



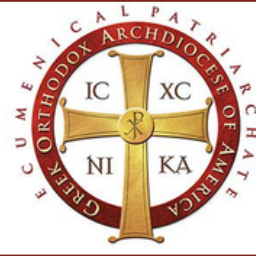
ARCHANGEL MICHAEL CHURCH

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SUNDAY APRIL 21, 2024 | FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT | St. Mary of Egypt | Mode Plagal 1 | Eothinon 2.

Whenever we experience guilt and shame because of something we have done wrong, we need to ask ourselves a question. Do we feel that way because we are sorrowful that we have disobeyed God or because we cannot stand being less than perfect in our own eyes or those of others? The first kind of humiliation is spiritually beneficial and may lead to repentance, but the second kind is simply a form of pride that easily paralyzes us in obsessive despair. At this point in our lives, most of us probably experience some mixture of these two types of shame. As we grow closer to Christ, the first must increase and the second must decrease.

When we wonder if there is hope for the healing of our souls in this way, we should remember St. Mary of Egypt. She stands as a brilliant icon of how to repent from even the most shameful sins. Mary experienced a healthy form of guilt when her eyes were opened to how depraved she had become through her life of addiction to perverse sexual pleasure. Through the intercessions and guidance of the Theotokos, she venerated the Holy Cross at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and received Communion on her way to decades of ascetical struggle in the desert. When the monk Zosima stumbled upon her almost 50 years later, he was amazed at her holiness. He saw this holy woman walk on water and rise up off the ground in prayer, but like all the saints she knew only her own sins and perpetual need for the Lord's mercy.

Perhaps what makes St. Mary of Egypt's story such a beautiful icon of true repentance is that she was genuinely humble before God. She was not sorrowful for her sin out of a sense of wounded pride, obsessive self-centered guilt, or fear of what others thought of her. Instead, she said earnestly to the Theotokos "Be my faithful witness before your Son that I will never again defile my body by the impurity of fornication, but as soon as I have seen the Tree of the Cross I will renounce the world and its temptations and will go wherever you will lead me." And she did precisely that, abandoning all that she had known for the long and difficult journey that led to the healing of her soul. Her focus was completely on doing whatever it took to reorient her life toward God, to purify her desires so that she would find true fulfillment in Him.

Today the Orthodox Church calls us all to follow her example of repentance, regardless of the details of how we have sinned in thought, word, and deed. By commemorating a notorious sex addict who became a great saint, we proclaim that no sin is so shameful that we cannot repent of it. An honest look at our lives, as we should all take during Lent, dredges up shame and regret in various forms. St. Mary of Egypt reminds us to accept humbly the truth about our failings as we confess our sins, call for the Lord's mercy, and do what is necessary to find healing. Her example reminds us not to be paralyzed by prideful obsessions that block us from being freed from slavery to our passions. Even her depraved way of life did not exclude St. Mary of Egypt from acquiring remarkable holiness.

If she did not let a perverse form of pride deter her from finding salvation, then no one should be ashamed to kneel before Christ in humility. The Savior did not reject her and He will not reject us when we come to Him as she did.

In today's gospel text, James and John related to Christ in a very different way, for they wanted the best positions of power when He came into His Kingdom. The Lord challenged their prideful delusions by reminding the disciples that humility, not self-exaltation, is the way to life eternal. He said "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." How shocking that today we celebrate honest, humble repentance from a woman with a truly scandalous past while some of the men closest to Christ in His earthly ministry think only of getting worldly power for themselves.

Perhaps the key difference is that St. Mary of Egypt got over obsession with herself. Instead of assuming that she was "damaged goods" for whom there was no hope, she humbly died to self by taking up her cross. Indeed, her repentance began in the context of venerating the Holy Cross at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The rest of her journey required profound faith, sacrifice, and courage. To undo with God's help the harm that she had done to herself through years of debauchery must have been incredibly difficult. But sustained by the Lord's mercy and the intercessions of the Theotokos, that is precisely what she did over the remaining decades of her life.

