

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

MISSION STATEMENT:

To foster the spiritual maturity of the Orthodox Christian faithful of St. John the Baptist and reach out to inquirers, the unchurched and inactive Orthodox on the west side of metropolitan Portland through worship, the Sacramental life, Education, Philanthropy, Hospitality, Fellowship and the practice of Christian Stewardship, thereby serving as an instrument in the growth and expansion of the Orthodox Christian Church.



Did you know that besides supporting the 6 mission Parishes mentioned last week, C.O.M.E. also offers mentoring to Parishes in Anchorage, AK; Bellingham, WA; Redding, Santa Cruz, Monterey County, Temecula, San Juan Capistrano, El Cajon, CA and Prescott, AZ? Thanks to your donations to Mochas for Missions, St. John helps provide this support. As of last week, **we have raised \$522** towards our goal of \$4,000! See Diane Cherry for questions.

SIGN UP TODAY for Sat. of Lazarus Pancake Breakfast & Palm Tying! "Learn How to Make Easter Palm Cross" through this YouTube link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=OI-k9LqaIS8

JOY Youth Group at the OFB on Thurs. Apr. 6th from 6-8:30pm to volunteer our time to help others in need. Participants must register for shifts individually. You may bring other family members and friends. Recommended for ages 6 and up! Contact Katherine Braden for the registration link and questions.

Lenten Care Packages Project. Did you know there are 11 students from SJB attending out-of-town colleges and universities? St. Justin's College Student Ministry is fundraising to cover the cost of a signed card, a chocolate bar, and a spiritual book. Visit Logos bookstore today to make a donation to cover the cost of this endeavor! Questions? Awesome ideas? Contact Sam M. or Bethany D.

Basics of Orthodox Class full schedule can be found on the bulletin board or our website.

CALLING ALL KIDS! The Holy Friday Youth Retreat is on Fri., Apr. 14th from 10:45am-2:45pm. It's a fun-filled day! Lunch, activities, and fellowship. Register during the coffee hour TODAY-Apr. 9th. For more info., please contact Athena Gonzales at athenacontes@hotmail.com.

Myrrhbearing Maidens is an opportunity for girls, 3rd grade - 8th grade, to serve at Christ's Burial and Resurrection during Holy Week. Donations of outgrown white dresses are also being accepted. For questions, contact Jennifer Rich (jenniferannarich@gmail.com).

PALM SUNDAY & PASCHA PICNIC ticket sales will begin next week! On 4/2 and 4/9 you may purchase the luncheon tickets with 1 check! Cost is: \$10/person and \$30/family. Palm Sunday fish luncheon benefits the St. John the Forerunner Monastery. Pascha picnic cost includes lamb, salad, and beverages.

We're Hiring! Agia Sophia Academy seeks experienced part-time & full-time educators for the 2017-18 school year. Visit www.asapdx.org to learn more about these exciting job opportunities!

On Sale now! Get your ASA gala tickets during coffee hour and help support our school! ASA is still seeking donations of: wine bottles, gift card donations (purchase a SCRIP card), and items for the silent auction! Visit: www.asagala.org for more information.

Welcome Visitors! All non-Orthodox visitors to our parish are welcome and may receive the blessed bread at the end of the Divine Liturgy. To receive Holy Communion, you must be baptized and confirmed in the Orthodox Church. You must also have prepared under the spiritual direction of your Father Confessor, which presumes participation in the Sacrament of Confession. Before approaching the Communion Chalice, we should not have any foreign matter in or on our mouths; this includes food, gum, lipstick, etc. Please come up the middle aisle with reverence and humility. When receiving, please place the cloth under your chin, wipe your mouth and then hand the cloth to the next person.



St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church

Bringing Orthodox Christianity to the Portland Westside and Beaverton Area

GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AMERICA * METROPOLIS OF SAN FRANCISCO

Witnessing
the Truth
of Apostolic
Christianity

Rev. Fr. Theodore Dorrance
Rev. Fr. Timothy Pavlatos
Dcn. Innocent Duchow-Pressley

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VISIT OUR PARISH WEBSITE AT STJOHNGOC.ORG

FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT~ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER LEAVE-TAKING OF THE ANNUNCIATION ARCHANGEL GABRIEL

GRAVE MODE/7TH MORNING GOSPEL

MARCH 26, 2017

Today, we celebrate the icon of the **Ladder of Divine Ascent** and the famous book of the same name, written by **St. John of Sinai**. Both the icon and the book show the Christian life to be a step by step progression away from a world of sin and our own inner world of the passions upward toward union with Christ. Each step on the Ladder of Divine Ascent represents a step closer to God. With each step up the ladder, St. John teaches us that the passions must be submitted to God for healing and transfiguration. This is a struggle characterized by the ascetic life of obedience to Christ's commandments. As we ascend this ladder, we begin to see ourselves as we truly are in relation to Christ, and how much our heavenly Father values us, loves us and wants to set us free from the slavery to sin.

The concept of a ladder ascending into heaven is not unique to this great spiritual work. It has its roots in the Old Testament, with Jacob's vision of a ladder. "And Jacob dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it!" (Gen.28:12) Many of the Holy Fathers of the Church interpreted this vision of the ladder to be a type of the Theotokos; she forms the ladder whereby God unites Himself to our nature and bows the heavens to the earth. This Old Testament vision gives us a context to better understand the Ladder of Divine Ascent by St. John of Sinai.

