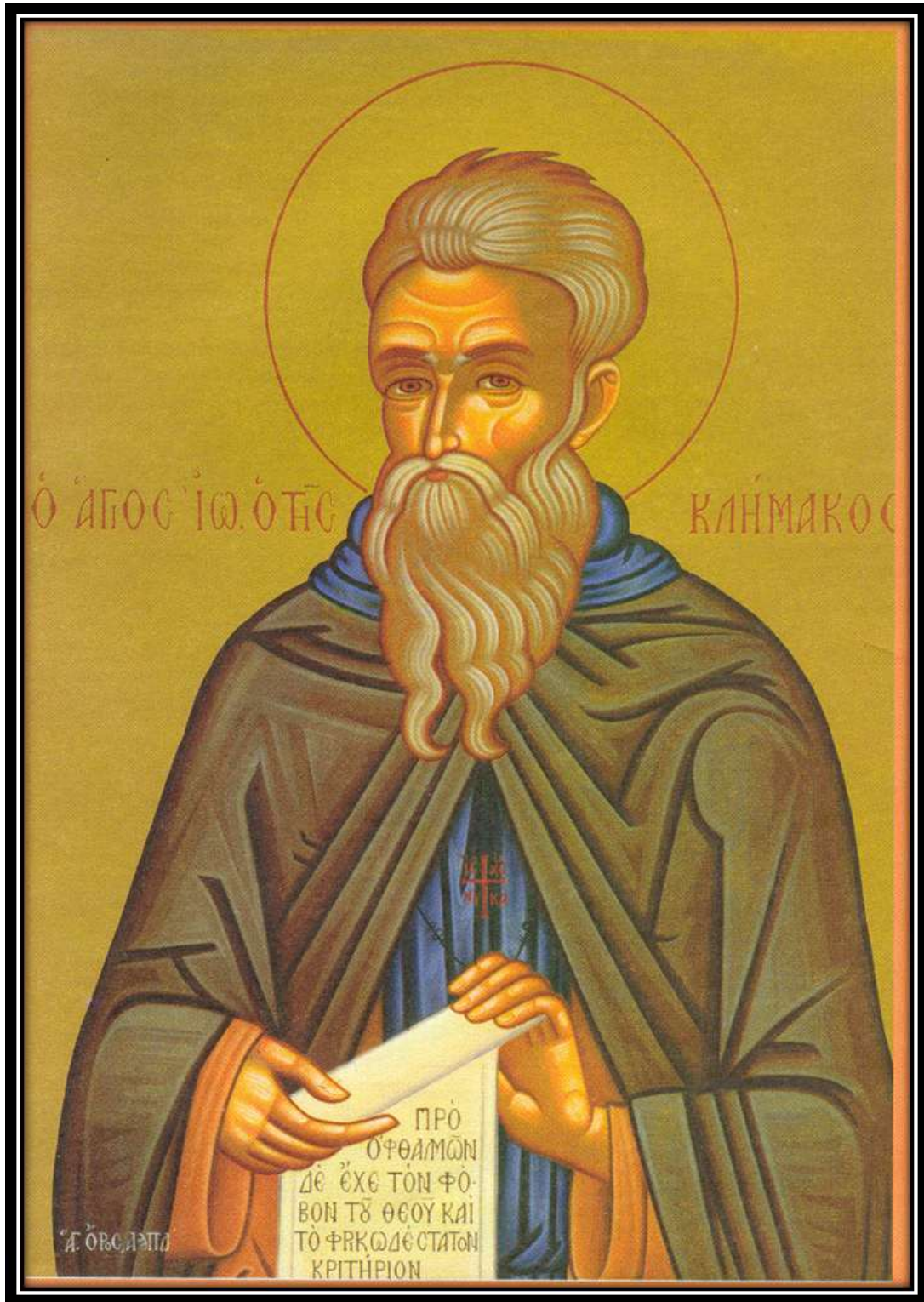


FOURTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT

(by Sisters Bonnie Komarnicki and Pat Lacey, ssmi, of the Ukrainian Catholic Religious Education Centre, Saskatoon SK)



Kondak (Tone 4)

Our father, teacher John the Lord has placed you and your faithfulness at the summit of the ascetic life* like an unerring star illuminating* the very limits of the world.*

THEME OF THE SUNDAY

FAITHFULNESS to God expressed through repentance, prayer, fasting, and the practice of Christian virtues.

ST. JOHN CLIMACUS

St. John lived in the late sixth and early seventh centuries. He was a monk at the Monastery of St. Catherine at Mt. Sinai. Most of his life was spent in complete solitude and unceasing prayer.

During the last years of his life, St. John was called to be the abbot of St. Catherine's monastery. During this period he wrote *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*.

TEACHINGS OF ST. JOHN OF THE LADDER

A Christian is one who imitates Christ in thought, word, and deed, as far as is possible for human beings.

Follow Christ without anxiety or hesitation, always looking heavenward and expecting help from there.

I do not know whether we must all teach others: but teach yourselves at all costs.

Do not be surprised that you fall every day; do not give up, but stand your ground courageously.

If anyone could see their own vices accurately without the veil of self-love, they would worry about nothing else in this life.

If the Holy Spirit is peace of soul, then nothing so prevents the presence of the Spirit in us as anger.

(The Ladder of Divine Ascent)

DID YOU KNOW?

St. John was the originator of "hesychasm."

Hesychasm (constant prayer) has come to be known as the pure "Jesus Prayer."

St. Catherine's monastery is one of the oldest Orthodox monasteries still in existence.

St. Catherine's monastery was not touched by the iconoclast controversies so it has some of the oldest mosaics/icons in existence.

St. John's feast day is also celebrated on March 30.

WHAT CAN I DO AT HOME OR IN MY CLASSROOM?

- Learn the Jesus prayer and pray it every day.
- Make Jesus beads.
- Draw a ladder and paste it on a sheet of paper. Make signs with "Jesus" printed on them. Put them on each rung of the ladder each day that you as a family or class pray the Jesus prayer.
- Draw a ladder and paste it on a sheet of paper. Every day that you do a good deed, paste it on one of the rungs of the ladder.
- Learn to sing the Tropar and Kondak for the Sunday.