

**Mary of Egypt** (ca. 344 – ca. 421) is revered as the patron saint of penitents, most particularly in the Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, and Eastern Catholic churches, as well as in the Roman Catholic.

The primary source of information on Saint Mary of Egypt is the *Vita* written of her by St. Sophronius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem (634–638). Most of the information in this section is taken from this source.

Saint Mary, also known as Maria Aegyptica, was born somewhere in Egypt, and at the age of twelve ran away to the city of Alexandria where she lived an extremely dissolute life. In her *Vita* it states that she often refused the money offered for her sexual favors, as she was driven "by an insatiable and an irrepressible passion," and that she mainly lived by begging, supplemented by spinning flax.

After seventeen years of this lifestyle, she traveled to Jerusalem for the Great Feasts of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. She undertook the journey as a sort of "anti-pilgrimage," stating that she hoped to find in the pilgrim crowds at Jerusalem even more partners in her lust. She paid for her passage by offering sexual favors to other pilgrims, and she continued her habitual lifestyle for a short time in Jerusalem. Her *Vita* relates that when she tried to enter the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the celebration, she was barred from doing so by an unseen force. Realizing that this was because of her impurity, she was struck with remorse, and upon seeing an icon of the Theotokos (the Virgin Mary) outside the church, she prayed for forgiveness and promised to give up the world (i.e., become an ascetic). Then she attempted again to enter the church, and this time was permitted in. After venerating the relic of the true cross, she returned to the icon to give thanks, and heard a voice telling her, "If you cross the Jordan, you will find glorious rest." She immediately went to the monastery of St. John the Baptist on the bank of the River Jordan, where she received absolution and afterwards Holy Communion. The next morning, she crossed the Jordan and retired to the desert to live the rest of her life as a hermit in penitence. She took with her only three loaves of bread, and once they were gone, lived only on what she could find in the wilderness.

Approximately one year before her death, she recounted her life to St. Zosimas of Palestine, who encountered her in the desert. When he unexpectedly met her in the desert, she was completely naked and almost unrecognizable as human. She asked Zosimas to toss her his mantle to cover herself with, and then she narrated her life's story to him, manifesting marvellous clairvoyance. She asked him to meet her at the banks of the Jordan, on Holy Thursday of the following year, and bring her Holy Communion. When he fulfilled her wish, she crossed the river to get to him by walking on the surface of the water, and received Holy Communion, telling him to meet her again in the desert the following Lent. The next year, Zosimas travelled to the same spot where he first met her, some twenty day's journey from his monastery, and found her lying there dead. According to an inscription written in the sand next to her head, she had died on the very night he had given her Communion and had been somehow miraculously transported to the place he found her, and her body was preserved incorrupt. He buried her body with the assistance of a passing lion. On returning to the monastery he related her life story to the brethren, and it was preserved among them as oral tradition until it was written down by St. Sophronius.

# SAINT PAUL ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL

Rector: Rev. Fr. Robert J. Royer    Email: [robertjroyer@gmail.com](mailto:robertjroyer@gmail.com)  
(810) 919-9485    Website: [stpaulorthodoxcathedral.org](http://stpaulorthodoxcathedral.org)

April 17, 2016  
The Fifth Sunday of Great Lent:  
**ST. MARY OF EGYPT**



**TODAY WE WILL CELEBRATE THE DIVINE LITURGY OF  
ST. BASIL THE GREAT**

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### Epistle – Hebrews 9:11-14

But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

### Gospel – Mark 10:32-45

And they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; and they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. And taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise." And James and John, the sons of Zeb'edee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant at James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise

authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

**ANNOUNCEMENTS** TODAY: Cards for those not able to join us during this Lenten season are on the table in the lobby area – please sign & include a short note if you desire. Church council mtg. following Divine Liturgy & short coffee break. For April we are collecting items needed in our kitchen. Items needed are posted on welcome board and on each table in the coffee room. During Lent we are collecting donations to be used to defray cost of ODO sponsored meals (approx. \$180/meal) – jars on tables in coffee room. Needed: Sponsors for coffee hour following Divine Liturgy – please volunteer – sign up sheet above drinking fountain.  
APRIL 10 DONATIONS: In memory of (IMO): LEO KYKO: Grace & Lee Kyko; IMO FATHER NICOLOFF: Pete & Jann Petroff; IMO my aunt NUNCA VESSA: Helen Arnaut  
For Health of Family (FHO): Angie Panzoff, Pete & Jann Petroff, Mary Roley, Sandra Arnaut, Lazar family; Dan & Tamara Aleksynas FHO my grandson ZACH on his birthday: Sam Petlichkoff; FHO MARY ROLEY on her birthday: Pete & Jann Petroff; FHO SAM PETLICHKOFF on his birthday: Claudia Scarbrough  
UPCOMING EVENTS: APRIL 23 – LAZARUS SATURDAY – 10 A.M. Divine Liturgy & 5 p.m. Vigil for PALM SUNDAY  
APRIL 24 – PALM SUNDAY – Divine Liturgy w/procession & blessing of palms  
APRIL 28 – HOLY THURSDAY (Bishop Alexander here) – 4 p.m. Vespers Divine Liturgy (pot luck meal following – please bring dish for at least 8), 7 p.m. Matins (12 Passion Gospels) – after service decorate the church,  
APRIL 29 GREAT & HOLY FRIDAY – 4 p.m. Vespers (Descent from the Cross) & 7 p.m. Matins (w/Procession)  
APRIL 30 GREAT & HOLY SATURDAY – 10 a.m. Vespers Divine Liturgy, 11:30 p.m. – Nocturns, Midnight – Paschal Procession Matins, Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Paschal Baskets & Agape meal following service,  
MAY 1 – GREAT & HOLY PASCHA,  
MAY 4 – BRIGHT WEDNESDAY – 10 a.m. – Paschal Divine Liturgy; Sunday, May 8 – ODO dinner at Sts. Peter & Paul Orthodox Cathedral pls. arrive bet. 1 & 1:30 if assisting  
Monday, May 16 – Mother's Day Dinner – Park Place - \$30.00 – dinner served 6 p.m. w/doors opening at 5 p.m. – See MARY TODOROFF for tickets.