

covid (we hope) this year requires more work than any of those—and they are indeed very few—who do set-up, serving and clean-up are prepared to do. Because of all this, the Parish Council is in agreement with me, that we not host a BBQ. Let's set our sights on Pentecost. —*Fr Lawrence*

• TODAY WE REMEMBER ST. MARY OF EGYPT:

St. Mary of Egypt tells her life story, a life confession in fact, to the priest Elder Zosimas. 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 some 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."

• KNOWING GOD:

No matter how much we may study, it is not possible to come to know God unless we live according to His commandments, for God is not known by science, but by the Holy Spirit. ...If someone has come to know God by the Holy Spirit, his soul will burn with love for God day and night, and his soul cannot be bound to any earthly thing. —*St. Silouan the Athonite*

ST. SERAPHIM CATHEDRAL

PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN ORTHODOX CHURCH



April 17, 2021

The Fifth Week of Lent: St. Mary of Egypt



• TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Four:

When the women disciples of the Lord learned from the angel the joyous message of the Resurrection, they cast away the ancestral curse, and elatedly told the Apostles: death is overthrown, Christ God is risen, granting the world great mercy.

• TROPARION OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT, 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

- Sat., April 17: 3:30 PM, Catechism: *On Death and the Funeral*
5 PM, Vigil/Confession
 - Sunday, April 18: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy
 - Tues., April 20: 8 AM, Matins
 - Wed., April 21: 8 AM, Matins
5 PM, Confessions
6:15 PM, Presanctified Liturgy
 - Thurs., April 22: 8 AM, Matins
7 PM, Online study of *Proverbs* with Fr. James
 - Friday, April 23: 8 AM, Matins ~ *Last day of Lent*
6 PM, Matins for Lazarus Saturday
6:45 PM, Baptismal Catechesis for Catechumens
 - Sat. April 24: 9 AM, Baptism of Catechumens
10 AM, Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday
2 PM, Church decoration and clean up
5 PM, Vigil for Palm Sunday
 - Sunday, April 25: 10 AM, Divine Liturgy for Palm Sunday, Procession to follow
Noonish, Rehearsal for Paschal Procession
6 PM, Bridegroom Matins
- PRAYERS FOR THOSE PREPARING FOR HOLY ILLUMINATION:
Please keep in your prayers the catechumens who are preparing for baptism on Lazarus Saturday: Andrew, Amanda, Zephyr, Anja, John Robert, Gwen and Deborah.
 - BRIDEGROOM MATINS:
This unique and profoundly moving Matins (done only three times a year)

will be served on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday evenings at 6 PM. See the April bulletin [here](#) for a description of the Matins.

- DECORATING, CLEANING AND POLISHING:
On Lazarus Saturday, 2 PM April 24, there will be a work party to clean and prep the Church for Holy Week. See Denise Pellizzer to sign up to assist her and the others with flowers and palms. We will polish the brass candle stands and clean the oil lamps, as well as wash windows, etc.
- READING PSALMS AND THE BOOK OF ACTS:
We read the *Psalms* over the icon of the tomb of the Savior Friday night through to Saturday morning. We read the *Book of Acts* following the Vespers Liturgy of Holy Saturday until we begin the Midnight Service and Pascha. The sign up sheet is posted by the front door. Please sign up.
- EGG DYING:
We are planning to color eggs on Tuesday 4/27. I plan to start the onion skin/dying prep Monday evening after work if anyone is interested. Please let me know if you are able to help. We will begin after the 10 AM Presanctified Liturgy Tuesday morning. If you are saving onion skins we will need them at the church by Sunday afternoon April 25. Put them in the hall kitchen on the counter. You will see some other bags there with my name on them. —*Shannon W.*
- EASTER EGG DECORATIONS:
John Gilluly is organizing an Easter egg decoration get-together for the parish kids on Holy Friday, April 30 at Noon (we have the Great Vespers of Holy Friday at 3 PM). See John and the flyer for more information.
- PASCHA:
Holy Week and Pascha are only three weeks away. The plan is to hold steady with our indoor attendance numbers at 70 (although we shall have to revisit that eventually). As the church calendar shows, all the usual Services will be celebrated. There will be no Paschal BBQ after the Agape Vespers this year. The Parish is of course a family, but it is also an institution, at least for the general public, which means we are required to follow the many and various local food service guidelines now in place—our kitchen is inspected by the county health inspectors once a quarter or so, as are the well, septic and bathrooms. Our Paschal BBQs are extremely well-attended, with lots of non-parish family and visitors. An event here, in the waning days of