

From the Triodion

The One who dwelled in Egypt as a little Child, the One whom the universe cannot contain, the Lord who knows all has revealed you as a star, shining forth from Egypt. In you we have a model of repentance. Implore Christ, O Mary, that in this time of the Fast we may praise you in faith and love.

We have you as a model of repentance, all-holy Mary; pray to Christ that in the season of the Fast, this gift may be conferred upon us; to praise you in our hymns with faith and love.



FIFTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT



**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church**  
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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM  
March 29, 2020

Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

**Antiphon (2nd)**

1: Be gracious to us, O God, and bless us; let Your face shine upon us, and have mercy on us.

**O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!**

2: That Your name be known upon the earth, among all nations Your salvation.

**O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!**

3: Let the peoples praise You, O God, let all the peoples praise You.

**O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!**

**Entrance Hymn**

**Priest:** Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ

**People:** O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia!

**Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 1, Pg. 38)**

After the stone was sealed by the Jews and while the soldiers were watching Your spotless body, You rose, O Savior, on the third day, giving life to the world. Therefore, the Heavenly Powers cried out to You, O Giver of Life. Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ, glory to Your Kingdom, glory to Your Economy, O You who alone are the Lover of Mankind.

**Troparion for St. Mary of Egypt (Tone 8)**

In you, O Mother Mary, was restored the likeness of God, for you carried your cross and followed Christ. You taught by your deeds how to spurn the body, for it passes away, and how to value the soul, for it is immortal. Wherefore, your soul is forever in happiness with the angels.

**Patronal Troparion (Tone 1, Pg. 15)**

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity, and in falling asleep, you did not forsake the world, O Mother of God. You have passed to life, being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, save our souls from death.

**Kondakion of the Annunciation (Tone 8)**

We Your servants ascribe to you, O Mother of God, thank offerings of victory, O Champion Leader, for we have been liberated from terror but as you have that invincible power do you free us from every kind of danger so that we may cry out to you: Hail, O Bride ever-Virgin!

Zossima was not told to imitate Mary's radical asceticism but to recognize "how many other ways led to salvation." In this his story resembles that attributed to St Anthony the Great who lived in solitude in Egypt. "It was revealed to Father Anthony in the desert that there was one who was his equal in the city. He was a doctor by profession and whatever he had beyond his needs he gave to the poor, and every day he sang the Trisagion with the angels."

**Ways Leading to Salvation Today**

As the Great Fast draws to a close, we may feel that we have lived its call to prayer and almsgiving to the full. Yet there are in our midst others who, like St Mary of Egypt, call us by their example to examine the possibilities of stretching our spiritual muscles further than we imagine possible.

Los Angeles attorney Tony Tolbert recalls how there was always room in his family home for someone down on their luck. This memory prompted him to move back into his parents' house and offer the use of his own fully furnished home for one year so a homeless family could regroup and move on with their lives. "You don't have to be Bill Gates or Warren Buffet or Oprah," Tolbert said. "We can do it wherever we are, with whatever we have, and for me, I have a home that I can make available."

When Palm Beach physician Richard Lewis died, friends and colleagues gathered at a local mortuary to pay their respects. They were astonished when the doors opened to admit a group of physically and mentally disabled people who came in to join them. Unknown to anyone – including his own twin brother – Dr Lewis had been supporting several group homes in the area caring for the disabled.

Swedish tourists Annis Lindkvist and her sister Emma were visiting Edinburgh, Scotland when a chance meeting changed their lives. Jimmy Fraser, unemployed and homeless after his marriage failed, was begging in the street when the women asked him for directions. They struck up an acquaintance and, ultimately, a friendship. The women obtained a passport for Fraser and paid for his flights so that he could join their family for Christmas. The women took him sightseeing and to a hockey match as well as to Midnight Mass "People promise you things all the time on the street," Fraser reflected, "but they never materialize... Being homeless is cold, lonely and depressing, and you get a lot of abuse from people. This was an incredible act of kindness!" The women are arranging a similar visit for Easter.

The extraordinary acts of these secular "Marys" bring to life the following words by the nineteenth century Russian saint, John of Kronstadt: "And God reveals his hidden saints so that some may emulate them and others have no excuse for not doing so. Provided they live a worthy life, both those who choose to live in the midst of noise and hubbub and those who dwell in monasteries, mountains and caves can achieve salvation. Solely because of their faith in Him, God bestows great blessings on them. Hence those who, because of their laziness, have failed to attain salvation will have no excuse to offer on the Day of Judgment.