Today, so near the end of Lent and only a week from Palm Sunday, we see that this is the path we must take also. In order to follow it, we must not be paralyzed in prideful shame about anything we have said, thought, done, or otherwise experienced or participated in at any point in our lives. Instead, we must have the brutal honesty and deep humility of St. Mary of Egypt, a woman with a revolting past who became a shining beacon of holiness. That is how she found healing for her soul and it is how we will find healing for ours also. The good news of this season is that the Lord makes such blessedness possible for us all through His Cross, His descent into Hades, and His glorious resurrection on the third day. But in order to participate in the great mystery of His salvation, we too must get over our pride, accept His mercy, and actually repent. If St. Mary of Egypt could do that with her personal history, we can too.

Ἦχος πλ. α΄

Τὸν συνάναρχον Λόγον Πατρὶ καὶ Πνεύματι, τὸν ἐκ Παρθένου τεχθέντα εἰς σωτηρίαν ἡμῶν, ἀνυμνήσωμεν πιστοὶ καὶ προσκυνήσωμεν· ὅτι ἠυδόκησε σαρκί, ἀνελεῖν ἐν τῷ Σταυρῷ, καὶ θάνατον ὑπομεῖναι, καὶ ἐγεῖραι τοὺς τεθνεώτας, ἐν τῇ ἐνδόξῳ ἀναστάσει αὐτοῦ.

Ἦχος πλ. δ΄

Ἐν σοὶ Ἄνωτερον ἀκριβῶς διεσώθη τὸ κατ' εἰκόνα· λαβοῦσα γὰρ τὸν σταυρόν, ἠκολούθησας τῷ Χριστῷ, καὶ πράττουσα ἐδίδασκας ὑπερορᾶν μὲν σαρκὸς παρέρχεται γάρ, ἐπιμελεῖσθαι δεῖ ψυχῆς, πράγματος ἀθανάτου· διὸ καὶ μετὰ Ἀγγέλων συναγάλλεται Ὁσία Μαρία τὸ πνεῦμά σου.

Ἦχος πλ. δ΄

Μνήσθητι Κύριε, ὡς ἀγαθὸς τῶν δούλων σου, καὶ ὅσα ἐν βίῳ ἡμάρτον συγχώρησον· οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀναμάρτητος, εἰ μὴ Σὺ ὁ δυνάμενος, καὶ τοῖς μεταστᾶσι δοῦναι τὴν ἀνάπαυσιν.

Ἦχος δ΄

Τῶν οὐρανίων στρατιῶν Ἀρχιστράτηγοι, δυσωποῦμεν ὑμᾶς ἡμεῖς οἱ ἀνάξιοι, ἵνα ταῖς ὑμῶν δεήσεσι, τειχίσῃτε ἡμᾶς, σκέπη τῶν πτερύγων, τῆς ἀύλου ὑμῶν δόξης, φρουροῦντες ἡμᾶς προσπίπτοντας, ἐκτενῶς καὶ βοῶντας· Ἐκ τῶν κινδύνων λυτρώσασθε ἡμᾶς, ὡς Ταξίαρχαι τῶν ἄνω Δυνάμεων.

Ἦχος πλ. δ΄.

Προστασία τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἀκαταίσχυντε, μεσιτεία, πρὸς τὸν Ποιητὴν ἀμετάθετε, μὴ παρίδης, ἀμαρτωλῶν δεήσεων φωνάς, ἀλλὰ πρόφθασον, ὡς ἀγαθή, εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν ἡμῶν, τῶν πιστῶς κραυγαζόντων σοὶ· Τάχυνον εἰς πρεσβείαν, καὶ σπεῦσον εἰς ἱκεσίαν, ἢ προστατεύουσα ἀεὶ, Θεοτόκε, τῶν τιμώντων σε.

