



# WEEKLY BULLETIN

BULLETIN BUILDER

## Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

**April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021: Sunday of St. John Climacus (of the Ladder)**

**MARTYRS: Antipas**, Bishop of Pergamum; **Martin** of Rome; **Vachos**

**SAINTS: John Climacus; Guthlac** the Hermit of Crowland; **Pharmuthios** the Anachorite, **Kallinikos** of Tsernika, **Tryfeni & Matrona**; **George** Founder of Chryssostom monastery; **Varsanoufrios**, Bsp of Tver, **Efthymios & Hariton** of Bologda; **James** of Vryleef; **James** of Zeleznij-Borok; **All in Rhodes**

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Great Compline: Monday, April 12<sup>th</sup>**, at 6:00 PM

**Presanctified Divine Liturgy: Wednesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>**, at 6:00 PM

**Akathist Hymn to Mother of God: Friday, April 16<sup>th</sup>**, at 6:00 PM

**Easter Card Fundraiser:** For \$15, wish "Christos Anesti" to over 300 Assumption families

**Fish Fest: Sunday April 25<sup>th</sup>**, order at: [www.foodfest.assumptionnh.org](http://www.foodfest.assumptionnh.org) & pick up 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM

### Gospel and Epistle Readings

#### Matins Gospel Reading – *Eleventh Orthros Gospel - John 21:14-25*

At that time, Jesus revealed himself to his disciples after he was raised from the dead, and he said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, do you love me more than these?" He said to him "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon, son of Jonas, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of JonAS, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you girded yourself and walked where you would; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish to go." (This he said to show by what death he was to glorify God.) And after this he said to him, "Follow me."

Peter turned and saw following them the disciple whom Jesus loved, who had lain close to his breast at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remains until I come, what is that to you? You, follow me!" So, the word went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die; but Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but "If it is my will that he remains until I come, what is that to you?" This is the disciple who is bearing witness to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true. But there are also many other things which Jesus did; were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. AMEN.

#### Epistle Reading – *St. Paul's Letter to the Hebrews 6:13-20*

BRETHREN, when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore to himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise. Men indeed swear by a greater than themselves, and in all their disputes an oath is final for confirmation. So, when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible that God should prove false, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. AMEN.

#### Gospel Reading - *Sunday of St. John Climacus (4<sup>th</sup> of Great Lent) – Mark 9:17-31*

At that time, a man came to Jesus kneeling and saying: "Teacher, I brought my son to you, for he has a dumb spirit; and wherever 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, and they were not able." And he answered them, "**O faithless generation**, how long am

I to be with you? How long am I to bear with you? Bring him to me." And they brought the boy to him; and when the spirit saw him, immediately it convulsed the boy, and he fell on the ground and rolled about, foaming at the mouth. And Jesus asked his father, "**How long has he had this?**" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into the fire and into the water, to destroy him; but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!" And when Jesus saw that a crowd came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, "You dumb and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never enter him again." And 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 arose. And when he had entered the house, his disciples asked him privately, "Why could we not cast it out?" And he said to them, "**This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer and fasting.**" They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he would not have anyone know it; for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of man will be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days he will rise." AMEN.

### Five Lessons from One Miracle



Today's gospel contains one of the rare times our Lord loses His patience. When He hears His disciples were not able to heal the demon-possessed boy, He calls them "**a faithless generation.**" This is because the Jews paid attention to their bodily circumcision but not their spiritual one. This also teaches that to defeat a demon we need strong faith. After the healing, the disciples worried they have lost the power of the Holy Spirit, they ask Him "why were we not able to heal him?" And He answers, "**This kind does not come out but with fasting and prayer.**" Now, this becomes the second lesson in our battle against evil. Faith, together with prayer and fasting are some of our prime weapons against evil. But why is the Lord asking the boy's father: "**How long has he had this?**" Being God, He knows how long, yet He wants to give everyone the measure of strength of this demon. For the longer the demon has entered a person, the more he establishes himself there and makes himself "**at home.**" This also happens with **sins** kept inside of us. The longer we do not seek the help of a spiritual father to confess them and have them forgiven, the harder it becomes to extract them from our soul. This makes certain kinds of sin to make themselves "**at home**" inside of us, so much so as we think all is fine with us. As a result, we do not ever go to Holy Confession, thus preventing our own salvation. Examples of such deeply rooted sins are the **7 Deadly Sins**, which nowadays are considered virtues! So, the third lesson is: do not let sin stain your soul for a long, or it may sit there for good. Further, noteworthy is how the faith admission of the boy's father is rather weak. This is also evident from the fact the boy is sick from its youth, but the father brings it to Jesus years later. But on his request, the Lord helps his unbelief. In such a way, this father becomes one of us. We often wish to believe, but our faith is weak. Yet, God works in mysterious ways. He initially allowed the demon into the boy, so the father becomes more faithful, and through his faith to find salvation for the boy, for himself and for many people present. In the same fashion, when we face a challenge in our family, we should consider God has allowed it, so our faith increases. Finally, the moment of the healing contains a "**hidden resurrection.**" This is because the boy becomes "**like dead,**" but the Lord takes him by the hand and "**raises**" him, thus prefiguring our own resurrection. AMEN.

### Sunday of St. John Climacus (of the Ladder)



The memory of this Saint is celebrated on March 30<sup>th</sup> and again on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Great Lent. This is because his book, "**The Ladder of Divine Ascent,**" is a sure and scientific guide to those following the ascetic life, but also to those who live in the world and wish to increase in virtue and decrease in passions. St. John proved himself a great man of prayer, while experiencing all forms of monastic life. His ever-memorable book teaches the seeker of salvation how to lay a sound foundation for his/her struggles, how to detect and fight against each of the passions, how to avoid the snares laid by the demons, and how to rise from the rudimental virtues to the heights of Godlike love and humility. It is held in such high esteem that it is universally read in its entirety in monasteries during Great Lent. AMEN