

SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 2021
FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT
SAINT JOHN CLIMACUS

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is dedicated to Saint John of the Ladder (Climacus), the author of the work, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. The abbot of Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai (6th century) stands as a witness to the violent effort needed for entrance into God's Kingdom (Mt.10: 12). The spiritual struggle of the Christian life is a real one, "not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the present darkness ... the hosts of wickedness in heavenly places ..." (Eph 6:12). Saint John encourages the faithful in their efforts for, according to the Lord, only "he who endures to the end will be saved" (Mt.24:13).

GREAT VESPERS

LORD I CALL *Seven stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 3, followed by three stikhera for Saint John Climacus*

Resurrection, tone 3:

By Your Cross, O Christ our Savior,
death's dominion has been shattered;
the devil's delusion destroyed.
The human race, being saved by faith,//
always offers You a song.

All has been enlightened by Your Resurrection, O Lord.
Paradise has been opened again.
All creation, praising You,//
always offers You a song.

I glorify the power of the Father and the Son.
I praise the authority of the Holy Spirit:
the undivided, uncreated Godhead,//
the consubstantial Trinity which reigns forever.

We bow down in worship before Your precious Cross, O Christ,
and we glorify and praise Your Resurrection,//
for by Your wounds we have all been healed.

We praise the Savior incarnate of the Virgin,
for He was crucified for our sake and resurrected on the third day,//
granting us great mercy.

Christ descended to hell proclaiming the glad tidings:

“Be bold! Now I have triumphed!
I am the Resurrection, I will lead you out, //
for I have shattered the gates of death!”

Standing unworthily in Your most pure house, O Christ God,
we offer our evening song, crying from the depths:
“You enlightened the world by Your Resurrection on the third day, //
Lover of mankind, deliver Your people from the hand of Your enemies.

Saint John Climacus, tone 8:

The Lord’s praises were always on your lips, O Holy Father John.
With deep wisdom you searched the Scriptures,
Which teach us to deny ourselves.
You became rich in the blessings of grace. //
Overthrowing the craftiness of the devil.

You washed your soul in a fountain of tears, O most glorious Father John.
You kept vigil for God and gained His mercy.
Upborne on the wings of prayer, you flew to divine love and beauty.
Now, together with your fellow soldiers, O holy one, //
You dwell in His spiritual light and unending joy.

On the wings of faith you raised your mind to God, O Holy Father John.
Hating the world’s confusion and vanity,
You took up your cross and followed Him who sees all things.
You submitted your rebellious flesh to His guidance,
Through the discipline of self-denial, //
By the power of the Holy Spirit.

GLORY... Saint John Climacus, tone 5:

O Holy Father,
Hearing the Lord’s voice in the Gospel,
You spurned the riches and glory of the world.
You cry out to all:
Love God and find eternal grace.
Set nothing higher than His love;
Thus you will find rest with all the saints when He comes in glory. //
Through his prayers guard and save our souls, O Christ!

NOW AND EVER... the Dogmatikon in tone 3:

How can we not wonder
at your mystical childbearing, O exalted Mother?
For without receiving the touch of man,
you gave birth to a Son in the flesh, immaculate Virgin.

The Son born of the Father before eternity
was born of you at the fullness of time, O honored Lady.
He underwent no mingling, no change, no division,
but preserved the fullness of each nature.
Entreat Him, O Lady and Virgin, and Mother,
to save the souls of those who, in the Orthodox manner, confess you//
to be the Theotokos.

APOSTIKHA All stikhera of the Resurrection in tone 3:

The sun was darkened by your Passion, O Christ,
but all creation was enlightened by the light of Your Resurrection//
Accept our evening song, O Lover of mankind!

Your life-bearing Resurrection, O Lord,
enlightened the whole universe, recalling Your creation.
Delivered from Adam's curse, we sing://
“Almighty Lord, glory to You!”

You are the changeless God,
Who, suffering in the flesh, were changed.
Creation could not endure seeing You on the Cross.
It was filled with fear while praising Your patience.
By descending to hell and rising on the third day,//
You have granted to the world life and great mercy.

You endured death, O Christ,
to deliver the human race from death.
You rose from the dead on the third day,
raising with yourself those who knew You as God//
and enlightening the world. Glory to You!

GLORY... Saint John Climacus, tone 2:

Let us honor John!
He is an earthly angel and a heavenly man:
The adornment of the world, the joy of the virtuous;
The glory of ascetics.
He was planted in the house of God,
And blossomed with the flower of sanctity.
He flourished in the desert like a cedar of Lebanon//
Through him the sheep of Christ's flock grow in holiness and righteousness.

NOW AND EVER...the Theotokion of the Resurrection in tone 2:

A new miracle surpasses all ancient miracles.
Who knows of a Mother who gave birth without a man,

who carried in her arms her Creator?
This birth is the will of God.
Since you carried Him as an infant in your arms, O most pure one,
and since you possess motherly boldness before Him,
do not cease praying for us who honor you, //
that He may be bountiful and save our souls.

Troparia

Resurrection, tone 3:

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm!
He has trampled down death by death!
He has become the first born of the dead!
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
And has granted to the world
Great mercy.

St. John Climacus, tone 1:

Let the heavens rejoice!
Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm!
He has trampled down death by death!
He has become the first born of the dead!
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
And has granted to the world
Great mercy.

Resurrectional Dismissal Theotokion, tone 1:

When Gabriel announced to you, O Virgin, saying "Rejoice!"
with that word the Master of all was incarnate in [^]you,
the holy Ark, spoken of by the righteous David!
Your womb became more spacious than the heavens,
for you carried your Creator.
Glory to Him Who took abode in you!
Glory to Him Who came [^]forth from you! //
Glory to Him Who freed us by being born of you