St. Nicholas Antiochian Orthodox Church

a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America
His Eminence Metropolitan SABA, Archbishop of New York &
Metropolitan of all North America
His Grace Bishop THOMAS, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Oakland & MidAtlantic
The Very Reverend Father Samuel Haddad, Pastor
Deacon Matthew Benefield
211 South Heber Street ☙ POB 5026 ☙ Beckley, WV 25801
Parish (304) 252-5821 - Cell (304) 541-8550 (*use this to contact Fr. Samuel*)
fr.samuel@att.net **www.orthodoxbeckley.org**

Tone 8 — **March 22, 2026** — Eothinon 8

Fourth Sunday of Great Lent

Commemoration of John Climacus, Author of "The Ladder"

Hieromartyr Basil of Ancyra; Martyr Kallinika of Rome

Today's Reader: Rdr. John Stroud

Next Sunday– March 29, 2026

Reader: **Varik Meiggs**

Commemorations/Bread Offering for the Holy Oblation: **The Tomaino Family**

The Luncheon next Sunday will be prepared by: **Cacic and Meiggs Families**

Bread for the Holy Oblation is Offered by the Stroud Family for the for the health & salvation of Rdr John, Liz, Cal, Emily, Annie, Ryan, Elliott, Philip Lazarus, Nathan, Marie, Leah, Garrett, Anne, Judi, Jim, Joy, Jim, Gretchen, Skip, Jean, Jan, David, Michael, Terry, Andy, Judy. Daniel, Matushka Loretta, Amy, Abigail, Francis, Aidan. Don, Brett, Tara, and Mary Sue,

It is also offered in memory of Bronnie. Annabelle, Jasper, Austin, Ruth and Mike.

"the Disciples were first called Christians in Antioch" (Acts 11:26)

Please note that **Holy Communion is reserved for members of the Holy Orthodox Church** who have prepared themselves through prayer, fasting and confession. However, all are welcome to partake of the blessed bread at the dismissal.

Please join us during our fellowship at the Coffee Hour immediately after the Divine Liturgy.

Important Announcements . . .

As we continue our journey in this blessed season of Great Lent, let us all remember to set aside time to pray, to fast, and to do works of mercy for those who need mercy. Enter into the Fast with joy in your heart, and humility in the face of God. This is a great time of preparation, and part of that preparation is a sincere self-evaluation and heartfelt confession. Fr. Samuel is available to hear your confession during Great Lent, and at the times listed in the coming week's schedule, or by appointment.

Please take a moment to make note of the Divine Services offered during Great Lent and put them on your personal calendar. Check the services in each week's Bulletin as changes can occur . During Great Lent, we offer increased prayers to God, and I hope that you can come to many of the services that are offered. May God bless your Lenten Journey!

Services in the Coming Week

3/22/26 (Sun)	**O,DL**	**Sunday of St John Climacus**
3/23/26 (Mon)	**6:00 pm**	**Little Compline w/Life of St. Mary of Egypt & Full Canon of St. Andrew**
3/24/26 (Tue)	**6:00 pm**	**Festal Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Annunciation**
3/25//26 (Wed)	**6:00 pm**	**Great Vespers for the Leave-taking of the Feast of the Annunciation**
3/26/26 (Thu)	**6:00 pm**	**Presanctified Divine Liturgy followed by presentation**
3/27/26 (Fri)	**6:00 pm**	**Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos (Full)**
3/28/2026	**11:00 am**	**Baptisms - The Tomaino Family Reception afterward**

"Blessings Box" Collection Update

Beloved in Christ,

This year, we are collecting non-perishable food for our new BLESSING BOX! PLEASE KEEP BRINGING FOOD so that we may continue to stock our shelves and have food to stock adequately. We need to continue our efforts in providing food for those who are truly Hungry. God bless everyone for your holy efforts!

Tone 8 — Eothinon 8

Fourth Sunday of Great Lent

Commemoration of John Climacus, Author of "The Ladder"

Hieromartyr Basil of Ancyra; Martyr Kallinika of Rome

Troparion of the Resurrection, *in the Eighth Tone*

From the heights Thou didst descend, O compassionate One, and Thou didst submit to the three-day burial, that Thou might deliver us from passion; Thou art our life and our Resurrection, O Lord, glory to Thee.

