

Family Connections

4th Sunday of Lent: St. John Climacus

Hebrews 6:13-20 & Mark 9:17-31



Ascend, my brothers, ascend eagerly. Let your hearts' resolve be to climb. Listen to the voice of the one who says: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of our God" (Isaiah 2:3).

—St. John Climacus (7th century)

EXPLORE TOGETHER:

Jacob's Ladder—Read the Old Testament story about Jacob's Ladder, which can be found in Genesis 28:10–17. The ladder represents the Theotokos. Talk about how Jesus came down the ladder in order to show us how to ascend it to heaven. Talk about things that help us climb the ladder to heaven and things that make us slide down.

For young children, the game Chutes and Ladders can be helpful in illustrating this point. Visit www.lent.goarch.org for more resources on this Sunday and to guide your Lenten journey.

Icon of the Ladder of Divine Ascent—Pull up a picture of this icon on your computer—it can easily be found by searching “Byzantine icon of the Ladder of Divine Ascent.” It shows people ascending toward heaven with angels helping them. It also shows demons pulling people off the ladder, causing them to fall into the pits of hell. This is a very vivid and graphic icon and is best to share cautiously with young children if at all. With teenagers, this icon can be a great discussion starter. When discussing, consider the following: What are the things in my life that are keeping me from ascending the ladder (these are our demons)? What are the things and people in the Church that help me to ascend?

Lord, I Believe; Help My Unbelief—Challenge your family to use the plea of the father in today's Gospel passage as a prayer throughout their day. Remind your children that we should constantly be calling on God to help us.

**Before church next week, read the scripture passages for the
5th Sunday of Lent: St. Mary of Egypt
Hebrews 9:11-14 & Mark 9:17-31**

FOR MORE INFORMATION FOR COUPLES AND FAMILIES, VISIT:



Center for Family Care of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
www.family.goarch.org