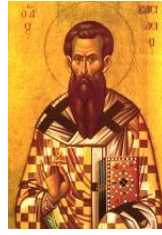


ST BASIL GREEK MELKITE CATHOLIC CHURCH  
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5<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT - SUNDAY OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT  
Saturday, March 20 & Sunday, March 21, 2021

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**PARISH SERVICES**

**Holy Liturgy:** Monday-Friday 8:30AM  
**Holy Liturgy:** Saturday 4:30PM, Sunday 11:00AM  
**Matins/Orthos:** Sunday 9:00AM  
**Holy Confession:** Monday 4-6PM  
**Vespers:** Saturday 3:00PM  
**Holy Rosary:** Sunday 10:30AM

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**HEALING PRAYERS NEEDED**

Prayers needed for our friends Maggy Atallah, Jean Benoit, Nadia Casab, Jeanette Farewege, Nancy Gazzal, Daniel Klockowski, Rose Pawlinga, Brian Sagrestano, and Karen Zalatan. Please notify Fr. Shofany in case of illness.

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**RECENT RECEIPTS**

Weekly Collection March 13/14: \$ 271.00 Memorial Services: \$ 570.00  
Palm Sunday & Easter Offering: \$ 25.00

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† **MEMORIAL MASSES** †

**THIS SATURDAY, MARCH 20**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Ralph & Denise Fusco  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Janet Chanatry & Family  
† **John Gazzal**, By Edward & Carmela Nassimos

**THIS SUNDAY, MARCH 21**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Ralph & Denise Fusco  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Mary Rinko  
† **Abdallah Ghryyeb**, By the Hesham & Najwa Marji  
† **John Gazzal**, By Kathy and Keith Williams

**NEXT SATURDAY, MARCH 27**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By Ralph & Denise Fusco  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Janet Chanatry & Family  
† **John Gazzal**, By Edward & Carmela Nassimos

**NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 28**

† **Eugene Hutchinson**, By John & Anita Iannotta  
† **Julia Nassimos**, By Mary Rinko  
† **Abdallah Ghryyeb**, By the Hesham & Najwa Marji  
† **Hazel Warren**, By Robert Lalli  
† **John Gazzal**, By Kathy and Keith Williams

**SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

**PALM SUNDAY & EASTER DONATIONS** ~ Angela Elefante donated flowers for Easter Sunday ~ Monetary Donations: from the Astour Family in memory of Agnes, Andrew, James, Mary, and Rose Astour ~ Juan Thomas in memory of the deceased members of the Thomas and Testa Families ~ John Anthony Kawam ~ David & Janet George ~ Travis & Han Stern ~ Robert Lalli  
**FUEL CONTRIBUTION** ~ by John & Michelle Roth in memory of Louis & Doris Zalatan ~ Edward & Margie Roth ~ Anthony L. Zalatan ~ David & Janet George

Thank you and many blessings from the St Basil Community.

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**ST. JOHN CLIMACOS AND THE LADDER**

AT THE FOOT OF MOUNT SINAI, in the Egyptian peninsula of the same name, sits the Monastery of St Catherine. It has been inhabited continuously for over 1700 years, making it one of the oldest such places in the world. Its unique climate has preserved icons and manuscripts from the first millennium AD that look as if they were just made. The greatest treasures it has produced, however, are its spiritual riches: over 170 saints honored in the Greek Orthodox and Catholic Churches, chief among them being St John Climacos.

A native of the region, St John lived in the sixth century. At 16 he became a monk and spent the rest of his life as an ascetic. For most of his life he lived in a hermitage at the foot of the mountain. When he was 75, he was chosen as abbot of St Catherine's monastery but ended his life in solitude, as a desert-dwelling ascetic. In the early seventh century another John, abbot of the Raithu monastery on the shores of the Red Sea, asked our John to write a guide to the spiritual life for the monks of Raithu. The result was the *klimax* or *Ladder* by which John of Sinai has been known ever since. Using the imagery of Jacob's ladder (see *Gen 28:10-19*), he portrays the ascetic life as a climb to heaven with each rung on the ladder being a virtue to be acquired. A twelfth-century icon preserved at the monastery shows monks climbing this ladder. Some acquire all the virtues and complete the ascent to God; others fall off, pulled down by the passions, unable to endure the ascetic life to the end. It has long been the custom in monasteries to read *The Ladder* each year during the Great Fast. This in turn gave rise to the commemoration of St John on the Fourth Sunday of the Fast.

**The Rungs of the Ladder:** The first seven rungs portray the most basic virtues necessary for an ascetic life: renunciation of the world, detachment from what was left behind, exile from all we have known, obedience (which is voluntary death of the ego), repentance, the remembrance of death, and cultivating a spirit of mourning. The remaining rungs detail steps needed to make progress on this way of life, such as freedom from anger and irritability, forgetting of wrongs suffered, avoiding gossip and slander, and conquering despondency. Battling gluttony, lust and greed through fasting from food, drink and sleep are depicted as the daily work of the monk. "The farmer's wealth is gathered on the threshing floor and in the wine-press, but the wealth and knowledge of monks is gathered during the evening and the night hours while standing in prayer and engaging in spiritual activity" (Step 20).

On subsequent rings the monk confronts more dangerous enemies – pride and vanity – through humility and the revealing of one's inmost thoughts. Only through the acquisition of these virtues can the monk attain to prayer, love, and heaven on earth: the state of communion with God.

**Some Excerpts from *The Ladder*:** "Blessed is he who, though maligned and disparaged every day for the Lord's sake, constrains himself to be patient. He will join the chorus of the martyrs and boldly converse with the angels. "Blessed is the monk who regards himself as hourly deserving every dishonor and disparagement. Blessed is he who mortifies his own will to the end, and leaves the care of himself to his director in the Lord; for he will be placed at the right hand of the Crucified. He who will not accept a reproof, just or unjust, renounces his own salvation. But he who accepts it with an effort, or even without an effort, will soon receive the remission of his sins." *From the Fourth Rung.*

(March2021Leaflets)