



# **Orthodox Church of the Annunciation**

**April 10th , Tone 1, Mk.10:32-45**

**Sunday of Venerable  
Mary of Egypt**

**Troparion of the Resurrec-  
tion, Tone 1**

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews, while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure body, Thou didst rise on the third day, O Savior, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life:

**Troparion of Annunciation,  
Tone 4**

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery! the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice, O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you.

**Troparion for St. Mary of  
Egypt Tone 1**

Having been a sinful woman, you became through repentance a Bride of Christ. Having attained angelic life, you defeated demons with the weapon of the Cross! Therefore, O most glorious Mary, you are a Bride of the Kingdom!

On this day, the fifth Sunday of Great Lent, we celebrate the memory of our holy and venerable Mother, Mary of Egypt.

The recorder of the life of this wonderful saint is St. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem. A hieromonk, the elder Zossima, had gone off at one time during the Great Fast on a twenty-days' walk into the wilderness across the Jordan. He suddenly caught sight of a human being with a withered and naked body and with hair as white as snow, who fled in its nakedness from Zossima's sight. The elder ran a long way, until this figure stopped at a stream and called, "Father Zossima, forgive me for the Lord's sake. I cannot turn around to you, for I am a naked woman." Then Zossima threw her his outer cloak, and she wrapped herself in it and turned around to him. The elder was amazed at hearing his name from the lips of this unknown woman. After considerable pressure on his part, she told him the story of her life.

She had been born in Egypt and had lived as a prostitute in Alexandria from the age of twelve, spending seventeen years in this way of life. Urged by the lustful fire of the flesh, she one day boarded a ship that was sailing for Jerusalem. Arriving at the Holy City, she attempted to go into one of the churches to venerate the Precious Cross, but some unseen power prevented her from entering. In great fear, she turned to an icon of the Mother of God that was in the entrance and begged her to let her go in and venerate the Cross, confessing her sin and impurity and promising that she would then go wherever the Most Pure One led her. She was then allowed to enter the church. After venerating the Cross, she went out again to the entrance and, standing in front of the icon, thanked the Mother of God. Then she heard a voice saying, "If you cross the Jordan, you will find true peace." She immediately bought three loaves of bread and set off for the Jordan, arriving there the same evening. She received Holy Communion the following morning in the monastery of St. John the Baptist, and then crossed the river. She spent the next forty-eight years in the wilderness in the greatest torments, in terror, in struggles with passionate thoughts like gigantic beasts, feeding only on plants. Later, when she was standing in prayer, Zossima saw her lifted up in the air. She begged him to bring her Holy Communion the next year on the bank of the Jordan, and she would come to receive it. The following year, Zossima came with the Holy Gifts to the bank of the Jordan in the evening and stood in amazement as he saw her cross the river. He saw her coming in the moonlight and, arriving on the further bank, make the sign of the Cross over the river. She then walked across it as though it were dry land. When she had received Holy Communion, she begged him to come again the following year to the same stream by which they had first met. The next year Zossima went and found her dead body on that spot. Above her head in the sand was writ-

## **Announcements and Activities**

**Presanctified Liturgy**— Wednesday, April 13th, at 6PM. Those desiring to receive Holy Communion should not eat or drink after their lunchtime meal. A light, Lenten supper will be served after the Liturgy.

**Baptisms of McGee family**— Saturday, at 8AM.

**Divine Liturgy for St. Lazarus**— Saturday at 9AM.

**Church cleanup (Lunch provided)**— We'll do our annual cleanup preparing for Holy Week and PASCHA following the Liturgy

**Saturday Great Vespers for Palm Sunday**— on Saturday, at 5:30 PM.

**Divine Liturgy for Palm Sunday**— 10AM.

**Parish Council**—will meet today, after Coffee Hour.

**Church School/Adult Ed.**— May 8th, at 9AM .

**Coffee Hours**— This week's Coffee Hour is our Bagels and Coffee week. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Tricia and Kathy and Kirk. Fish is allowed next Sunday. Remember: No Meat, eggs, dairy or things with dairy in them (sour CREAM, MILK chocolate, etc) may be served at coffee hours until Pascha on April 24th (fish may be served at Coffee Hour on Palm Sunday, April 17th.) A blessed lent to all.