"If you love your neighbor, then all of heaven will love you. If you are united in spirit with your fellow creatures, then you will be united with God and all the company of heaven; if you are merciful to your neighbor, then God and all the angels and saints will be merciful to you. If you pray for others, then all of heaven will intercede for you. The Lord our God is holy; be holy yourself also."



## 52nd National Melkite Convention Re-Scheduled

**The 52nd National Melkite Convention hosted by St. John Chrysostom Melkite Catholic Church on July 9 - 12, 2020 has been rescheduled for 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Go to their website, [2020melkite.org](http://2020melkite.org) for more information.**

## LENTEN DINNER CANCELED

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, our annual Lenten Dinner has been cancelled. You should have received a letter in the mail. If you have already sent in a donation and would like it returned, please call the rectory (508-752-4174) and we will gladly do so. If you would like us to keep your donation, it will get to the charities who need it. The current financial situation in Lebanon is challenging and any donations we can make to the charities will be much appreciated.

As you may know, we have cancelled all public services for the time being. We will live stream Divine Liturgy on the parish's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/olphmelkiteworcester>) at **10AM** tomorrow. The church will be open for private prayer from **11:30AM-12:30PM**. I will distribute Eucharist to those who wish to receive it. We cannot have more than 10 people in the church at any one time.

At his time, I anticipate that Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Pascha services will have to be live-streamed as well. Please see the schedule in the Bulletin. The schedule is tentative at the moment. I will keep you updated if anything changes.

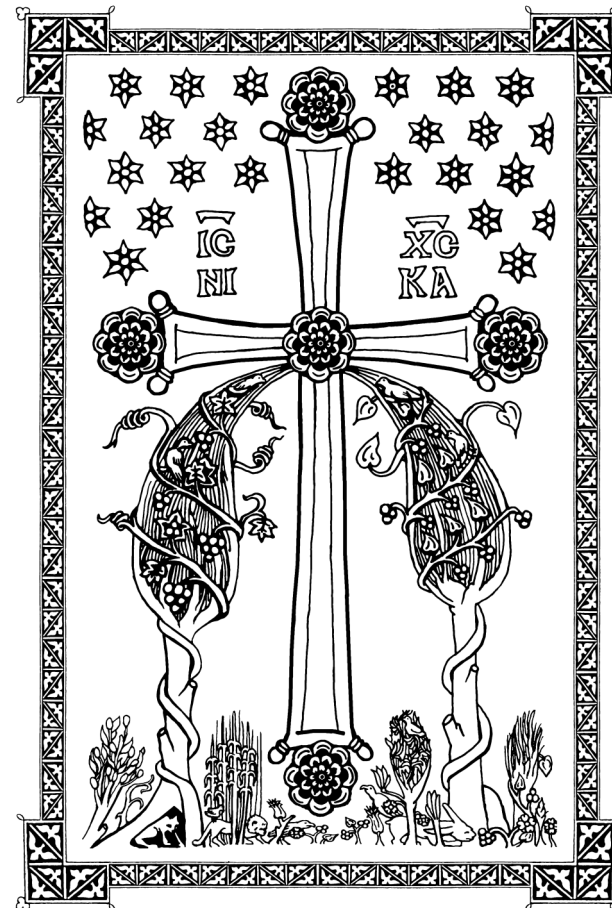
If you want me to remember someone at the Divine Liturgy, please send me an email at [olphmelkite@gmail.com](mailto:olphmelkite@gmail.com). This morning, we the repose of the soul of Anthony Mooradian (4th anniv.), requested by Ron Abraham. We also remember our sister Aileen Abraham, who had a stroke earlier this week and is recovering. *O Christ, Physician of our souls and bodies, bless, heal and have mercy on your handmaid, Aileen.*

Welcome to those who are visiting today. We are happy to have you worship with us. If this is your first time here, please come downstairs to the Hall, introduce yourself, have some refreshments, and get to know the Community. If you have any questions about the Melkite Church and its traditions, please don't hesitate to ask Fr. Bryan.

Weddings— One year notice. Contact Fr. Bryan for Sacramental Preparation.

Baptisms— One month notice. Contact Fr. Bryan for Sacramental Preparation.

