration due to a medical condition, a deep bow is fine.*



**PLEASE KEEP OUR SHUT-INS IN YOUR PRAYERS**

Send a "Thinking of You" card or remember their Birthday with a card. If anyone needs to be added, please

**Mrs. Mary Fredericks**

**Mrs. Audrey Chengelis**

**Mrs. Julia Simko**

**Mrs. Mary Jane Puskas**

**Emilia Yannitto**

**Matushka Helen Psinka**

**Mrs. Dorothy Shirilla**

**Mrs. Pauline Fesz**

**Mrs. Marion Zwinski**

**Joan Cross**

**Irene & Al Mazanek**

**HELP MY UNBELIEF**

God loves each of us without conditions. He loves us as we are and seeks to attract us by His love and guide us into His Kingdom. There is nothing that we can do to make God stop loving us. That's how God is by nature: "God is love" (1st John 4:8). Therefore, God's faithfulness to each person can be counted upon and is absolutely reliable. God has not only made clear promises to us but He has also fulfilled them without fail and will continue to do so.

However, can the same be said about human Faithfulness to God? Although we know about God's faithfulness and may have experienced it personally more than once, nevertheless overwhelming doubt can seize us at critical moments. Typical is the case of the man who brought his

**TEACHINGS OF ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER**

A Christian is one who imitates Christ in thought, word, and deed, as far as is possible for human beings, believing rightly and blamelessly in the Holy Trinity.

Follow Christ without anxiety or hesitation, always looking heavenward and expecting help from there.

I do not know whether we must all teach others: but teach yourselves at all costs.

Do not be surprised that you fall every day; do not give up, but stand your ground courageously.

If anyone could see his own vices accurately without the veil of self-love, he would worry about noth-

**Thank you City Machine Technologies, Inc.**

We extend our biggest thanks to Michael & Chip Kovach of City Machine Technologies. They donated two motors for our big freezer. This is a substantial savings for our parish.

Thank you so much! God Bless them!

**40 DAY REMEMBRANCE**

**Sunday April 23:** Olga / Robert Fredericks

## PRAYER LIST– Updated 3-8-23

**PARISHIONERS:** Eli Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / George Horodnic / Irene Horodnic / Victoria Elash / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / Paula Kennedy / George Kolesar / Kim Konik / Mary Jane Puskas / Kenny Ruff / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Matushka Carol Steffaro / Marion Zwinski / Erica & her unborn baby

**FAMILY & FRIENDS:** Archbishop Benjamin / Bishop Matthias / Fr. James Gleason (Fr.) / Fr. David Lis / Fr. Emil Hutnyan / sub-deacon Wylie Meath (Fr.) / James Basala (Fr.) / Dominic (Centofanti) / Ellen (Clark) / Katie (Garrity) / Claudia (Gemmel) / Kathy Jacob (Fr.) / Ellen (Kessler) / Eleanor Marie (Kidder) / Paul (Kolesar) / Kathy (Kolesar) / Malakai (Kolesar) / Joe Kollar (Fr.) / Andrew LaChard (Jesko) / Walter Litzie (Fr.) / Mea (Mahan) / Mary (Mahan) / Pauline Meath (Fr.) / Karen Muzyka (Fr.) / Tracy Nelson (Fr.) / Matushka Raissa (Nicoloff) / Ksenia and her unborn child (Petrochko) / Matushka Helen (Psinka) / Chris Quotap (Fr.) / Kristianna & infant Mary Louise (Robinson) / William Romanchak (Fr.) / Katherine (Steffaro) / Johanna (Tusinac) / Richard (Tusinac) / Joseph (Vansuch) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Paula (Voytilla) / Sarah and her unborn baby / Drew (Willison) / Emilia (Yannitto) / Zoland Zile, (Fr.)