Troparion for St. John of the Ladder, *in the Eighth Tone*

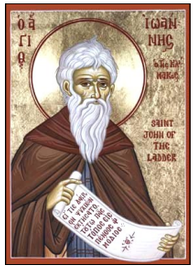
The barren wilderness thou didst make fertile with the streams of thy tears; and by thy deep sighing thou hast given fruit through thy struggles a hundred-fold. Accordingly, thou hast become a star for the universe, sparkling with miracles. Therefore, O righteous Father John Climacus, intercede with Christ God to save our souls.

Troparion of St. Nicholas, *in the Fourth Tone*

Thy righteous acts have manifested thee to thy flock as a model of faith, a reflection of humility, and a teacher of abstinence, O Father Bishop Nicholas. Therefore, through humility thou hast achieved exaltation, and through poverty riches. Intercede thou with Christ to save our souls.

Kontakion of the Sundays of Great Lent*, in the Eighth Tone*

O Victorious Leader, we thy servants ascribe to thee our victory trophy. And since thou hast saved us from adversity we offer thee our thanks, O Theotokos. So as thou hast that invincible power, continue to deliver us from danger. That we may cry out to thee: Hail O Bride without Bridegroom!



Epistle

Hebrews 6:13-20

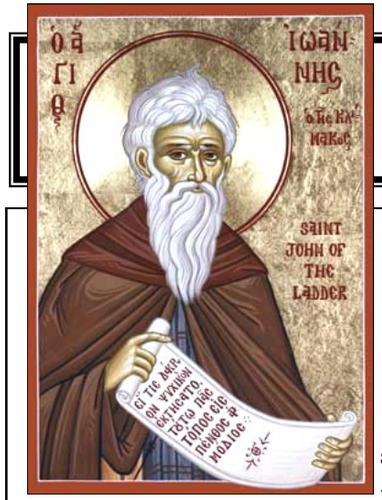
Prokeimenon: Make your vows unto the Lord and perform them.
God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel.

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 Melchiz'edek.

Gospel

Mark 9:16-30

At that time, a man came to Jesus, kneeling down and saying to Him, "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." 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."



Lenten Synaxarion

Sunday of St. John of the Ladder

"On this day, the fourth Sunday of Great Lent, we commemorate our venerable Father among the saints, St. John of Sinai, the author of *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*."

No one knows the birthplace or parentage of our venerable Father John of Sinai. In his youth, at the age of sixteen, he came to the wilderness of Sinai and dwelt under the guidance of Abba Martyrius. When Abba Martyrius tonsured our venerable Father John at the age of twenty, he took him and went to that pillar of the wilderness, Abba John the Sabbaite in the wilderness of Gouda where he had with him his disciple Stephen the Cappadocian. When the Sabbaite elder saw them, he arose and took water, poured it into a small basin, washed the feet of the disciple (the young John) and kissed his hand; but did not wash the feet of Abba Martyrius his superior. Abba Stephen was scandalized by the situation. After the departure of Abba Martyrius and his disciple, Abba John noticed that his own disciple was greatly perplexed and said to him, "Why are you so troubled? Believe me, I do not know who the boy is, but today I received the abbot of Sinai and washed his feet." After forty years, he did indeed become the abbot according to the prophecy of the elder.

After the passing of his spiritual father, St. John continued alone in the wilderness in a cave in the Wadi Thola. He traveled from time to time, going at least once as far as Alexandria. He records in The Ladder his visit to a large monastic community there and marvels of repentance, obedience, and humility which he observed. In his humility, he counted our venerable George the Wonderworker of Arselaou as his master. In all, he spent some forty years in solitude and stillness. He guided the monks who dwelt in that desert since he was a most excellent and nurturing spiritual father – for in those days there were innumerable ascetics living in cells all through the mountains and valleys of Sinai. From time to time, he received visitors from farther away. At one point, some other monks, prompted to jealously by the adversary who hates all good, complained of St. John's fame and teaching. In response, he humbly kept strict silence for over a year, until the same fathers who had complained came, asking him to speak again for the benefit of all.

After he had spent forty years in the wilderness, the monks of Sinai asked him to become abbot of the great monastery built by the emperor Justinian beside the Burning Bush of Moses, the Holy Monastery of St. Catherine. In obedience to the fathers, he left his blessed solitude to take up the responsibilities of abbot. It is told that on the very day on which he assumed the office abbot, there came a group of about six hundred pilgrims. When they were seated, our venerable Father John saw someone in the crowd with short hair and wearing a Jewish tunic. This person was going about like someone with authority, directing the cooks, the stewards, the storekeepers, and other workers. After the people left, when the servers all sat down to eat, they sought everywhere for the one who had been going about supervising, but did not find him. Then the servant of God, our venerable Father John, said, "Let him go. The lord Moses did nothing strange in this same place where he served before and which belongs to him."

