

March 17, 2024
Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast, St. Mary of Egypt



SAINT GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH
Fighting the Good Fight with Faith

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever! ~ Slava Isusu Christu! Slava Na Viki!
Слава Иисусу Христу! Слава на вики!

Propers for this Sunday: Resurrectional Tone 1: pg. 125, & Fifth Sunday of the Fast: pp. 230 – 231
Typica: pp. 16-17, Beattitudes: pp. 23-24, St. Basil melodies: pg. 96

Divine Services for the Week:

SUN., MARCH 17 8:30 A.M. **FIFTH SUNDAY of the GREAT FAST, ST. MARY of EGYPT**
DIVINE LITURGY
+ Carol Huchko, offered by Butch & Judy Dzumba

(At St. Mary: Wednesday, March 20, 6:00 P.M., Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts)

FRI., MARCH 22 6:00 P.M. **SIXTH FRIDAY of the GREAT FAST**
LITURGY of the PRE-SANCTIFIED GIFTS

SUN., MARCH 24 8:30 A.M. **PALM SUNDAY, Blessing of palms and pussy willows**
DIVINE LITURGY
+ John Pinchot, offered by Ted & Doris Gerhardt



Happy Birthday Greetings:

March 21: Mary Ann Popovich March 22: Carolyn Gural, Jonathan Dohanich

Anniversary Greetings

None for the week

Please Pray For Our Sick and Shut-ins

Eileen Batcha, Rebecca Dickun Marianne Dove, Jean Herdt, Rebecca Hutcheon, Kevin Joray, Mary Ann Jugan, Neil Jugan

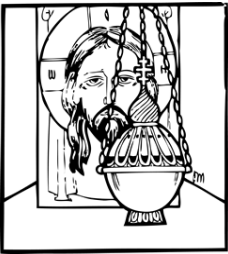
Josephine Maruhnich – **Beaver Elder Care** (616 Golf Course Road, Aliquippa, PA 15001)

Betty Polas – **Apple Blossom Senior Living** (125 Apple Blossom Way, #307, Moon Twp., PA 15108)

Epistle Readers – March 17: Prudy Peya – March 24: Dan Pinchot

Ushers – Stand in as needed

Troica Holders – March 17: F. Hersh – March 24: M. Bobanic



THIS WEEK'S SANCTUARY LAMP

March 17 - 23, 2024

Burns before the real presence of our Lord for:

Our Parishioners
Living and Deceased

A Prayer after Communion

O Lord, Jesus Christ our God, may your holy body bring me everlasting life and may your precious blood remit my sins. May this Eucharist give me joy, health, and happiness. At your dread second coming, grant that I, a sinner, may stand at the right side of your glory, through the prayers of your most pure Mother and of all the saints. Amen.

It's Never too Late

As we continue our Lenten journey, we focus on this Sunday on the life of our venerable mother Mary of Egypt. The example of this “Penitent Saint” tells us **that it is never too late in life - or in Lent - to repent.** Christ will gladly receive all who come to Him, but their coming must be in serious and sincere repentance.

17th EGGstravaganza TODAY

St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church in Uniontown will have their 17th EGGstravaganza on Sunday, March 17 from 12:00 noon – 4:00 PM. Come and “experience the traditions”. Egg artists will demonstrate and sell eggs. There will be a Market Place with Pysanky supplies, Easter items, Easter crafts, basket covers, and other ethnic items. Children’s activities include storytelling, making Easter eggs, and other projects. There will also be a hands-on workshop for those interested in learning to make pysanky. A Lenten lunch menu will be available for purchase as well as an extensive bake sale table. Admission is free. St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church Social Hall, 201 E. Main St., Uniontown, PA. 724-438-1382. www.stjohnbaptist-byzcath-uniontown.org & www.facebook.com/StJohnByzUniontown.

Deanery Lenten Vespers TODAY

Today, March 17th, the Fifth Sunday in Lent, St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church, Avela, PA, will host the Deanery for the Sunday Lenten Vespers @ 3:00 P.M. At the conclusion of vespers, we will conduct the Anointing Service and provide opportunity for private Confessions. And finally, a Lenten meal will be offered in the Parish Social Hall. All are welcome to attend.