**MILITARY FAMILY & FRIENDS:** Cory Deaton (Fr.) / Alena Grabavoy (Fr.)

**MISCELLANEOUS:** Metropolitan Paul (Orthodox Diocese of Aleppo) & Archbishop John (Archdiocese of Aleppo) still being held captive / The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers around the world / Those suffering persecution in Syria, Iraq, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and around the world.

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### MARCH SPONSORSHIPS

#### ALTAR CANDLES:

In memory of my husband Andrew – Given by Ann Cvercko

In memory of my husband William – Given by Linda Livosky

#### ICONOSTAS CANDLES:

In honor of Matthew Vansuch on the occasion of his birthday.

In memory of ArchPriest Eugene Vansuch.  
Given by Nick and Monica Vansuch

#### WINE & INCENSE:

In memory of my father Joseph Korechko - Given by Joan Sirilla.

#### TETRAPOD CANDLES:

In memory of her mother: Olga L Sveda– Given by Barbara Kolesar

#### FLOWERS:

In memory of Nadine (Rusnak) Pallai- Given by Nadine Sabol

#### BULLETIN:

In memory of Nadine (Rusnak) Palai– Given by Nadine Sabol

In memory of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas, my ordaining bishop– Given by V.R. Andrew Bartek

### PRAYERS

In the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Come, let us work in the mystical vineyard of Christ, bearing fruits of repentance within it. Let us not labor for the sake of food and drink, but through prayer and fasting let us attain to Christ-like virtues. And the Lord of the vineyard, pleased by our labor, will grant and reward, redeeming our souls from sin, for He alone shows steadfast love towards people. Lord, we praise You, we glorify You, and we give thanks to You forever! Amen.

*Adapted Hymn of Praise, Fourth Sunday of Lent.*

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O holy Father John, with rivers of tears you have made the barren desert bloom, and with heartfelt sighing's of repentance you have made your labors bear fruit a hundredfold. O Saint, pray to Christ our God for the salvation of our souls. Amen.

Dismissal Hymn, Feast of St. John of the Ladder

**STATEMENT OF HIS EMINENCE  
ARCHBISHOP DANIEL OF  
CHICAGO AND THE DIOCESE OF  
THE MIDWEST ON THE KIEV  
CAVES LAVRA**

Faithful Orthodox Christians have now come to the third week of Great and Holy Lent. During this solemn period, each Christian examines their conscience and heart before Almighty God, falling down before Him in repentance. It is also during this time that we are called to heighten our love and attention to the needs of our neighbor. And, as our Lord has taught us, anyone in need is our neighbor. I have learned with great sadness that the monastics of the brotherhood of the Holy Dormition-Kiev Caves Lavra are being removed from their monastery as a result of political unrest in Ukraine. The Kiev Caves Lavra is the cradle of monasticism and spirituality of Kievan Rus and has been for over one thousand years. These very monks that are being removed are the stewards of this sacred place who helped restore the monastery in 1988, after they were allowed to return and restore monastic life and, finding the Lavra ravaged by war and suffering neglect at the hands of the Soviet government.

I want to reaffirm my continuing support and prayers, along with the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest, for His Beatitude Metropolitan Onuphry of Kiev and All Ukraine, His Eminence Metropolitan Pavel of Vyshgorod, the abbot of the holy monastery, and all of the monastics and faithful who dwell there.

I call upon the clergy and faithful of the Diocese of the Midwest to increase their prayer and fasting during this time, entreating the Lord to have mercy on brotherhood of the Lavra, and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

It is before the most Holy Gifts that the celebrant recites the prayers of St. Basil the Great asking the Lord to remember those who serve in governments and all civil authorities. We

continue this prayer and ask the Lord to inspire the elected leaders of Ukraine and of all nations, “grant them a secure and lasting peace; speak good things into their hearts concerning thy Church and all Thy people, that we, in their tranquility, may lead a calm and peaceful life in all godliness and sanctity.”

