

• TODAY WE REMEMBER ST. MARY OF EGYPT:

St. Mary of Egypt tells her life story, a life confession in fact, to the priest Elder Zosimos. Fr Timothy Pavlatos writes that "...in these words St. Mary was exhibiting some very powerful feelings and emotions: shame, fear, and also courage. St. Mary had never shared her story prior to the day she met Zosimos the priest and thus we take the narrative she shared as her confession to this man of God. Here, too, lies a very important lesson for all of us, and that is, do not allow shame to stand in the way of courage when it comes to approaching our Lord Jesus Christ in the mystery of Holy Confession. Shame is a very powerful thing and can prevent us from connecting with others, including God. Shame is also painful. We are all flawed and we do things we are not proud of, and yet, we are loved and we do belong to the One Who has given us life. Being flawless or sinless has never been a prerequisite for being loved by God for "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). God's love for us is not contingent on anything because God is Love (cf. I Jn 4:8), and He cannot not love us, no matter what we do. God loved Mary of Egypt even when she was a prostitute, and His love for her was perfect and complete. He loved her just the same as He loved Peter, John the Baptist, and His own mother. This is difficult for us to comprehend because our experience of being loved has been tainted by our interactions with others, mostly our primary caregivers. We then take these experiences and project them on to God as a god who can be mad at us or who withdraws from us when we mess up. Yet this is not the case at all. God never leaves us, for this is impossible. He is in us, around us, present in all places at all times. It is the experiences that we've had in life that gives us the sense, the idea, and the belief that this happens. This is how our learned history distorts reality and that what we believe is not what actually is."

• HOLY WEEK SIGN UP SHEETS NOW POSTED:

There are many ways to serve the Church during Holy Week. In particular, church cleaners are needed for after services.

• GRATITUDE:

Many thanks to Mike Yuhas, Debbie Buse's hard-working husband, for spending all week working here on his tractor repairing our parking lot (he also gave the rector a lesson in driving a tractor). No pot-holes! Thank you, Mike!

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



April 14, 2019

The Fifth Week of Lent: St. Mary of Egypt



• TROPARION OF ST. MARY, Tone Eight:

In thee the image was preserved with exactness, O Mother; for taking up the Cross, thou didst follow Christ, and by thy deeds thou didst teach us to overlook the flesh, for it passeth away, but to attend to the soul, since it is immortal. Wherefore, O righteous Mother Mary, thy spirit rejoiceth with the Angels.

• KONTAKION OF ST. MARY, Tone Three:

Thou who once of old wast filled with all manner of fornication, art now seen today to be a bride of Christ by thy repentance. Thou didst live and emulate the life of the Angels. By the Cross, thou didst annihilate the hordes of demons; for this cause art thou a bride now in the Kingdom of the Heavens, O Mary, thou all-modest one.

ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Saturday, April 13: 9 AM, Akathist Saturday, Divine Liturgy
3:30 PM, Catechism: *On Holy Unction*
5 PM, Great Vespers
- Sunday, April 14: 8:30 AM, Matins
10 AM, Divine Liturgy
11:45 AM, Church School,
Noon, Agape luncheon in Hall
- Mon., April 15: 5 PM, *Holy Unction at Sts. Peter and Paul Church*
- Tues., April 16: 8 AM, Matins
- Wed., April 17: 8 AM, Matins
5 PM, Confession, 6:15 PM, Presanctified
- Thurs., April 18: 8 AM, Matins
- Friday, April 19: 8 AM, Matins (last Lenten Matins)
11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions
6:15 PM, Matins for Lazarus Saturday
7 PM, Final Baptismal Catechism
- Sat. April 20: 9 AM, Baptisms
10 AM, Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday
Reception Breakfast for the Newly-Illumined
Afternoon, Decorating/Cleaning for Palm Sunday
5 PM, Vigil for Palm Sunday

• BAPTISMS NEXT WEEK:

Please keep those preparing for Holy Illumination in your prayers: Harriette Acorne; James and Harvey Clawson; Aaron and Alejandra Wilkerson and their children Aaron, Xavier, Paloma, Celeste and Belen; Otto Ignatius, son of Christine and Nathan Molcillo. The Service of Holy Baptism will begin at 9 AM, Lazarus Saturday, April 20. “Alumni” of Lazarus Saturday baptisms are asked to prepare the Agape Meal after the Saturday Baptisms in honor of the Newly-Illumined.

• CLEAN-UP AND DECORATION:

Next Saturday afternoon about 3 PM we will decorate and clean the

Church in preparation for the Palm Sunday Vigil, Holy Week and Pascha. Inside the Church we will be cleaning windows, light fixtures, scraping wax, and decorating the Church with flowers and palms for Palm Sunday. Please let me know what time you will be coming to help. —*Fr Lawrence*

• DIGITAL OFFERINGS—A REMINDER:

The Cathedral and Parish subsist on our offerings from the wealth that God has provided us. These optional ways to share our bounty make it an easier—and less painful—sacrifice.

- 1) *iPad*. Transactions can be made very simply on the Candle Desk iPad.
- 2) *Text Giving*. Enter 707-701-5052 in to your text message App on your cell phone, indicate an amount you want to give (for example, \$25). A prompt will open your browser.
- 3) *Phone App*. Download the “ConnectNow Giving App” on your cell phone. <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/connectnow-giving/id1244158209?mt=8> or just Google the words *ConnectNow Giving App*

• BE MISSIONARY MINDED:

When the Divine Liturgy has concluded, take a moment before going to the Parish Hall, look around and introduce yourself to someone you haven’t met. Don’t leave the greeting of guests to someone else—and rather than ask “Are you new here?” to someone that might attend Church more frequently than you do (how embarrassing!), simply introduce yourself, and offer to walk with that person to the Hall for the Agape Meal, if you are heading that direction. Unless we invite and accompany our guests, it’s very awkward for them to enter the Hall, see people having a nice time with each other, and not know what to do. Welcome, welcome, welcome! As I enter the Parish Hall for the meal, I take a moment to see who is standing or sitting alone—which disappoints me, and I have to wonder, *why is no one in our congregation sitting with this person?* Now and then vary your Sunday lunch habits and extend yourself to someone new to you, and possibly to the Parish. Many of our mission parishes have the custom of inviting a visitor/guest over for a Sunday evening dinner, along with a couple other parish members. This is Agape in action (*Agape* is a sacrificial and welcoming love, toward strangers or friends), and in this way we participate in sharing the Good News of the faith. We believe that all of us share in the missionary work of the Church, in whatever humble and loving way that God has equipped us. —*Fr Lawrence*