Εβρ 9:11-14

Ἀδελφοί, Χριστὸς παραγενόμενος ἀρχιερεὺς τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν δια τῆς μεζονος καὶ τελειότερας σκηνῆς, οὐ χειροποιήτου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως, οὐδὲ δι' αἵματος τράγων καὶ μόσχων, δια δὲ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος εἰσῆλθεν ἐφάπαξ εἰς τὰ Ἅγια, αἰώνιαν λύτρωσιν εὐράμενος. εἰ γὰρ τὸ αἷμα ταύρων καὶ τράγων καὶ σποδοῦ δαμάλεως ῥαντίζουσα τοὺς κεκοινωμένους ἀγιάζει πρὸς τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς καθαρότητα, πόσω μᾶλλον τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς δια Πνεύματος αἰωνίου ἑαυτὸν προσήνεγκεν ἄμωμον τῷ Θεῷ, καθαρῆς τὴν συνείδησιν ὑμῶν ἀπο νεκρῶν ἔργων εἰς τὸ λατρεύειν Θεῷ ζῶντι;

Mode Plagal 1

As the Father and Spirit are unoriginate, so the Word, who was born from the Virgin for us. Let us praise Him, O believers, and let us worship Him. For our salvation He was pleased to be crucified in the flesh, and to undergo death, and to resurrect the dead, by His glorious resurrection.

Mode Plagal 4

In you, O Mother, is preserved undistorted what was made in the image of God; for taking up the cross, you followed Christ and by example taught, that we should overlook the flesh, since it passes away, and instead look after the soul, since it is immortal. And therefore, O devout Mary, your spirit rejoices with the angels.

Mode Plagal 4

Remember, Lord, as the Good One, your servants, and forgive them in whatever they have sinned in life. No one is without sin, except for you the Mighty One, and show rest to the departed.

Mode 4

O Chief Commanders of the heavenly armies, we the unworthy now entreat you in earnest, to fortify us by your supplications to the Lord, and shelter us beneath the wings of your spiritual glory, guarding us who run to you and fervently entreat you: As the Commanders of the hosts on high, rescue us faithful from dangers of every kind.

Mode Plagal 4

O Protection of Christians that never falls, intercession with the Creator that never fails, we sinners beg you, do not ignore the voices of our prayers. O good Lady, we implore you, quickly come unto our aid, when we cry out to you with faith. Hurry to intercession, and hasten to supplication, O Theotokos who protect now and ever those who honor you.

Heb. 9:11-14

Brethren, when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to 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, not with the blood of goats and calves but with 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.

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, παραλαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς δώδεκα μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ ἤρξατο αὐτοῖς λέγειν τὰ μέλλοντα αὐτῷ συμβαίνειν, ὅτι ἰδοὺ ἀναβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου παραδοθήσεται τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσι καὶ γραμματεῦσι, καὶ κατακρινοῦσιν αὐτὸν θανάτῳ καὶ παραδώσουσιν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἔθνεσι, καὶ ἐμπαίζουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ μαστιγώσουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐμπτύσουσιν αὐτῷ καὶ ἀποκτενοῦσιν αὐτόν, καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστήσεται. Καὶ προσπορεύονται αὐτῷ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης υἱοὶ Ζεβεδαίου λέγοντες· διδάσκαλε, θέλομεν ἵνα ὁ ἐὰν αἰτήσωμεν ποιήσης ἡμῖν. ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τί θέλετε ποιησαί με ὑμῖν; οἱ δὲ εἶπον αὐτῷ· δοῦναι ἡμῖν ἵνα εἷς ἐκ δεξιῶν σου καὶ εἷς ἐξ εὐωνύμων σου καθίσωμεν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ σου. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· οὐκ οἴδατε τί αἰτεῖσθε. δύνασθε πιεῖν τὸ ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω, καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθῆναι; οἱ δὲ εἶπον αὐτῷ· δυνάμεθα. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τὸ μὲν ποτήριον ὃ ἐγὼ πίνω πίεσθε, καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθήσεσθε· τὸ δὲ καθίσει ἐκ δεξιῶν μου καὶ ἐξ εὐωνύμων οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμὸν δοῦναι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἠτοίμασται. Καὶ ἀκούσαντες οἱ δέκα ἤρξαντο ἀγανακτεῖν περὶ Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωάννου. ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτοὺς λέγει αὐτοῖς· οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν τῶν ἐθνῶν κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι αὐτῶν κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν· οὐχ οὕτω δὲ ἔσται ἐν ὑμῖν, ἀλλ' ὅς ἐὰν θέλῃ γενέσθαι μέγας ἐν ὑμῖν, ἔσται ὑμῶν διάκονος, καὶ ὅς ἐὰν θέλῃ ὑμῶν γενέσθαι πρῶτος, ἔσται πάντων δοῦλος· καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου οὐκ ἦλθε διακονηθῆναι, ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι, καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντι πολλῶν.