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**APRIL SPONSORSHIPS**

**WINE:**

In memory of wife Laurissa Rusnak– Given by Dr. Sub-deacon Walter Rusnak

**INCENSE:**

In memory of brother George Rusnak  
Given by Dr. Sub-Deacon Walter Rusnak

**ICONOSTASIS CANDLES:**

In memory of George & Mary Vasile & Robert Vasile  
– Given by Jim & Elaine Johnston /

**ALTAR CANDLES:**

In memory of my father Michael Boldish– Given by Nancy Tusinac  
In honor of the ladies from the sisterhood for cooking for the first week of week – Given by the parishioners

**TETRAPOD CANDLES:**

In memory of my parents George & Marie Gresko –  
Given by Mary Gresko

**BULLETIN:**

In memory of my mother Jennie Rudiak & Kathy Lazor & Helen Livorsky – Given by Sue Kennedy  
For my Mother Dorothy – Given by V.R Andrew Bartek

**FLOWERS:**

In memory of parents Nick & Mary K. Libertin (4 yrs) & brother Dr. Nick Libertin (20 yrs), George & Ruth Libertin - Given by Charissa & Tom Oliphant & Mark & Colette Libertin  
In memory of Nadine Rusnak - Given by Mary Jane Pukas

## Holy Synod Issues Updated Clergy Guidelines

The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America is releasing a revised version of the Guidelines for Clergy. Originally released in 1998, the Guidelines provide support and direction to priests and deacons on questions that arise in the fulfilling of their sacred duties. In particular, the Guidelines apply the Holy Canons and other traditional sources of pastoral direction to the present context.

While never intended to be an all-encompassing pastoral handbook, certain sections of the revised Guidelines are expanded. In particular, more guidance is given on the relationship between the parish priest and other clergy in a parish setting. Corresponding to the increase in diaconal vocations since the original publication of the Guidelines, the role and responsibilities of the deacon is brought forward. The text clarifies when priests and deacons are being considered in contrast with all ordained clergy. Monastics, seminarians, readers, subdeacons, and other altar servers are addressed in new sections. Emerging realities around marriage are addressed forthrightly.

The Holy Synod's earlier edition of 1998 was promulgated under the leadership of the late Metropolitan Theodosius and was drafted by committees led by the late Archbishop Job and His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel. The Holy Synod's current edition, which replaces the previous edition, was prepared by His Grace Bishop Alexis of Sitka and Alaska with the assistance of Archpriest Kirill Sokolov over the course of more than two years. The Guidelines were compared with the regulations and procedures of other jurisdictions as well as models from the other Autocephalous Orthodox Churches and other important primary sources. A wide range of clergy from across the Orthodox Church in America provided invaluable line-by-line review and input including the Chancellors of the Dioceses

and the members of the Office of Pastoral Life. The hierarchs of the Holy Synod reviewed the Guidelines and made changes over the course of two sessions of the Holy Synod. This edition of the Guidelines was adopted at the regular Fall 2022 session of the Holy Synod.

“We are laboring in the Savior's sheepfold during a time when the flock is in dire need of treatment, mercy, and love,” exhorts His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon in the forward to the revised text. “It is my fervent prayer that pastors will apply these guidelines to build up the Body of Christ and the Kingdom of God.”

### GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

The theme of **FAITHFULNESS** is highlighted by the hymns and readings of the Fourth Sunday of Lent. The above hymn echoes Jesus' teaching: “Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you” (John 6:27) The Epistle reading, Hebrews 6:13-20, tells us that God's promise to bless all the nations is absolutely reliable. The Gospel reading Mark 9:17-31, dramatically points up the necessary of faith on man's part in order to receive God's blessing. Finally the example of St. John the Ladder is lifted up in order to show us that our faithfulness to God is expressed through repentance, prayer, and fasting, and the practice of Christian virtues leading to a paschal renewal. **(THAT'S WHAT LENT IS ALL ABOUT!)**

What was God's promise?

