

St. Cyril of Jerusalem Orthodox Church

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+ **April 14, 2019 +**
FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT
St. Mary of Egypt

+ **Wednesday, April 17 – Final Presanctified Liturgy, 7 p.m. - Confessions afterward**

+ **Saturday, April 20 – Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday, 10 a.m. - Confessions afterward**

LENTEN CONFESSIONS – All Orthodox Christians should go to confession before Holy Pascha.

DONATIONS FOR FLOWERS to decorate the Lord's tomb and for Pascha can be made now.

Schedule for Holy Week

+ **Sat., April 20 – Lazarus Saturday Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.**

Next Sunday is Palm Sunday!

+ **Sat. April 20 – Vespers with the blessing of Palms, 5:00 p.m.**

+ **Sun. April 21 – Palm Sunday Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.**

+ **Sun., April 21 – First Bridegroom Matins, 5:00 p.m.**

+ **April 22 & 23 – Holy Monday & Tuesday – Bridegroom Matins, 6:30 p.m.**

+ **April 24 - Holy Wednesday – Sacrament of Holy Unction, 6:30 p.m.**

+ **April 25 - Holy Thursday – Mystical Supper Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.**

12 Passion Gospels, Carrying of the Cross, 6:30 p.m.

+ **April 26 – Holy Friday – Royal Hours before the Cross, 10:00 a.m.**

Vespers, Taking Shroud to the Tomb, 4:00 p.m.

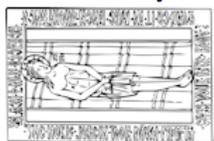
Lamentations before the Lord's Tomb, 7:00 p.m.

+ **All Night Psalm Vigil at the Tomb +**

+ **April 27, Holy Saturday – Blessed Sabbath Liturgy, 10:00 a.m.**

+ **HOLY PASCHA – begins Saturday at 11:30 p.m.**

+ **April 28 – Pascha Sunday - Agape Vespers, 1:00 p.m., followed by meal**



+ **That God may forgive us, let us forgive others.** We are all on this earth as temporary guests. Prolonged fasting and prayer is in vain without forgiveness and true mercy. God is the true physician; sins are leprosy. Whomever God cleanses, God also glorifies. Every merciful act of men, God rewards with mercy. He who returns sins with sin perishes without mercy. Pus is not cleansed by pus from infected wounds, neither is the darkness of the dungeon dispelled by darkness, but pure balm heals the festering wound, and light disperses the darkness of the dungeon.

- *St. Nicolai of Serbia*

From Sinner to Saint:

The Life of our Holy Mother St. Mary of Egypt



The recorder of the life of this wonderful saint was St. Sophronius, Patriarch of Jerusalem. A priest-monk, the elder Zossima, had gone off at one time during the Great Fast 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 and called: "Father Zossima, forgive me for the Lord's sake. I cannot turn round 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 that, when she was standing in prayer, Zossima saw her lifted up in the air. After considerable pressure on his part, she told him her life-story.

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 got into a ship that was sailing for Jerusalem. Arriving at the Holy City, she attempted to enter one of the churches to venerate the Precious Cross, but some unseen power physically 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 Virgin 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: "If you cross the Jordan, you will find true peace."

She immediately bought three loaves of bread and set off for the Jordan River, arriving there the same evening. She received Communion the following morning in the church of St. John the Forerunner, and then crossed the river. She spent forty-eight whole years in the wilderness in the greatest torments, in terror, in struggles with passionate thoughts like gigantic beasts. After her three loaves were eaten, she fed only on plants that grew in the desert.

St. Mary begged Zossima to bring her Holy Communion the next year on the bank of the Jordan, and she would come to receive it. The following year, on Holy Thursday evening, Fr. Zossima came with the Holy Gifts to the bank of the Jordan, 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 Communion, she begged him to come again the following year to the same stream by which they had first met. 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 1st, on the very night of Christ's Passion, after communion of the divine Mysteries." Zossima learned her name for the first time, and also the awe-inspiring marvel that she had arrived at that place the previous year on the night of the same day on which she had received Communion - a place that he had taken twenty days to reach. And thus Zossima buried the body of the wonderful saint. 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. St Mary is commemorated on April 1 and on the Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast. The Church holds her up before the faithful in these days of the Fast as a model of repentance. She entered into rest in about the year 530.