ΚΑΤΗΧΗΤΙΚΟΣ ΛΟΓΟΣ

Ἡ Εκκλησία μας βοηθάει με τη σημερινή περικοπή να ετοιμαζόμαστε για να προσκυνήσουμε με πίστη και ευλάβεια τα γεγονότα της Μεγάλης Εβδομάδας. Ο Κύριος μιλεί πολύ καθαρά στους μαθητές του για τα πάθη των αγίων ημερών. Δείχνει σ' όλους μας το σωστό τρόπο, που μπορούμε να υποδεχτούμε τη θυσία του Γολγοθά.

Ο Κύριος λέγει στους μαθητές του ότι στα Ιεροσόλυμα ἴα παραδοθεῖ στα χέρια των Γραμματέων και Φαρισαίων, θα τον Καταδικάσουν, θα τον εμπαίζουν, θα τον μαστιγώσουν, θα τον φτύσουν, θα τον σκοτώσουν, αλλά την τρίτη ημέρα θα αναστηθεί. Οι μαθητές δοκίμαζαν μεγάλη στενοχώρια γι' αυτά τα πράγματα, γιατί δεν ήθελαν να χάσουν από κοντά τους τον Κύριο, δεν μπορούσαν ακόμα οι μαθητές να καταλάβουν και να δεχτούν πως ο Χριστός ἦλθε στον κόσμο για να θυσιαστεί και έτσι σωθούν ὅλοι οι ἄνθρωποι.

Ο Ιάκωβος και ο Ιωάννης ζητούσαν από τον Κύριο κοσμικά αξιώματα. Νόμιζαν πως ο Χριστός στα Ιεροσόλυμα θα γίνει κοσμικός ἄρχοντας για να ελευθερώσει τους Εβραίους από την κυριαρχία των Ρωμαίων. Αυτή όμως τη νοοτροπία ο Κύριος την απορρίπτει. Ο Χριστός δεν ἦλθε στον κόσμο για να γίνει κοσμικός ἄρχοντας, ὥστε να υποδουλώνει τους ανθρώπους στην εξουσία του. Ο Κύριος ἦλθε για να υπηρετήσει τους ανθρώπους με την αγάπη του και ὄχι να τον υπηρετήσουν οι ἄλλοι. Ο Κύριος μας διδάσκει πως ο ἄνθρωπος πρέπει να ἔχει μέσα του πολλή αγάπη και ταπείνωση. Η αγάπη μας κάνει υπηρέτες των ανθρώπων. Δεν εἶναι υποτιμητικό να προσφέρεις τις υπηρεσίες σου στους ἄλλους. Ὅποιος ἀπὸ μας θέλει να βρίσκεται κοντά στο Χριστό πρέπει να τον μιμείται στη ζωή του.