When Abraham had shown his faith in God by his willingness to offer Isaac as a sacrifice (Genesis 22:1-14), God made a solemn vow to bless Abraham. The Epistle to the Hebrews quotes God's promise to Abraham: “I promise you that I will bless you and give you many descendants” (Hebrews 6:14; see also Genesis 22:17). This promise was fulfilled in the phenomenal rise of the Jewish nation in the history of salvation. In addition to the growth of the Jewish nation, however, the New testament writers also found a spiritual meaning in this promise of God to bless all the nations. St Paul calls Abraham “the spiritual father of us all” (that is both Jews and Gentiles, Roman 4:11-12, 16). For St. Paul “the blessing which God promised to Abraham (was) given to the Gentiles by means of Christ Jesus, so that through faith we might receive the Spirit promised by God” (Galatians 3:14). Read Hebrews 6:13-20.)

## **Fr. Maximos Constas Announced as Guest Speaker at Fall 2023 Synaxis National Clergy Retreat**

The OCA Office of Pastoral Life (OPL) today announced V. Rev. Archimandrite Maximos Constas, PhD, as speaker for the upcoming Synaxis: National Clergy Retreat for Active and Retired Priests from October 17-20, 2023, at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake Conference Center in Mundelein, Ill. This conference will provide an opportunity for fellowship, prayer, and education for all priests and bishops of the Orthodox Church in America.

“We are delighted to have Father Maximos join us as the guest speaker at our first Synaxis: National Clergy Retreat,” said Director of the OCA OPL Archpriest Nicholas Solak. “Not only is he a noted scholar, teacher and academic, but Father Maximos’ lived experience as an Orthodox Christian great-schema monk will help our cohort of clergy to ponder the place of the Prayer of the Heart in our priestly ministry.”

His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon and the Holy Synod of Bishops encourage all priests to participate and their parishes to financially support their participation. Watch a short video of Metropolitan Tikhon speaking of the upcoming retreat.

The Synaxis will include shared meals, morning and evening prayer and engaging education sessions. Attendees will also have the opportunity to explore Chicago during a free afternoon, as well as participate in a Hierarchical Liturgy at the historic Holy Trinity Cathedral in Chicago.

## **4th Sunday of Great Lent: St John Climacus (of the Ladder) Commemorated on March 26**

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to Saint John Klimakos, the author of The Ladder of Divine Ascent. In this book the Igoumen of Saint Katherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai bears witness to the great effort which is required for entry into God’s Kingdom (Matthew 10:12).

The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is difficult since it is “not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places ...” (Ephesians 6:12). Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, as the Lord has said, only “he who endures to the end will be saved” (Matthew 24:13).

Saint John was born around the year 525, the son of devout and wealthy parents. He received a very good education, but at the age of sixteen, he forsook the world and went to Mount Sinai, subjecting himself to the spiritual guidance of Elder Martyrios. When he was nineteen years of age,<sup>1</sup> his Elder reposed. Then Saint John entered the arena of hesychasm, visiting the monastic communities of Skētē and Tabēnnisē in Egypt. For another forty years, he lived in a cell at Thora in the Sinai Desert, which was a two hour (5 mile) walk from the Monastery of Saint Katherine.

Aflame with indescribable longing for God, he ate everything that was permitted by the monastic Rule, but only in very small quantities, and not unto satiety. By so doing, he overcame the vice of pride; and by eating just a little food, he humbled the stomach, which always wants more. He raised his body from death and paralysis by the remembrance of death, and he overcame the tyranny of anger with the sword of obedience.

Who can describe the fountain of his tears, which is now to be seen in very few individuals? He slept only as much as was necessary to prevent his mind from being distracted. Before going to sleep he prayed a great deal, and he also wrote books. This was how he subdued despondency. His entire life was spent in unceasing prayer, and incomparable love for God.

After writing The Ladder at the request of Igoumen John of Raithu Monastery, and leading a God-pleasing life, Saint John fell asleep in the Lord when he was about seventy-five years old (ca. 603). He is also commemorated on March 30.

<sup>1</sup> This was his monastic age. He was, in fact, thirty-five years old.