O, the wonder! It had been the Holy Prophet and Lawgiver Moses who had served the guests.

At the request of Abba John, abbot of Raitho near the shore of the Red Sea, our venerable father wrote his wonderful book, The Ladder of Divine Ascent, in which he sets out the whole of Christian life as a divine ascent of thirty rungs to Christ. This book has been a treasure, a pearl beyond price, to this day. It is useful not only to monastic but to all devout Christians....St. John was true physician of souls and had great spiritual insight into men's behavior. He made detailed observations of the symptoms of men's sin-sick souls, diagnosed their spiritual diseases, and prescribed the appropriate medicine for their recover and salvation. He showed how one can ascend the "ladder of the virtues" step by step and reach the Promised Land, fleeing the Egypt of the passions. Yet, his success was due only to his own life of constant watchfulness, fasting, vigils, and prayers.

The monastic community he shepherded continues to this day beside the Burning Bush, and his teachings guide and direct monastics throughout the world. During Great Lent, The Ladder is read aloud in monasteries during meals so the monastics may receive his edifying spiritual counsels for their soul's sustenance, as they simultaneously receive physical nourishment for their bodies.

Today the cave in which he dwelt in the wilderness of Sinai can still be seen, but his resting place is unknown except to the angels. He fell asleep in the Lord in the seventh century. St. John is also commemorated on March 30, the day of his repose.

2026 Great Lent ~ Schedule of Services

3/22/26 (Sun)	O,DL	Sunday of St John Climacus
3/23/26 (Mon)	6:00 pm	Little Compline w/Life of St. Mary of Egypt & Full Canon of St. Andrew
3/24/26 (Tue)	6:00 pm	Festal Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Annunciation
3/25//26 (Wed)	6:00 pm	Great Vespers for the Leave-taking of the Feast of the Annunciation
3/26/26 (Thu)	6:00 pm	Presanctified Divine Liturgy followed by presentation
3/27/26 (Fri)	6:00 pm	Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos (Full)
3/28/2026	11:00 am	Baptisms - The Tomaino Family Reception afterward
3/29/26 (Sun)	O,DL	Sunday of the St. Mary of Egypt
4/1/26 (Wed)	6:00 pm	Presanctified Divine Liturgy followed by presentation
4/2/26 (Thu)	6:00 pm	Great Compline
4/3/26 (Fri)	6:00 pm	Little Compline w/Canon of the Raising of Lazarus
4/4/26 (Sat)	10:00 am	Divine Liturgy (Chrysostom) for Lazarus Saturday Baptisms after Liturgy—Reception afterward
4/4/26 (Sat)	5:00 pm	Festal Great Vespers for Palm Sunday
4/5/26 (Sun)	O,DL	Palm Sunday

Please check the schedule published in the Bulletin each week.

Calendar for the Week of March 22, 2026

Saints of the Day

Sunday—March 22, 2026 Sunday of the Veneration of the Holy Cross
9:25 am - Orthros
9:30 am - High School 10:00 am – Youth Ministry
10:30 am - Divine Liturgy
After Liturgy- Junior &Youngsters Church School

Holy Martyr Agapios & His Companions

Monday— March 23, 2026 Strict Fast
6:00 pm Little Compline w/Life of St. Mary of Egypt & Full Canon of St. Andrew

Martyr Sabine the Egyptian & St. Christodoulos of Patmos

Tuesday—March 24, 2026 Strict Fast
6:00 pm Festal Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Annunciation

St. Patrick, Enlightener of Ireland; St. Alexis, Man of God;

Wednesday—March 25, 2026 Strict Fast
6:00 pm Great Vespers for the Leave-taking of the Feast of the Annunciation

St. Cyril, Archbishop of Jerusalem

Thursday—March 26, 2026 Strict Fast
6:00 pm Presanctified Divine Liturgy
Pot-luck Lenten Dinner/Presentation
"Holy Anaphora of St Basil the Great #4"

Holy Martyrs Chrysanthos and Daria

Friday—March 27, 2026 Strict Fast
6:00 Akathist Hymn to the Theotokos w/Little Compline—Complete

