

**The Weekly Messenger – March 18, 2018**  
**St. John Chrysostom Albanian Orthodox Church**  
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*Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 Gospel: Mark 9:17-31*

**The Ladder of Divine Ascent for Us Today** During Great Lent, we commemorate the great monastic saint and writer, John Climacus (of the Ladder). Saint John, who fell asleep in the Lord in the mid-seventh century, was the abbot of one of the most ancient monasteries in the Christian world, at the foot of Jebel Musa—Moses' Mount—on the Sinai Peninsula. An austere ascetic, he wrote what may be the classic work of our spiritual tradition: *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. Commemorating Saint John on the Fourth Sunday of Great Lent reminds us that a major component of our lenten effort is focused on being ascetical to some degree, and that any ascetical effort must be placed within a larger context of warfare against the passions and the attainment of those key virtues that mark the life of a committed Christian. Saint John provides an example and a body of teaching both through his mode of life and again, through his enduring spiritual classic, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*—something to keep in mind as our lenten efforts may be starting to sag at this point in the season. Read more:  
<https://oca.org/reflections/fr.-steven-kostoff/the-ladder-of-divine-ascent-for-us-today>

**Semi Annual Parish Meeting:** March 18, 2018 during coffee hour. Parish business to be discussed: Building update, Church Finances, Social Activities, selection of delegates for Archdiocesan Assembly July 23 – 27, 2018 in St. Louis, MO. The Albanian Archdiocesan Assembly will be held in conjunction with the OCA All American Council.  
<https://oca.org/history-archives/aacs/the-19th-all-american-council>

**Only 2 Remaining Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts:** *Wednesday Evening – March 21, 28,* @ 7:00 pm. Followed by potluck dinner and discussion.

**Commemorations for the Departed:** Flossie Vissar, Bill Vissar, Father Eugene VanSuch (10 yrs), Katherine Halkedis, Jorgjia Kashari, Father Deacon Stephen Stefani and those servicemen and women who have fallen asleep in the Lord in the service of their Country.

**Commemorations for the Living:** Father Dimitrie Vincent, Betty Subashi Brenda Cantwell, Dolly Seiler, Sara, Craig Risley, Wayne Merkle, Elizabeth Jones, Ann Gjoka, Virginia Daka, Haretina (Papa) Milo, Margarita, Peter Melnik, Dhimiter Ndrecka, Pandeli, Jorgaq, Lefteri, and all of the men and women serving in the Armed Forces.

**March giving:** single ply toilet tissue

**Parishioner News:** Congratulations to Jola Salavaci and Gjergj Gjogu who were engaged on Jan. 28, 2018! Jola is the daughter of Luiza & Niko Salavachi; Gjergj is the son of Leonora & Dhimiter Gjogu. They are planning a wedding in Albania with their families and friends. Best wishes and Many Years to the happy couple and their families!

**Coffee Hour Sponsors:** *Please check the sign-up sheet in the vestibule and pick a date or visit our website and signup online:* <https://teamup.com/ksqta3sqv6k1qvr2o7>

**March 18<sup>th</sup>** Vissar Family in memory of Flossie

**March 25<sup>th</sup>** Jerry & Laura Hall

**April 1<sup>st</sup>** Annual Pancake Breakfast

**April 8<sup>th</sup>** Pascha – no coffee hour

**April 15<sup>th</sup>** Donna Dimitri

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>** Betty Subashi (10 yrs Andy)

**Sunday school News:** An ice skating outing is scheduled **March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2018** from 1:00 to 2:30 at the U of P Class of 23 Rink. The Sunday school will pay for the outing using the money they earned from their fundraising activities. Sunday school director Steve Coraluzzi may be e-mail [sundayschooldirector@stjohnsphila.org](mailto:sundayschooldirector@stjohnsphila.org) for more information.

**Save the Date:** Our first Paint Event Social will be **Saturday, April 28th at 4pm** in our fellowship hall at St. John Chrysostom. You will get a chance to socialize with your fellow parishioners, enjoy a glass of wine, light appetizers and most importantly you get to paint and keep your own work of art. Non-church members are also welcome and their invitation is encouraged. We can introduce them to our church and other fellow members. Tickets are \$30 per person and all proceeds will go to the church. Please contact Fiori Papa or Michele Lorimer for more information. <https://stjohnsphila.org/registration.html>

#### **Upcoming Events:**

**March 18<sup>th</sup>** 3 Yr Memorial Flossie Vissar/Semi-annual Parish Meeting during coffee hour

**March 25<sup>th</sup>** ANNUNCIATION

Annual Sunday school ice skating 1:00-2:30 pm at the University of Penn Rink - Always a fun time! SAVE THE DATE!

**March 31<sup>st</sup>** Divine Liturgy followed by the Sunday School Lazarus Saturday Retreat 10:00 am – 2:00 pm

**April 1<sup>st</sup>** Palm Sunday Divine Liturgy 10:00 am

**Tuesday,** April 3<sup>rd</sup> Holy Tuesday - Bridegroom Matins 7:00 pm

**Wednesday,** April 4<sup>th</sup> Holy Wednesday - Holy Unction 7:00 pm

**Thursday,** April 5<sup>th</sup> Holy Thursday - 12 Gospels 7:00 pm

**Friday,** April 6<sup>th</sup> Holy Friday – 10:00 am Decorate the Epitaph ion,

5:00 pm Vespers (Taking Down from Cross), 7:00 pm Funeral

**Saturday,** April 7<sup>th</sup> Saturday- Liturgy 10:00 am, Matins/Nocturne/Liturgy beginning 11:00 pm

**Sunday,** April 8<sup>th</sup> Paschal Agape Vespers - 1:00 pm - no coffee hour after Vespers

**Saturday,** April 28<sup>th</sup> Paint Event 4:00 pm

**Saturday** May 19<sup>th</sup> Buddy Walk with the Melnik Family