## REPOSED LIST FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH

Dear Parishioners I have been working on this project for a few weeks. I went back to the beginning of the diptychs from 1917 to the present. It is important to remember and keep in our hearts the founders, builders and benefactors of this parish. We will have a monthly Panachida to remember all that reposed in that month. If a name needs to be added please see Fr. A. The © stands for all the faithful of this parish. Going back and trying to read the names was difficult. If you see a name spelt incorrectly please see Fr. I hope this will bring joy to all of you to remember your loved ones on a regular basis in the Church.

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1- Anna Rago (1920) ©                   | 18- Vladimir Conkich (1924) ©      |
| 1- Konstantin Pavchula (1933) ©         | 18- Still born Sabastinak (1924) © |
| 1- Spiros Psaromatis (1936) ©           | 18- John Furin (1934) ©            |
| 2- Gerasimakis Mikes (1930) ©           | 19- Manthas Geanakis (1956) ©      |
| 4- Theodora Anos (1963) ©               | 21- Tai Whitham                    |
| 5- Emily Vasilchek (1970) ©             | 21- Sava Yovansvich (1920) ©       |
| 5- Mary Bilchik (1923) ©                | 21- Michael Barol (1965) ©         |
| 5- Milan Milasav (1926) ©               | 22- Matthew Pacak (1969) ©         |
| 6- Joseph Libertyn (1989) ©             | 22- Anna Sweesy (2010) ©           |
| 6- Joseph Macala Jr (1993) ©            | 22- Theodore Boldosh (1931) ©      |
| 6- Eva Nedostup (1921) ©                | 23- John Olesko (1971) ©           |
| 6- Mike Korfia (1932) ©                 | 23- Andrew Zlatfoff, Sr. (1975) ©  |
| 6- Alexander Tsvetanoff (1949) ©        | 24- Mary Bolina (1988) ©           |
| 8- Helen Konik (1925) ©                 | 25- Pani Janette Moriak (1997)     |
| 8- Olga Sweda (1995) ©                  | 25- David Chikerotis (2019)        |
| 9- Rampo Nikoloff (1957) ©              | 26- Joseph Krause (1998) ©         |
| 10- David Joseph Wargo (1977) ©         | 26- Michael Urchak (2005) ©        |
| 10- Mary Durshaw (1980) ©               | 26- Irene Homulos (2005) ©         |
| 11- John Kostrounis (1924) ©            | 26- Vasili Spirtos (1925) ©        |
| 11- Nicholas Sivachko (1934) ©          | 26- George Konstaudinidis (1943) © |
| 11- Christine James (1959) ©            | 26- Tony Deligeorge (1957) ©       |
| 11- Helen Kalafut (1962) ©              | 26- Dan Barbus (1958) ©            |
| 12- Metropolitan Nicholas (2011)        | 27- Darlene Hryb (2017) ©          |
| 12- Margaret Krause (2009) ©            | 27- Bogan Bolgar (1927) ©          |
| 12- Eli Maystevovich (1951) ©           | 27- Evdokia Vasilika (1932) ©      |
| 13- George Malchisky Sr (1980)          | 27- George Britven (1957) ©        |
| 13- Steven Gozur (1993) ©               | 28- Anthony Fojcik (1920) ©        |
| 14- Steven Nosik (1987) ©               | 28- John Patellis (1926) ©         |
| 14- Nikita Meris (1933) ©               | 29- Trofin Melnik (1931) ©         |
| 14- John Furin (1933) ©                 | 30- Nicholas Aasta (1921) ©        |
| 15- Tatianna Muc (1931) ©               | 30- George Andras (1999) ©         |
| 15- Mary Furin (1996) ©                 | 31- Helen Homulas (1974) ©         |
| 16- Mary Grubich (1931) ©               | 31- James Malli (1925) ©           |
| 16- Catherine Kovchuiak (1947) ©        | 31- Katherine Hamanzi (1946) ©     |
| 18- Sub-deacon William Livosky (2015) © |                                    |

## EASTER FLOWER DONATIONS

For those who have already purchased, and those who want to purchase Easter Flowers, to help off set the cost they are \$15 a flower. If you would like to have them *In Memory* or *For the Health* of someone they will be mentioned them during the Great Entrance on Pascha. Please send Fr. Andrew the information before Great & Holy Friday.