Holy Fathers of St. Sabbas Monastery killed by Saracens

Saturday—March 28, 2026 Strict Fast
11:00 am Baptism of the Tomaino Family
5:00 pm Great Vespers
Confessions afterward

St. James the Confessor, Bishop of Catania; St. Enda, Abbot

Sunday—March 29, 2026 Sunday of St Mary of Egypt
9:25 am - Orthros
9:30 am - High School 10:00 am – Youth Ministry
10:30 am - Divine Liturgy
After Liturgy- Junior &Youngsters Church School

Hieromartyr Basil, Presbyter of Ancyra; Holy New Martyr Euthymios of the Holy Mountain Athos

Please note that Confessions are heard at the time noted above in the coming week's schedule, or by appointment by calling Fr. Samuel at: ((304) 541-8550

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

2026 Presentations

Given after the Presanctified Divine Liturgy during Great Lent

It is our tradition, following each of the six Presanctified Divine Liturgies during Great Lent (each Wednesday at 6:00 pm) to have a Lenten Pot-luck Dinner and a spiritual presentation.

"The Holy Anaphora of St. Basil the Great"

One writer once said that the "Eucharistic celebration is the sublime expression of the Christian Faith." Without a doubt, all Faithful Orthodox Christians know this to be true and the core of their spiritual life in Christ and His Holy Church. On the Sundays of Great Lent, we will experience what is, for the most part, the same Divine Liturgy we know so well yet called by a different name: **The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great** – and in it, we find some very noticeable differences. One of these differences is the reading of long, beautiful prayers by the Priest, one of which is "**The Holy Anaphora of St. Basil the Great**". This series of Presentations will examine this rich set of prayers so that we can glean all that we can from the Divine Liturgy celebrated during the Holy Season of Great Lent.

Presentation IV (3/26/2026): We continue our study with the following prayers of the Anaphora:

6. Institution Narrative ("take, eat . . . Drink this all of you . . ."; 7. Anamnesis (remembrance of Christ, with parallels to second article of Creed); 8. Offering of sacrifice; 9. Epiklesis (invocation of Holy Spirit to 'consecrate' both people and offering)

Presentation V (4/1/2026 – Wednesday): In this final session we will briefly review what has occurred so far in the Anaphora, up until the Epiklesis, and will continue to the end with the following prayers:

10. Intercessions for Church and world (stemming from Epiklesis); 11. Doxology of the Holy Trinity 12. Conclusion of the study of the Anaphora of St. Basil the Great. We will consider how our worship been impacted by the knowledge of all that we have learned in these presentations.

General Rules of the Lenten Fast

The Lenten Fast rules that we observe today were established within the monasteries of the Orthodox Church during the sixth through eleventh centuries. These rules are intended for all Orthodox Christians, not just monks and nuns.

The first week of Lent is especially strict. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, a total fast is kept. In practice, very few people are able to do this. Some find it necessary to eat a little each day after sunset. Many faithful do fast com-pletely on Monday and then eat only uncooked food *(bread, fruit, nuts)* on Tuesday evening. On Wednesday, the fast is kept until after the Presanctified Liturgy.

From the second through the sixth weeks of Lent, the general rules for fasting are practiced. Meat, animal prod-ucts *(cheese, milk, butter, eggs, lard),* fish *(meaning fish with backbones),* olive oil and wine *(all alcoholic drinks)* are not consumed during the weekdays of Great Lent. Octopus and shell-fish are allowed, as is vegetable oil. On weekends, ol-ive oil and wine are permitted.

According to what was done in the monasteries, one meal a day is eaten on weekdays and two meals on weekends of Great Lent. No restriction is placed on the amount of food during the meal, though moderation is always encouraged in all areas of one's life at all times.

Fish, oil and wine are allowed on the Feast of the An-nunciation *(March 25)* and on Palm Sunday *(one week before Easter).* On other feast days, such as the First and Second Finding of the Head of Saint John the Baptist *(February 24),* the Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste *(March 9),* the Forefeast of the Annunciation *(March 24)* and the Synaxis of the Archangel Gabriel *(March 26),* wine and oil are permitted.

It is with Great Joy, we Announce
The Baptism & Chrismation
of the Servants of God

Joshua and Amara Tomaino

and their children

Joseph , Alayna, and Markella

On Saturday, March 28, 2026 at 11:00 am

All the Faithful of St. Nicholas Orthodox Church
are invited to witness this blessed event

A Reception will follow in the Church Hall

May God Grant them
Many, Many Years!

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