Stay for Fellowship Hour

We extend a warm welcome to our parishioners, visitors, and friends. We are thankful that you have come to worship with us today. We invite you to join us following the Sunday Divine Liturgy for Fellowship Coffee and doughnuts today and every Sunday! *We invite EVERYONE to STAY and join us.*



T	G	R	E	T	R	S	I	F	E
O	N	T	N	A	V	R	E	S	Z
T	N	A	G	E	D	T	Z	L	E
S	S	E	N	R	H	E	E	A	B
I	S	R	I	G	B	N	B	E	E
T	Y	N	I	E	I	G	E	V	H
P	K	R	D	I	D	D	R	A	D
A	L	E	O	E	E	E	N	D	E
B	E	V	A	L	S	D	Z	I	E
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ZEDEEEE

GLORY

DRINK

INDIGNANT

CUP

HAND

PAGANS

GREAT

SERVANT

FIRST

SLAVE

SERVE

A Note from Fr. Christiaan

Dear Parishioners,

I wrote you about the encouraging news regarding greater Pittsburgh vocations last week. My own work at the seminary has me responding to and helping young men and women get to their vocations directors when they think of being priests and nuns. We are fortunate in our parishes to have both represented and I am grateful to have Sr. Mary Virginia present as a witness to religious services and reminder of the church’s need to have our monastics pray for God’s blessing and preservation of the church and her members.

This week, the Gospel exposes the rough time the apostles made of their initial vocational call. They saw the popularity of Jesus, his power with the masses, and his miraculous abilities. This tempted them to think that power was arbitrary, that Jesus was going to change God’s design for the world in his mind, ever present to Him before the creation of the first atom (and Adam)!

God, being eternal, preestablishes the order of how each element in the universe will unfold and somehow surpasses crude matter and inventively produced angels and humans who have the ability to choose freely to cut their own path, to have a free power of willing or nilling. Prayer and the intercession of Jesus does not change God’s predetermined plan for the world and for us. For example, no matter how sincere or no matter the holiness of the person praying, God declares in the Bible that the universe will come to a physical end, just as a physicist would be liable to admit in terms of longer eons of time.

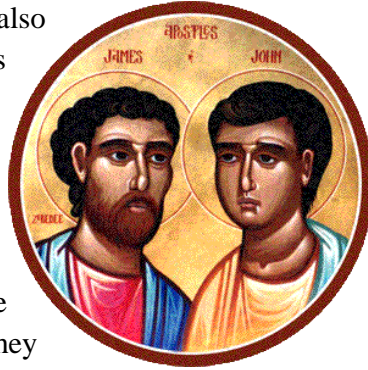
So, why pray? The Fathers of the Church, inspired by the third-century commentary on the Our Father by Origen of Alexandria, repeat that we exercise the “dignity of causality” in prayer. God has a preestablished harmony whereby, if our Sr. Mary Virginia or Fr. Christiaan pray ‘x’ liturgy or ‘y’ prayer, God has preestablished that the elements of the world will be changed in a predetermined way. Or if we pray for grace or some sort of change of mind/soul in a person, God will have already established – on condition of that prayer being said – that He will or will not provide an impetus or influence of grace in the life of thinking and choosing in the person’s soul for whom we pray. The mystery of free will occurs in the fact that God both influences and somehow enables our free decisions to go forward without coercing us.

The apostles in Today’s Gospel want a Jesus who will, by their request, change the world to their own plans. Jesus reveals that God’s system of organization has already been set and that their wishes are not going to change it. It is for this reason that Jesus, when creating the perfect prayer at the request of his disciples (known as the Our Father), added the line: “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Prayer and petition to God is supremely useful, but it is already in God’s plan that when we use the predetermined grace inspiring us to pray at time ‘x’ or time ‘y’ that God will subsequently change the course of events in the world. This is how time and eternity work together in the created order.

Fr. Christiaan

Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast

For the third time, Jesus spoke of his passion and death (see also Mark 8:31-33; 9:30-32). His cross was to be the climax of his earthly mission. The Lord was clearly trying to impress upon his closest disciples that this would indeed occur. He was teaching them the doctrine of the cross. Certainly, John and James had heard all that Jesus said about his mission for they were among his closest disciples, the only ones privileged— along with Peter—to witness his transfiguration (see Mark 9:2- 13). Despite all they had seen and heard, they asked Jesus to promise that they would sit at his side in places of honor when he came into his kingdom (Mark 10:37). They knew what Jesus was about, yet they still asked this question. What was going on in their minds at that moment that could make them disregard all they had learned? We often are like James and John when it comes to the things of God. Like these two sons of Zebedee, we have heard and seen much: we have heard the gospel proclaimed; we have pondered God’s word in scripture; we understand the nature of our Lord’s mission. Our minds can be so entrenched in the ways of this world, however, that what we’ve seen and heard drifts out of our minds when we must make decisions. The influence of the world is constantly pressing us, relentless in forcing upon us ways and standards which are opposed to what Christ taught. Each day we must center our lives on the truths we have learned in Christ so that they, not the world, can guide our lives. The author of the letter to the Hebrews warned: “We must pay the closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it” (Hebrews 2:1).