### V.R. Andrew Bartek (8 Flowers)

- ◆ In memory of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas, my ordaining bishop
- ◆ In memory of my parents George & Dorothy
- ◆ In memory of my family and In memory of all the deceased of this parish including all the priests who served this parish
- ◆ For the health of all my family and friends
- ◆ For the health of his Grace Bishop Matthias
- ◆ For the health of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, His Eminence AB Daniel & the entire Synod of bishops
- ◆ For the health of all the parishioners and their families of this parish

### Matthew & Deena Vansuch & Family (5 flowers)

- ◆ In honor of Nick & Monica Vansuch

## Hebrews 6:13-20 (Epistle)

For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, “Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you.” And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set

before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

## A SAINT’S FAITHFULNESS

Faithfulness to God is exemplified by the lives of saints. St. John, whose feast is celebrated on the Fourth Sunday of Lent (St. John is also commemorated on March 30), lived in the late sixth and early seventh centuries. He was tonsured a monk at the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mt. Sinai, one of the oldest Orthodox monasteries in existence. Most of his life was spent in complete solitude and unceasing prayer at a place outside of the monastery. There, according to tradition, God had spoken to Moses by the burning bush and later had given to him the Law. St. John is the supreme example of the Orthodox monastic ideals of continuous prayer, perpetual fasting, and unwavering faithfulness to God and His Kingdom. His was a radical call to uncompromising obedience to the teachings of Jesus, as the following hymn suggests: *O holy Father, hearing the voice of the Gospel of the Lord, you renounced the world, counting as nothing its riches and its glory. By your example you cry out to all: “Love God and you will find eternal grace. Prefer nothing above God’s love, so that when He comes in glory, you may find rest with all the saints.” By their intercessions, Christ our God, guard and save our souls.* Vesper Hymn, Fourth Sunday of Lent, Feast of St John of the Ladder

During the last years of his life St. John was called to be the abbot of St. Catherine’s Monastery. During this period he wrote his famous work *The Ladder of Divine Ascent* because of which he came to be known as St. John “of the Ladder” (Klimakos). In this book St. John offers his wisdom on spiritual and moral perfection through a life in union with God, the summit of the human quest for true life and ultimate fulfillment. Jesus taught His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount: “You must be perfect— *Con’t Pg. 10*



## Mark 9:17-31 (Gospel)

Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not." He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me." Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" When Jesus saw that the people came running together, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: "Deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and enter him no more!" Then the spirit cried out, convulsed him greatly, and came out of him. And he became as one dead, so that many said, "He is dead." But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when He had come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but prayer and fasting." Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know it. For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day."

## WHAT IS FAITH

Faith is an act of trust, an attitude of confidence, and an inward decision of reliance on God. Faith activates the power of God in our lives. Through

the commitment of faith we enter into a personal relationship with God and become open to the flow of His love. In worship Orthodox Christians are frequently urged to place their lives in the hands of Christ: Let us commit ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ, our God." In His ministry and teachings Christ often asked for faith.