The icon of the Ladder is an icon of life: a life which is dynamic and dangerous. It reminds us of the words of Christ, "Strive to enter in through the narrow gate rather than the wide highway which leads to destruction." As a Christian gradually ascends, the force of spiritual and ascetical labors lifts him on high and places him into closer and closer communion with God. But, if the Christian, like Adam of old, stops ascending the ladder of Christ-likeness by ceasing to focus on God and becomes distracted by the world or becomes prideful and self-sufficient, he will trip and fall off the ladder and his soul will undergo corruption. After a fall it will become much harder to get back on the ladder than it was before. May God give us the grace to ascend towards union with Him.

The memory of Saint **John Climacus** is celebrated on March 30, where his biography may be found. He is celebrated today because his book, The Ladder of Divine Ascent, is a sure guide to the ascetic life, written by a great man of prayer experienced in all forms of the monastic polity; it teaches the seeker after salvation how to lay a sound foundation for his struggles, how to detect and war 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 the Great Fast.

PC: Taylor/Souza G: Blankenstein Altar Servers Team C: Tobias, Kyle, Levi, Aiden, Thomas, Petros, Gabriel

Clean up Team 2: Wood, Powell, Stinman, Gillespie, Muzik, Poulos N & A

SMALL ENTRANCE HYMNS

Resurrectional Hymn for this Sunday (Grave Mode):

O Lord, by Your sacred cross, You abolished death, and granted unto the thief blessed paradise. The myrrhbearers ceased lamenting and turned to joy. The apostles did preach the Good News at Your command, that You had risen from the dead, O Christ our God, bestowing Your mercy upon the world ever more.

Katelisas to Stavro Su ton thanaton, i neoxas to listi ton parathison. Ton Miroforon ton thrinon metevalues, ke tis Sis Apostolis kirittin epetaxas, oti anestis Christe o Theos, parehon to kosmo to mega eleos.

Hymn of the Annunciation (4th Mode):

Today is the fountainhead of our salvation and the manifestation of the mystery which was from eternity. The Son of God becometh the Virgin's Son and Gabriel announceth the good tidings of grace; for this cause, let us cry to the Mother of God with him: Rejoice, thou who art full of grace; the Lord is with thee.

Hymn of St. John the Baptist (2nd Mode):

The memory of the just is celebrated with hymns of praise, but the Lord's testimony is sufficient for thee, O Forerunner; for thou hast proved to be truly more venerable than the Prophets, since thou wast granted to baptize in the stream Him Whom they proclaimed. Wherefore having contested for the truth, thou didst rejoice to announce the good tidings even to those in Hades: that God hath appeared in the flesh, taking away the sin of the world and granting to us great mercy.

Kontakion for this Sunday (Plagal 4th Mode):

To thee, the Champion Leader we thy flock dedicate a feast of victory and of thanksgiving, as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos. But as thou art one with might which is invincible, from all dangers that can be do thou deliver us, that we may cry to thee: Rejoice, thou Bride unwedded.

EPISTLE READING: Hebrews 6:13-20 (Fourth Sunday of Great Lent):

Brethren, when God made a promise to Abraham, since He had no one greater by whom to swear, He swore by 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.

GOSPEL READING: Mark 9:17-31 (Fourth Sunday of Great Lent):

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 believe, 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." They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And He would not have any one 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."

PARISH ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 26TH

Sunday, March 26th	St. John of the Ladder Orthros & Divine Liturgy	8:45 AM
	Sunday School/Theology	12:15 PM
Monday, March 27th	Great Compline	6:30 PM
	Basics of Orthodoxy Class-Holy Mysteries I	7:30 PM
	Choir Practice	7:30 PM
Wednesday, March 29th	Presanctified Liturgy	8:30 AM
	Great Canon of St. Andrew	6:30 PM
Friday, March 31st	Presanctified Liturgy	8:30 AM
	Men's Lenten Retreat to the Monastery	3:00 PM
	Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos	6:30 PM
Saturday, April 1st	Great Vespers	5:00 PM
Sunday, April 2nd	St. Mary of Egypt Orthros & Divine Liturgy	8:45 AM
	Sunday School/Theology 101	12:15PM

If you would like to schedule confession with Fr. Timothy, please do so **BEFORE** Holy Week.

Logos Bookstore is taking orders for **Tsourekia**, the traditional Pascha bread made by the Sisters at St. John the Forerunner Monastery. The price has been \$10 per loaf. Please stop by the bookstore and place your order for delivery before Pascha.

Project Mexico

Project Mexico Homebuilding Trip. We now have a fundraising page for our trip this summer. Our trip is Aug 2nd-9th. The initial trip fees of \$540 each to Project Mexico are due April 31. We are going to send 20 people from our parish.

<https://volunteer.projectmexico.org/fundraising/group/st-john-the-baptist-beaverton-or>

Support Project Mexico and St. Innocent Orphanage! Please donate bags of dried pinto beans and rice to the orphanage. Questions? Contact Pavlos B at grkgks12@gmail.com

Sts Mary & Martha Philoptochos

Women's Monastery Retreat sponsored by Sts. Mary & Martha Philoptochos on Apr. 21st-23rd. Please email: nika.buckley2014@gmail.com to sign up so she can save your space. Look forward to a beautiful time of fellowship with one another and the nuns!

Ladies of St. John the Baptist, please consider signing up for the upcoming round of "Gleaning Groups", sponsored by Sts. Mary and Martha Philoptochos. If you decide to sign up to be in a "Gleaning Group", you can expect to meet at least once every two weeks, discuss a spiritual book together, pray for one another, and deepen your relationships with a small group of women over the next 6 months. Look for the sign up table during coffee in the SFH. See Nika B. or Jessie C. for questions.

We look forward to building and deepening relationships with our sisters in Christ.
We hope you will be able to join us!