



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

The Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt

Troparion of the Resurrection, 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: Glory to Thy Resurrection, O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind!

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 of St. Mary of Egypt, Tone 8

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!

The 5th Sunday of Great Lent, Tone 1, April 2nd, Mark 10:32-45

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 there on that spot. Above her head in the sand was written: "Abba Zossima, bury in this place the body of the humble Mary. Give dust to dust. I passed away on April 1, on the

Announcements and Activities

Presanctified Liturgy— Wednesday, at 6PM
The Presanctified Liturgy is the Church's magnificent way of composing a Lenten service, with a Lenten feel, while giving us Holy Communion to aid us in our Lenten efforts. Those desiring to receive Holy Communion should not eat or drink after their noon meal. A Lenten meal will follow the service, in the Social Hall.

Divine Liturgy for St. Lazarus— Saturday, at 9AM. We will clean the church and the hall and do any necessary outside cleanup after the Divine Liturgy, in preparation for Holy Week and PASCHA. The church will provide breakfast after the Liturgy.

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

Divine Liturgy for Palm Sunday— Sunday, at 10AM.

Church School/Adult Ed.— April 9th, at 9AM.

Parish Council—will meet next Sunday, after Coffee Hour.

Confessions— Fr. Lawrence is available before and after Services and by appointment during the week. All members should have made their Lenten Confession by Holy Wednesday—please do not delay.

Coffee Hours— This week's Coffee Hour is being sponsored by Jason and Madeline and Darryl and Laura Beth. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by Edie O and Mike Mek. From now until PASCHA, on April 16th, we do not allow meat, dairy, eggs or fish at coffee hour, or anything with dairy or meat byproducts: such as chicken stock, sour cream, chocolate, etc. While shellfish is allowed—shrimp, oysters, clams, etc.—fish with a backbone is allowed on March 25 (our feast) and on Palm Sunday (April 9th). If you have any questions beyond these instructions, you may speak to Fr. Lawrence.

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy— who are ill.** **Matushka Ann Hopko**, reposed. **Jonathan— ill.** **Reposed Barbara Ranjo.** Fr. **And Matushka's Granddaughter Annabella is past her illness, but still needs prayer for the return all body parts to normal.** **Laure— battling Cancer.** **Paul— ill** **Ralph—ill Archpriest Lawrence**, from Canada, progressive eye disease. **Tsige Roman—** our beloved Tsige reposed on December 3rd. Please keep praying for her homeland of Ethiopia. **Brian— ill.** **Jonathan— ill.** **Katia—** sister of Shkbarra's **Grace**, Heather's goddaughter. **Reposed Priest, James.** **Reposed Hierarch Tikhon . Diane— surgery.** **Rufin—** soldier in Ukraine. **Elise, ill.** **Sally,** surgery

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 Lenten Synaxarion*)

From the Lives of the Saints. THE HOLY MARTYRS AMPHIANUS AND EDESIUS

These two young men were blood brothers from the city of Patara, of distinguished but pagan parents. While they were studying the secular sciences in the city of Beirut, they were enlightened by the Spirit of God and, acknowledging the falsehood of paganism, they discerned the truth of Christianity. When they returned home, they could no longer live with their pagan parents and kinsmen and secretly fled to Caesarea in Palestine, to the presbyter Pamphilus, renowned for his sanctity and spiritual learning. With Pamphilus, they studied the Law of God day and night and practiced Christian asceticism. It is said of Amphianus that he was twenty years old according to the flesh, but in understanding and generosity he was a hundred. When a persecution began during the reign of Maximian, many Christians fled the city and hid themselves. Others willingly and joyfully gave themselves into the hands of the persecutors in order to suffer for the Name of Him Who first suffered for them. Amphianus was among the latter. Unafraid, he entered a pagan temple where Prince Urban was offering sacrifices to the idols, seized the prince's hand that was holding the sacrifice, and cried out to him to refrain from serving dead idols and offering sacrifices to them, and to acknowledge the true God. Some of the pagans, who heard these words and witnessed the great courage of Amphianus, repented and embraced the Christian Faith. The enraged prince subjected Amphianus to torture. Among other tortures, they wrapped Amphianus's legs with cotton and set them on fire. When he remained alive, they cast him into the sea with a stone around his neck. The sea became turbulent and hurled his martyred body back to the city.

Edesius was first sent to a copper mine in Palestine and was later taken to Egypt. In Alexandria, Edesius was filled with holy zeal against a certain Prince Hierocles, who assembled Christian nuns, maidens and virtuous women in the market place and gave them over to the most shameful degenerates for mockery. Edesius, filled with holy zeal, struck the disgraceful prince. For that, he was tortured and drowned in the sea as was his brother Amphianus. Like two innocent lambs, they were sacrificed for Christ in about the year 306 A.D. and went to the glorious mansions of the Lord.

Taken from *The Prologue of Ochrid*, by St. Nikolai

"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)