## LITURGICAL ATTENDANCE

**Wednesday, March 1:** 2 attended am prayers  
**Wednesday, March 1:** 26 attended Canon  
**Thursday, March 2:** 1 attended am prayers  
**Thursday, March 2:** 22 attended Canon  
**Friday, March 3:** 1 attended am prayers  
**Friday, March 3:** 31 attended Pre-Sanctified / 16 Communicants  
**Saturday, March 4:** 7 attended Vespers  
**Sunday, March 5:** 87 attended Liturgy / 56 Communicants  
**Monday, March 6:** 3 attended am prayers  
**Tuesday, March 7:** 1 attended am prayers  
**Wednesday, March 8:** 2 attended am prayers  
**Wednesday, March 8:** 22 attended Presanctified / 7 communicants  
**Thursday, March 9:** 2 attended am prayers  
**Friday, March 10:** 2 attended am prayers  
**Friday, March 10:** 16 attended Akathist  
**Saturday, March 11:** 23 attended Vespers  
**Sunday, March 12:** 48 attended Liturgy / 32 Communicants  
**Monday, March 13:** 1 attended am prayers  
**Tuesday, March 14:** 1 attended am prayers  
**Wednesday, March 15:** 1 attended am prayers  
**Wednesday, March 15:** 33 attended Pre-Sanctified / 16 Communicants  
**Thursday, March 16:** 1 attended am prayers  
**Friday, March 17:** 3 attended am prayers  
**Friday, March 17:** 21 attended Akathist  
**Saturday, March 18:** 12 attended Memorial Liturgy  
**Saturday, March 18:** 12 attended Vespers  
**Sunday, March 19:** 65 attended Liturgy / 40 Communicants  
**Monday, March 20:** 3 attended am prayer  
**Tuesday, March 21:** NO PRAYERS  
**Wednesday, March 22:** 1 attended am prayers

# March Celebrations

## Birthdays

- 1- Marilyn Calzone
- 2- Lori Batura
- 2- Andy Zenko
- 6- AP John Steffaro
- 11- Cindy Ferrick
- 14- Reader Matthew Vansuch
- 16- Paul Bojan
- 16- Claudia Zile
- 18- Thomas Zelinsky
- 20- Gianna Hryb
- 20- Jacob Hryb
- 21- Brooklyn Lariccia
- 24- Ann Jesko
- 27- Mary Jane Puskas
- 30- Bobbie Royhab



## Anniversary

- 24- Chris & Lindsay Lariccia

## Name's Day

- 4- AB Daniel of Chicago  
4- His Grace Bishop Gerasim of Forth Worth  
17- AB Alejo of Mexico  
17- His Grace Bishop Alexis of Alaska

*I gathered this information while House blessing.  
If you would like to be added to above please contact me. Fr. Andrew*

### *A Saints Faithfulness con't from pg 8*

just as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48), a command valid not only for the apostles, nor only for ascetics and monks, but for all Christians.

What is Christian perfection? Put simply it is to "live just as Jesus did" (1st John 2:6), So that we may "become mature people, reaching to the very height of Christ's full stature" (Ephesians 4:13). For us in the world Christian perfection is not the practice of harsh ascetic disciplines in their external forms but growth in love, holiness, and goodness—a spiritual ascent through Christ, a Jacob's ladder which brings us to the very presence of God (Genesis 28:10-22) Read Matthew 11:27-30.

## MESSAGE FROM THE SISTERHOOD

Dues are now be collected for the year. They are \$12. Joanne Biros is collecting the money.

If you are not a member and you want to become one, or are interested in what the sisterhood does, a sisterhood member would be happy to answer any questions and would be joyous if you became a new member.

## CLEANING OF CHURCH

Council has voted to encourage parishioners to give of their time & talents to help clean the church. Please see Fr. Andrew if interested & willing to help with one of the 4 Groups listed. Cleaning needs to be done by Vespers on Saturday, once a week for a month.

### **Group 1- One or more people (one person has signed up for this group)**

Dust, clean, and sanitize all Icons & Icon Stands & Window sills. Dust, clean & organize the vestibule area & entrance way. Sweep all the stairs in the church, including those going down to basement.

### **Group 2- One or more people (2 people have signed up for this group)**

Vacuum all the upstairs rugs. Dust & clean all pews & sweep under the pews. Remove all unnecessary items from pews, including the cry room

### **Group 3- One or more people**

Water all plants. Clean bathrooms. Sweep floors outside of bathroom & organize and clean that area, including bookstore area.

