



Weekly Bulletin

Orthodox Church of the Annunciation

The Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt

Troparion of the Resurrec- tion, Tone 5

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit, born for our salvation from the Virgin; for He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead, by His glorious Resurrection.

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 3

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 Fifth Sunday of Great Lent Tone 5, April 21st, Mk. 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

Announcements and Activities

Presanctified Liturgy— Wednesday, at 6PM. Those desiring to receive Holy Communion should say Pre-communion prayers and fast from food and drink from the time after their lunchtime meal to the reception of Holy Communion at the Presanctified Liturgy.

Baptism of Catherine W and Don S.: Saturday, at 9AM. What a joy to bring these two, so dear to our Community, into sacramental communion.

Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday followed by Lunch and Church/Hall Cleanup and making of Palms for Palm Sunday— at 10AM.

Great Vespers for The Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem, Palm Sunday— Saturday, at 5:30PM.

Divine Liturgy for the Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem, Palm Sunday w/ procession— Sunday, at 10AM.

Coffee Hour— This week's Coffee Hour is our Bagels and Coffee week. Next week's Coffee Hour will be sponsored by the Brian and Kerri & Aaron C. Palm Sunday does allow fish. Until PASCHA, on May 5th, no meat, eggs or dairy may be served at Coffee Hours. Keep in mind that that includes byproducts: no MILK chocolate, no sour CREAM, no regular Mayo, etc. There are, of course, vegan substitutes for many of these items, and these are fine.

Church School/Adult Ed— next Sunday, May 12th, at 9AM.

Parish Council— met last Sunday. We accepted, thank God, the first monthly balance sheet of '24 in the black. We discussed the PASCHAL cycle, reserved funds for the Consecration and the invitation to RSVP and select banquet food selection—which will go out shortly after PASCHA and a Consecration Committee Meeting We also discussed our next tow fundraiser: Ethnic Foods and BBQ

Landscaping Project— thanks to those who came and helped plant the plants on Thursday. Only a few of us, I think, had the vision of how beautiful our grounds would look. This week, God bless, Mike Meko, Erika, Mike L. Don S, Brandon M., and Steve F. for making this plantings look so professional. And God bless Fr. Lawrence's friend, grower and layout designer of our planter boxes, David Obrien. We're also working on some ideas for safety.

Pray for... Sarah, the daughter of Fr. Lawrence's godfather, health issues. **Youseff and Jimmy—who are ill.** Archpriest Lawrence, from Canada, progressive eye disease. **Priscilla and Departed, George.** Luci F. bad knee. **Newly- Departed Marylyn; ill, Diane, ill, Colin. John Truman**—lightheadedness and a recent fall. , Tom and Amy, who lost their son. **Nicholas, the father of a friend.** **Rose Marie**— Rachel's mother, cancer. **Barbara H.**—recovering from a fall. **Claude (Moses)**- in need of housing. **Eleni**—aftermath of a stroke. **Sharon. Baby Archie. Phil**— covid. **Reposed Makhoul. Marius and Lucia.** (aka Darrell and Laura Beth) health issues. **Todd**, cancer, Anna, his wife. **Micha**

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 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 4. 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 HIEROMARTYR [PRIESTLY -MARTYR] JANUARIUS AND OTHERS WITH HIM

This saint was the Bishop of Benevento in Italy. At the time of the persecution under Maximian, Januarius was brought before the court and tortured in various ways, which he blamelessly and patiently endured. When they cast him into the fire, the fire was cooled by an invisible dew, and the martyr stood unharmed amidst the flames, singing praises to God. Then they scrapped his body with iron brushes until the bones showed white, which the martyr innocently and patiently endured. His deacon, Festus, and his reader, Desiderius, witnessed the suffering of the martyr and wept for their spiritual father. Then they too were bound and, together with Bishop Januarius, were brought to the city of Pozzuoli [Puteoli, near Naples] and cast into prison. The Pozzuoli deacons Proculus and Sussos and two Christian laymen, Eutychius and Acutius, were in this same prison for the sake of Christ. The next day all seven of them were thrown to wild beasts, but the wild beasts did not touch them. They were all beheaded, and the Christians of the city of Naples secretly carried the body of St. Januarius to their city and buried it honorably in church. To the present day numerous miracles have occurred at the grave of this saint. Among the many miracles one is particularly remembered: A poor widow, whose only son had died, removed the icon of St. Januarius from the church and placed it on the body of her dead son, sobbing and praying to the saint, and her son returned to life. St. Januarius suffered honorably in the year 305 A.D.

THE HOLY MARTYR THEODORE AND OTHERS WITH HIM

Theodore suffered for the Christian Faith in Perga of Pamphylia, during the reign of Emperor Antoninus. Theodore was young and of handsome countenance. When the governor of that province chose him, along with other young men, to be sent to the imperial court for service, Theodore objected and declared that he was a Christian. Because of this, he underwent many kinds of tortures and was then thrown into the fire. But water bubbled out of the ground and quenched the fire. The governor attributed this to some magic on Theodore's part, but the martyr said: "This is not the work of my power but of Christ my God. If you want to know the power of your gods, light another fire and throw in one of your soldiers. Then I hope you will see the power of your gods, and the almighty power of my God." Indeed, the governor wanted to cast one of his soldiers into the fire, but they, in fear, implored him to throw in Dioscorus, the pagan priest, instead. The pagan priest then begged the governor to throw in the idol of Zeus and the other idols, for if they were gods, they would easily save themselves. Dioscorus said this because he had turned to Christ in his heart, having seen the miracle that took place with St. Theodore. Learning of this, the governor sentenced Dioscorus to death by burning. Also delivered over to death by the governor were Theodore and two soldiers, Socrates and Dionysius, as well as Theodore's mother, Philippa. Theodore was crucified on a cross, on which he expired on the third day. Socrates and Dionysius were run through with a spear, and Philippa was beheaded. All were crowned with wreaths of glory in the Kingdom of Christ.

Taken from the Prologue of Ochrid, Compiled and written 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)