Πρέπει ἀπὸ τώρα να συνηθίσουμε να υπηρετούμε τους ἄλλους. Πρώτα ἀπ' ὅλα θα αρχίσουμε να προσφέρουμε τις υπηρεσίες και τη βοήθεια μας στους γονεῖς μας. Να ξεκουράζουμε τη μητέρα μας. Να εξυπηρετούμε και τα ἄλλα ἀδέλφια μας. Να φροντίζουμε για κάθε καλὸ που μπορεί να γίνει στην τάξη μας και γενικά στο σχολεῖο μας. Να επισκεπτόμαστε τους ἀρρώστους και να προσφέρουμε βοήθεια και χαρά στους φτωχοὺς. Ὅλα αυτά μας βοηθούν να παρακολουθήσουμε ἀληθινὰ τα γεγονότα της Μεγάλης Εβδομάδας. Θα αρχίσουμε ἀπὸ τώρα να θυσιάζουμε τον εγωισμό μας, για να φτάσουμε ἀργότερα και στο σημείο να προσφέρουμε για την αγάπη του Χριστοῦ και των ἄλλων „ ἀνθρώπων και ἀπὴ τη ζωὴ μας.

SYNAXARION

April 21st- St. Alexandra the Empress
April 22nd - St. Theodore the Sykeote
April 23rd - St. George the Great Martyr
April 24th - St. Elizabeth the Wonderworker
April 25th - St. Mark, Evangelist & Apostle
April 26th- St. Glaphyra the Righteous
April 27th - St. Symeon the Holy Martyr
Saturday of St. Lazarus



LITURGIES

Monday, April 22nd
Great Compline 4PM

Tuesday, April 23rd
Great Compline 4 PM

Wednesday, April 24th
Presanctified Liturgy and Dialogues of Faith 6:45 PM

Thursday, April 25th
Great Compline 6:30PM | Palm Folding 7:30PM

Saturday of Lazarus. April 27th
with Archbishop Elpidophoros | Orthros 9am Liturgy 10am

Palm Sunday, April 28th
Orthros 7:15 AM, First Divine Liturgy 8:30 AM
Second Divine Liturgy 11:00 AM

MEMORIALS

Demetra Brountzas - 40 days
Anastasia Manos - 40 days
James Fengos - 6 months
Apostolos Cavounis - 9 months
Ioannis Petropoulos - 3 years
Dr. Emmanuel G. Pappous - 4 years
Family & Friends of Koutsourakis Family
Gregorios Papaporfiriou - 12 years
Athena Papaporfiriou - 30 years
May their memory be eternal!

EVENTS

Registration open for our summer [Camp Hellas](#) at AMC!
Please purchase your GOYA [Luminary Candles](#) for Good Friday by April 28th. [Easter Lambadas](#) are on Sale at the Pre-School. [Easter Egg Hunt](#) will be on Sunday May 5th. HOPE will make [Lazarakia Buns](#) on April 27th 10:30am
[Barre Exercise](#) - Wednesdays - 9:30 am in the Piano Rm
Archangelos Dance Troupe [Glendi](#) May 11th
[Young at Heart](#) St. Michael Tour & Luncheon May 14th
JOY/GOYA [Olympics](#) - May 24-26th SCCC at Brentwood

Save the Date: AMC Panygiri - June 2nd
Save the Date: AMC Golf Outing - June 6th

AMC

PLEASE JOIN US FOR
A FELLOWSHIP EVENT AS
THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL CHURCH
CELEBRATES

Palm Sunday

WITH A TRADITIONAL BAKALIARO LUNCHEON

in The Angelades Fellowship Hall April 28th
Immediately Following the Liturgy

RESERVATIONS SECURED IN ADVANCE
APRIL 21st BY STEWARDS OF THE CHURCH

PLEASE RSVP ON REAM OR SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW

STEWARDS AND IMMEDIATE
FAMILY - \$20 PER PERSON
CHILDREN UNDER 12 - FREE

CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE WITH ANY QUESTIONS 516-944-3180
SUSAN@ARCHANGELMICHAELCHURCH.ORG