### **Group 4- One or more people**

Sweep the downstairs including side rooms & wipe tables (including kitchen area). Sweep stairs going out of kitchen leading outside. Sweep stairs going up to the altar area.

## Metropolitan Council meets for its Regular Spring 2023 Session

The Regular 2023 Spring Session of the Metropolitan Council of the Orthodox Church in America took place on Tuesday and Thursday, March 14 and 16. While these meetings were conducted by video conference, the Metropolitan Council looks forward to meeting in person in October for the Regular Fall Session.

Under the presidency of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, the Council conducted general business reviewing and discussing reports that were previously submitted in writing.

In his report, His Beatitude highlighted his archpastoral work in his diocese, the diocese under his locum tenency, and his primatial work. He offered an update on his domestic and international travels and his work following the relocation to the canonical territory of his Archdiocese, which is allowing him to be with his flock and parishes on a regular basis and without the need for extensive travel.

The Property Committee updated the Council on the sale of Westwood (the Chancery property on Long Island, NY) and offered an update on the work of the real estate firm, Ripco Real Estate, which was engaged by the Metropolitan Council following the Special Session in early February. The property is now listed as a commercial listing.

Judge Ray Lanier, General Counsel, and Mr. David Lane, Chair of the Legal Committee, offered the legal report in executive session, giving an update on a number of legal cases.

Priest Alessandro Margheritino, Secretary of the Orthodox Church in America, also presented his report noting updates on technology issues, reporting on the work of SMPAC, the management of Westwood, and the new and temporary office in Virginia. He offered a report on the OCA Archives and the ongoing work at the Florovsky Library at Saint Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary where the OCA Archives are scheduled to move in the coming weeks.

Father Alessandro referenced the report of the Council Manager, Deacon Peter Ilchuk, and discussed site options for the 21st All-American Council scheduled for July 2025. The Metropolitan Council also voted to nominate an initial slate of members for the

Preconciliar Commissions. These names will be submitted to the Holy Synod for consideration.

Andrew Smith, Treasurer of the Orthodox Church in America, offered his report in which he reviewed current financials, proposed amendments to the 2023 budget. Mr. Smith introduced Matushka Sharon Hubiak and Ms. Diane Dorogy, who offered the report of the Internal Auditing Committee. The Metropolitan Council thanked the internal auditors, Mr. Andrew Smith and Ms. Susan Wisnewski, Accounting Manager, for their diligent work. The Council then heard from Mr. Michael Crofton of the Philadelphia Trust Company who offered an update on the state of the investment portfolio.

On Thursday, Archpriest Alexander Rentel, Chancellor of the Orthodox Church in America, presented his report highlighting his activities and the work of the Chancery, various past and upcoming changes in connection to the relocation of the Chancery, as well as an update on his recent travels.

Most of the meeting on Thursday then turned to the discussion of the Pension Plan. The Council first heard a report from the Pension Board represented by Archpriest John Dresko and Ms. Melanie Ringa. Mr. Michael Stieglitz, Pension Plan Administrator, was also in attendance. Extensive discussion followed on the state of the Plan, the new actuary engaged by the Pension Board, and the issue of compliance. As previously announced, the Metropolitan Council and the Pension Board will convene in person for a joint retreat in October during the Regular Fall Session of the Metropolitan Council.

Archpriest Joseph Ciarciaglino, Chair of the Metropolitan Council Pension Committee, offered a report in which the committee responded to some of the points made in the Pension Board's report. Finally, His Eminence Archbishop Daniel, chair of the recently appointed Pension Joint Committee, offered his first report.

The Special Joint Committee was appointed by the Holy Synod in November 2022. The Committee has been tasked with addressing compliance issues and facilitating a retreat for a comprehensive assessment of the OCA Pension Plan. To conclude the meeting, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon thanked the Council and offered important words for the whole Church in regard to the work undertaken and ongoing on the Pension Plan.

His Beatitude closed the meeting with prayer.