**Pray for...** **Hierarch Nikolai (Soraich)**— battling cancer. Samir's friend, **Johnny**, who has been improving in the battle to save his sight. **Brian**, Sunday's brother. **George and Alex**, health problems. **All those who have lost their lives or are suffering as a result of the current Pandemic** . **Archimandrite Alexander**— Fr. Lawrence's long-time father confessor, who reposed. **Our Vladyka Benjamin**— battling on-set parkinsons. **Tsige Roman and Abraham**— I know we are always mindful of Tsige, but please continue to pray for the work and for Ethiopia, torn by civil war, with all the problems that go with a regional terror. **Reposed Jonathan T. George and Alesis**, Brother and Daughter of Peter and Irene S. **Matushka Ioanna R. reposed. Matushka Priscilla**, ill. **Anya J**— a longtime friend of the parish who is ill. **Stephen F.**— battling back pain. **John F.**— battling cancer. **Arch-priest Anthony**— battling cancer. **Julie**— sister of Kathy M., battling health problems. **Rhoda's requests for Douglas and Kayana. Reposed Constance**— the mother of Andrew F. **Will-reposed**, Michael T.'s brother-in-law. **Reposed Vadim. Christian**— undergoing some medical testing. The reposed— **Novice Nonna, Robbie**—cancer. **Raphael**, cancer. Child **Aidan**— seizures. Child **Henry. Robbie** the cousin of Brian R., who reposed after a battle with cancer. **Louis Joseph M.**, had to be hospitalized for a gall bladder surgery. **Victor T.** underwent surgery and remains hospitalized. **Christine**—health

ten: "Abba Zossima, bury in this place the body of the humble Mary. Give dust to dust. I passed away on April 1, on the very night of Christ's Passion, after Communion of the Divine Mysteries." For the first time, Zossima learned her name and also the awe-inspiring marvel that she had arrived at that stream the previous year on the night of the same day on which she had received Holy Communion - a place that he had taken twenty days to reach. And thus Zossima buried the body of the wonderful saint, Mary of Egypt. When he returned to the monastery, he recounted the whole story of her life and the wonders to which he had been an eyewitness. Thus the Lord glorifies repentant sinners. She entered into rest in about the year 530.

St. Mary is remembered today, as we reach the end of the Great Fast, to arouse the energy of the slothful and to urge sinners to repentance, imitating her example. She is also commemorated on April 1. The Righteous Zossima, who buried St. Mary, is commemorated on April

O Christ our God, through the intercessions of our venerable Mother Mary of Egypt, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

(taken from The Synaxarion, Fourth Sunday of Great Lent)

### **From the Lives of the Saints... THE HOLY MARTYRS TERENCE (TERENTIUS), AFRICANUS, MAXIMUS, POMPEIUS (POMPILIUS) AND THIRTY-SIX OTHERS WITH THEM**

They all suffered for Christ and were crowned with wreaths of glory during the reign of Emperor Decius. By order of the emperor, the governor of Africa announced to the people that everyone had to offer sacrifices to the idols. Those who resisted, the governor threatened with cruel tortures. Upon hearing about these threats, many fell away from the Faith and worshipped the idols. However, these forty remained unwavering in their faith and were subjected to torture. St. Terence encouraged his companions, saying: "Brothers, let us be on guard that we do not deny Christ our God, lest He deny us before His Heavenly Father and the holy angels." The governor divided them into two groups. Thirty-six of them, after being flogged and having their skin scraped and salt poured into their open wounds, were all beheaded. The first four were cast into prison with heavy iron chains around their necks, hands and feet. An angel of God appeared in the prison and touched the chains of the shackled men, and the chains fell off. After that, the angel prepared a bountiful table for them and fed them. Once again, they were brought out and tortured, and again they were imprisoned. Then the governor ordered the soothsayers to gather as many poisonous, loathsome creatures as possible, such as snakes and scorpions, and to lock them up in the same cell with the martyrs. The loathsome creatures did not touch the God-pleasers, but rather lay huddled in the corner, where they remained for three days. On the third day, when the door of the cell was opened, the repulsive creatures rushed out and bit the soothsayers. Finally, the governor pronounced the death penalty upon the four martyrs. When they were brought out to be beheaded, they joyfully chanted psalms and praised God, Who had vouchsafed them a martyr's death. They suffered honorably in the year 250 A.D., and were found worthy of the Kingdom.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, by St. Nikolai Velimirovic)

*"There do not exist many or few, nor small or great problems. The only problem is the absence of Christ from our lives" (From the life and teachings of Elder Epiphanius Theodoropoulos)*