**Please let Fr. Bryan know about anyone who is sick, in the hospital, or homebound so that he can visit and bring them the Eucharist on a regular basis.**



## In the Light of a Star

AS THE GREAT FAST DRAWS TO A CLOSE, we are presented with the story of St Mary of Egypt. Her *Life*, by St Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem, is read on the Thursday of Repentance, along with the Great Canon of St Andrew of Crete. On the fifth and last Sunday in the Great Fast, Mary herself is commemorated. The story of her early dissolute life, her remarkable conversion, and the asceticism which characterized the rest of her days made her the classic model of repentance in both East and West.

The second figure in St Sophronios' *Life* stands in complete contrast to his principal subject. St Zossima (April 4) is described as a devout monk in an unnamed Palestinian monastery. While Mary lived a free-wheeling and undisciplined life before her conversion, Zossima had been raised in the monastery since his infancy. This practice was not uncommon before the modern age.

We are told in the *Life* that Zossima "...had been through the whole course of the ascetic life and in everything he adhered to the rule once given to him by his tutors concerning spiritual labors. He had even added much himself in his efforts to subject his flesh to the will of the spirit." Thus, while Mary was indulging her every carnal desire, satisfying her "insatiable desires and irrepressible passions" (as she described it), Zossima was learning to subject his passions to the spirit.

The *Life* insists that "he had not failed in his aim. He was so renowned for his spiritual life that many came to him from neighboring monasteries and some even from afar." Zossima, we are told, "never ceased studying the Divine Scriptures... his sole aim being to sing of God and to practice the teaching of the Divine Scriptures."

### Zossima's Dilemma

When Zossima, by then a heironomk, had spent some fifty years in the monastery, he came to think that he had attained a certain level in the ascetic life beyond his fellows. He knew that he had not exhausted the spiritual life, but did not know where to go from here. "Is there a monk on earth who can be of use to me and show me a kind of asceticism that I have not accomplished? Is there any man to be found in the desert who has surpassed me?"

Was Zossima displaying pride? He was not self-satisfied with his achievements nor was he condescending to others less advanced than himself. He more resembled the young man whom Christ told to keep the commandments and who replied, "*I have kept all these things since my youth. What do I still lack?*" (Mt 19:20) Zossima wanted to deepen his spiritual life but was frustrated that he could not find a spiritual mentor who could help him progress.

By way of response, an angel appeared to him and counseled him that there are always unknown struggles in the spiritual life greater than the challenges he had already faced. "That you may know how many other ways led to salvation, leave your native land like the renowned patriarch Abraham and go to the monastery by the River Jordan. There he would eventually encounter, not a monk or even another man, but a woman whose witness renewed his spiritual life as well as the lives of countless believers ever since. Zossima remained in his monastery and lived to be over 100. It would be his obedience to tell Mary's story to the world.

### Prokimenon

**Reader:** Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them: let all round about Him bring gifts to the awesome Lord.

**People:** Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them: let all round about Him bring gifts to the awesome Lord.

**Reader:** God is renowned in Judah; in Israel, great is His Name!

**People:** Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them: let all round about Him bring gifts to the awesome Lord.

**Reader:** Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them,

**People:** Let all round about Him bring gifts to the awesome Lord.

**Epistle:** Hebrews 9:11-14

### Alleluia Verses

Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.

**Verse:** Let us greet Him with thanksgiving; let us joyfully sing psalms to Him.

**Gospel:** Mark 10:32-45

**Hirmos:** In you, O full of grace...

### **SCHEDULE FOR PALM SUNDAY & HOLY WEEK (LIVE-STREAMED)**

**Fri. 4/3-Vespers for Lazarus Saturday-6:00PM**

**Sun. 4/5-Palm Sunday. Divine Liturgy -10:00AM**

**Mon. 4/6-Bridegroom Service-6:00PM**

**Tues. 4/7-Bridegroom Service-6:00PM**

**Wed. 4/8-Vesper Liturgy for Last Supper 6:00PM**

**Thu.4/9 - Crucifixion Service 6:00PM**

**Fri. 4/10—Vespers-Descent from the Cross –Noon**

**Fri.4/10-Lamentations-6:00PM**

**Sat.4/11-Hajmeh, Orthros, Divine Liturgy of Pascha-9:00PM**

**Sun. 4/12-Divine Liturgy of Pascha-10:00AM**