

St. Nikolai Orthodox Mission of Alliance
as part of Orthodox Campus Fellowship at University of Mount Union, Dewald Chapel.

Divine Liturgy, 9:00 am.

Very Reverend Father Joseph Cervo, Archpriest (AOCANA-retired)

Rev. Protodeacon James Gresh, Mission Administrator (Bulgarian Diocese OCA)

April 14, 2013: 4th Sunday of Lent

St. John of the Ladder (*Climacus*)

St. Martin the Confessor



Tone 4 Troparion (*Resurrection*)

When the women Disciples of the Lord
learned from the Angel the joyous message of the Resurrection,
they cast away the ancestral curse and elatedly told the Apostles:
“Death is overthrown! Christ God is risen,//granting the world great mercy!”

Tone 1 Troparion (*for St John Climacus*)

O dweller of the wilderness and angel in the body,
you were a wonderworker, O 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 grants healing to all!

Tone 4 Troparion (*St. Nikolai Velimirovich*)

Thy righteous acts have revealed thee to thy flock
As a model of faith, a reflection of humility.
And a teacher of abstinence, O Father Bishop Nikolai;
Therefore, through humility thou hast obtained exaltation and through poverty, riches;
Pray to Christ God to save our souls.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

Tone 4 Kontakion (*Resurrection*)

My Savior and Redeemer as God rose from the tomb
and delivered the earth-born from their chains.
He has shattered the gates of hell, and as Master,//
He has risen on the third day!

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Tone 4 Kontakion *(for St John Climacus)*

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.

Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20

Tone 4 Prokeimenon

O Lord, how manifold are Your works; in wisdom have You made them all.
v: Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord, my God, You are very great!

Tone 4 Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

v. Go forth, prosper and reign, for the sake of meekness, righteousness and truth!
v. For You love righteousness, and hate iniquity.

Gospel: Mark 9:17

(Instead of "It is truly meet ...," we sing the following Hymn to the Theotokos)

All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace:
the assembly of Angels and the race of men.

O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins,
from whom God was incarnate and became a Child - our God before the ages.

He made your body into a throne,
and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens.
All of creation rejoices in you, O Full of Grace. Glory to you!

Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!
The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil
Tidings. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!



Schedule of Services:

Wednesday, April 17, Presanctified Liturgy, 6:30 PM at St. George Antiochian, 1118 Cherry Ave. Canton. Our Mission Choir is singing responses joined by other area choir members. Lenten meal (always delicious) following Liturgy.

Saturday, April 20, NO Vespers.

Sunday, April 21, 5th Sunday of Lent, Liturgy, 9 am.

Wednesday, April 14, Presanctified Liturgy, 7 pm. Mt Union Chapel.

Donations: For those desiring to make a contribution to this missionary effort, please make your check payable to "Orthodox Mission of Alliance."

Coffee Social: Will take place following the Divine Liturgy, in the fellowship room on the left side, down the hall from the chapel; please join us.

Procedure for receiving Holy Communion: In the Orthodox Church, Holy Communion is reserved only for Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and regular confession. Those who have done so should approach the chalice with their arms crossed over their chest. Do not make the sign of the cross while standing in front of the chalice; state your baptismal first name; open your mouth wide (do not stick out your tongue), tilt your head back and allow the priest to deposit the holy gifts into your mouth (no need to close your mouth on the holy spoon).

Welcome to our non-Orthodox visitors: As stated above, Holy Communion is reserved only for prepared Orthodox Christians. We invite all visitors to introduce yourself to Fr. Joe and Fr. Deacon James at the end of the liturgy and to come forward to receive a piece of the blessed bread (which is given “instead of Holy Communion,” especially to those Orthodox not prepared to receive the Eucharist and to those who are not Chrismated Orthodox). We look forward to seeing you again and encourage you to learn more about the historic Orthodox Christian Faith.

Thought for the Day:

As seen in today’s Icon, St. John of the Ladder depicts the ascension to heaven by the practical use of a ladder. This symbolic ladder is to be scaled in a series of spiritual rungs where increasingly more exertion is required in order to reach the Kingdom of God. St. John has proven to be one of the greatest writers in Christianity. “The Ladder of Divine Ascent” is a discourse on spiritual exercises and actions, which he presents in an inspiring way as the approach to the throne of Heaven.

St. John is remembered not only as the author of the acclaimed “The Ladder of Divine Ascent,” but also as the originator of hesychasm,[which is the Orthodox practice of silent prayer, based on Christ’s command in the Gospel of Matthew (6:6) “But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”] This divine quietness leads one to God through constant prayer, the prayer which has come to be known as the “Jesus Prayer” (“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”). Regarding this St. John wrote: “ Let the remembrance of Jesus be present with each breath, and then you will know the value of hesychia.” He continued to champion this doctrine which found strong support among Christian thinkers, notably among them was St. Gregory Palamas, whose advocacy brought about official Church support of hesychasm in the fourteenth century.

For more than seventy years, John of the Ladder practiced what he preached in the confines of his Mt. Sinai desert monastery. He achieved such a reputation for piety and wisdom that men from all walks of life were drawn to his side and came from all over to make a pilgrimage to his retreat. From St. John’s strong faith and fervent prayer came the power of healing through the divine intervention of the Jesus. If nothing else, St. John’s visitors would leave him with a serenity which they had never before experienced and with a sense of fulfillment that would last a lifetime.

One of Christendom’s luminary figures, His memory is celebrated on March 30, the day of his repose and on the fourth Sunday of Great Lent.

Fr. George Poulos, in his book Orthodox Saints, writes:

"St. John gives me strength in the times that I appear weak (because I always am). He reminds me why I am here on Earth and what my purpose is and keeps me on track so that I do not get too caught up with school or any one thing. He inspired people just by his actions, not by words, and that to me says a lot and is powerful."

St. Nikolai Orthodox Mission of Alliance
P.O. Box 193
Maximo, Ohio 44650-0193