In both the Gospel and Epistle today we learn about one of the hallmarks of Christianity – servant leadership. “Cleanse your conscience form dead works,” Saint Paul teaches us, “to serve the living God.” And again, in the Gospel, Jesus explains that he did “not come to be served but to serve.” In this way of service, Jesus shows us that we are called to “give” our life to God through the gift of service to each other. During the Lenten season, the Church invites us to intensify our calling as servant leaders and to live out this calling in real tangible ways.

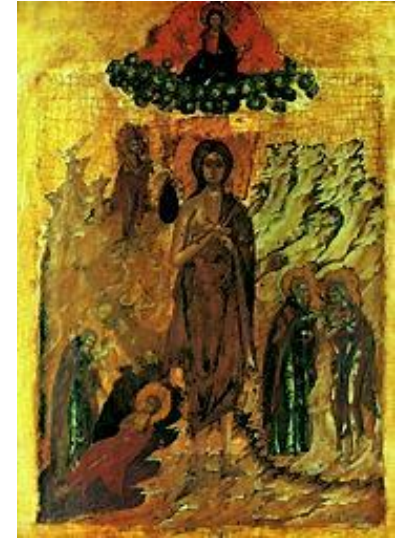
Questions to Ponder

1. What are some practical examples of servant leadership?
2. What are some ways that we can serve others?
3. Why is service to one another a way in which we serve God?
4. If service is a good work, what are some examples of “dead works” which are not unto salvation?

...for the Son of Man also has not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Our Venerable Mother Mary of Egypt

The story of Mary of Egypt is remembered and cherished throughout Christendom, east and west. In our Holy Church, however, we remember her twice each year. The first time, her feast day on April 1st, is our gift to her: we remember what she did, who she was, and who she became. The second time, today on the Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast-Lent, is her gift to us: the gift of her story at the moment when we ourselves must enter the inner desert of our hearts. For what does Lent mean for us? It is that time when we must face ourselves and face ourselves in the presence of God. Who are we? What do we live for? We fast, pray, repent, and confess. It is hard and we get lost in the wilderness. And we cannot escape the truth of who we are. At this point in Lent, we prepare for Holy Week. And before we can rejoice, we must complete our full sojourn in the desert.



The Life of St. Mary teaches us that the values of the Church are quite different from those of the world. She went out into the desert and had nothing, no friends, no home, no possessions, no clothes and hardly any food and drink. The world looked for pleasure; the satisfaction of the senses, money and power, but St. Mary was moneyless and powerless in the world. Today’s Gospel reading confirms the choice of Mary of Egypt, for it says that those who wish to be great must be servants. This is upside down from all the ways of this world. But our Lord preached this and like Him our venerable mother Mary lived this.

Indeed, as we have already said, the Church calls our venerable mother Mary “the greatest of saints”. The use of this word “great” may surprise us. In everyday life, we use “great” in other meanings. The world speaks of “great politicians”, “a great car”, “and a great amount of money”. But the Church calls Mary of Egypt “GREAT” and a thousand and a half years after she lived we ask for her prayers, but not for those of any politician or film-star or sportsman. Let us think more carefully before next we utter this word “great”.

And as this last week of the Great Fast - Lent begins; let us also ponder on the words of the Mother of God, which led Mary of Egypt to her salvation through repentance and her greatness: “If you cross the Jordan, you will find true peace”. These mysterious words are today also addressed to each of us; the interpretation of their mystery is open to the souls of each of us, but only if we ask the Mother of God and our venerable mother Mary of Egypt to guide us. And then we shall find our own “entry into Jerusalem”.

ST. GEORGE BYZANTINE CATHOLIC CHURCH



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Holy Protection Convent, 1000 Clinton St. 724-378-0238



Cantors: Jo Ann Hersh, Louisa Hersh, David Klacik, Dan Pinchot

Facilities Supervisor: John Poiarkoff - Grounds Keepers: Rich Mudron, Rob Dzumba, Francis Hersh

Holy Mystery of Reconciliation Before Liturgies, or by appointment

Holy Mysteries of Initiation Contact the priest

Holy Mystery of Anointing Contact the priest prior to surgery or in the event of illness

Holy Mystery of Marriage Contact the pastor six months prior to wedding

Pirohi Sales 2nd Friday of each month

St. George Ladies' Guild & Men's Club Everyone welcome to participate

Opportunities for StewardshipChurch and grounds cleaning and maintenance: Every Saturday,

Pirohi making: 2nd week of each month

It is never too late, to pick up and begin again, or to begin at all.