

## A Story about St. John Climacus - aka St. John of the Ladder

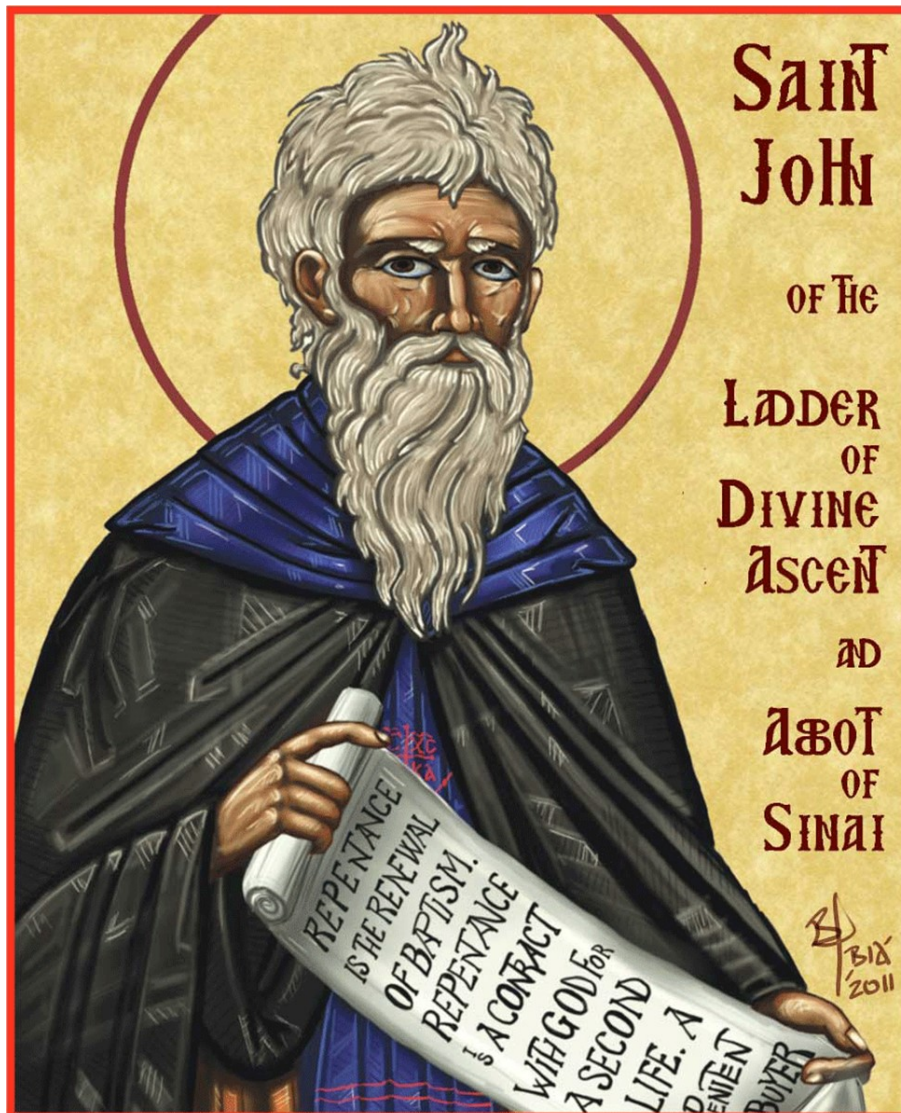
St. John of the Ladder, also called St. John Climacus, was a monk who lived on Mount Sinai many hundreds of years ago (6<sup>th</sup> century). From his earliest youth he prayed and fasted in the desert. As he grew in holiness, other monks sometimes came to him for advice on how to live a spiritual life.

One of these monks was a young man called Moses. One day, Moses went out to prepare a garden bed for growing vegetables. As he worked in the noon day sun, Moses grew very hot. He decided to lie down under the shade of a nearby cliff and there he fell asleep.

Meanwhile, St. John was resting in his cell. In a dream an old man told him that young Moses was in danger, so St. John immediately arose and started to pray for his student.

Later that evening, Moses returned and told St. John that he had taken a nap under an overhanging cliff. In his sleep, he had heard St. John calling his name. Waking up, he ran out from under the cliff to find his teacher. A moment later, a big boulder fell on the place where Moses had been sleeping!

Many other miracles are associated with St. John Climacus. He is called St. John of the Ladder because he wrote a book about the monastic struggle to grow close to God. In it he pictures the spiritual life as a ladder, stretching from earth to heaven with 30 steps, or rungs.





### **Fourth Sunday of Lent: St. John of the Ladder**

In the icon we see St. John standing before his monastery at the foot of a ladder. His fellow monks are climbing up towards Jesus at the top. A couple of monks, who fell into sin and did not repent are being pushed off the ladder into the mouth of Hell, which is represented by a whale-like monster.