

# Holy Apostles Orthodox Church

347 Ridge Rd, Lansing, NY 14882

HolyApostlesLansing.org

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## APRIL 2, 2017

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – Tone 8. St Mary of Egypt.** Ven. Titus the Wonderworker (9th c.). Martyrs Amphianus (Apphianus) and Edesius (Aedesius) of Lycia (306). Martyr Polycarp of Alexandria (4th c.).

**EPISTLES:** Galatians 3:23–29: In Christ, we are children of Abraham, freed from the old Law.  
Hebrews 9:11–14: The Blood of Christ frees us so that we might serve Him.

**GOSPELS:** Luke 7:36–50: She who is forgiven much loves much.  
Mark 10:32–45: Jesus foretells the Cross.

**COFFEE HOUR:** This week: Potluck Next week: ??? (Sign up today!)

**TONSURING:** On Saturday, April 8, Ivan Bazarov will be tonsured as a reader at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in Elmira Heights. The tonsuring will be performed by Archbishop Michael, prior to Liturgy. An exact time will be announced. Please inform Fr. Joel if you intend to go, so that we can organize transportation. To free our community for this celebration, there will be no liturgy that day in Lansing.

**FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS:** In the Lenten spirit of almsgiving, we've set up a box in the back of church for food pantry donations. During this time of fasting, the Church calls us to use the money that we save by eating a simpler diet in order to help those in need. We already filled up one box and delivered it to the Lansing food pantry. Let's see if we can fill the box again before Pascha!

**SPEAKING OF THE FOOD PANTRY...** The Lansing Food pantry appreciates our food donations, but would also be interested in some of our parishioners coming to volunteer and help distribute food. Please see Fr. Joel for more information.

**LOOKING AHEAD:** As we set out on the final week of Lent before Holy Week, it's time to begin thinking about the Feast of Feasts to come. Flyers and postcards for our Pascha celebrations are available in the back of church, which you can take to distribute or post. In addition to the services throughout Holy Week, we will have Paschal Liturgies on Bright Monday and Tuesday. After following Christ through the sorrowful journey of Holy Week, we'll have opportunity to come and enter into His joy. Also, Fr. Joel and Matushka Meg will be holding a celebration at

their house on the evening of Bright Tuesday. Details to come!

**LENTEN SERVICES:** Services are held throughout the week during the Lenten Season that help us to intensify our prayer life and enter into the spirit of preparation for Our Lord's Resurrection. Especially in this last week before Holy Week, these services can aid in preparing for the Feast of Feasts to come. The mid-week Presanctified Liturgy in particular is an opportunity to receive Christ's Body and Blood to strengthen us in our spiritual struggles. Even one additional service during the week can help maintain the spiritual connection between Sundays.

**PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND:** The oca Dept of Evangelization, along with Abp Michael, announce a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, June 4–17, 2017. For more information or to reserve your spot, please visit the diocesan webpage.

**LENTEN RESOURCES:** Children's lessons for the season of Great Lent are available at <http://www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/religious/zines/lentzine> (Greek Archdiocese) and at <http://dce.oca.org/focus/pascha> (OCA Dept. of Christian ed).

**WELCOME VISITORS!** We warmly welcome all of our visitors! Please know that we are glad to have you here praying with us, and we invite you to stay after the service to enjoy a meal and meet everyone in our community.

## PRAYER SCROLL

### LIVING:

Apr Timothy H  
Apr Herman S  
Apr Sergius K  
Apr Thomas E  
Apr Stephen M  
Apr John R  
Apr Patrick C  
Pr Adam S & Angie  
Mother Raphaela  
Mother Christophora  
Mat Joanna B  
Mat Katya  
Mat Mary G  
Joshua  
Brittany  
Gretchen  
Marianne  
Terrence  
Helen  
Judy  
Mary & Susan  
John & Carmine  
Nathan

Leah  
Helen  
Lindsey  
Elizabeth  
Mary  
Joe A  
Daniel  
Andrew & family  
Carol  
Wilhelmina  
Elizabeth  
David  
Shirley  
Christina  
Jim & Kim  
Rachel  
Constantine & Maria  
Gaetan  
Christine  
Samuel  
Lisa  
Lyudmila  
Nickolay  
Anetta

Zachary  
Iconographer Helena  
Natasha, Lena, Vera,  
Sergei  
Caleb  
Danielle  
Larry, Mark, Katie  
Ann  
Dorothy  
Ronald  
Sheryl & Lacey  
Alexander, Angela,  
Anton  
Peter  
Gregory & Ann  
Raymond  
Vincent  
Photini  
Robert  
Steven, Stephanie,  
and family  
Diana  
Elizabeth

Children: Anthony,  
Mia, Isabel, Bear,  
Victoria, Iva Bell,  
Panagiotis, Ada,  
Grace, Elias, Jack  
Seminarians: Rdr  
Robert & Ivan  
**Birthdays:**  
**Anniversaries:**  
**Namesdays:**

### REPOSED:

Apr John U  
Priest Matthew  
Priest John  
Apr Alexander  
Dn Mark  
Rdr Gregory  
Daniel  
Ada  
Lillian  
Joseph  
Marie  
Joseph

Laura  
Martha  
Stanley  
Taissia  
Steluța  
Theophan  
Lynda  
Florence  
James  
James R  
Vasily  
Mordecai  
Alexandr  
Ron  
John  
Eleanor  
Harold  
Alfred  
Edward  
**Newly Reposed:**  
Michael, Mat  
Julianna, Mario,  
Robert

**BY THE NUMBERS:** Last Collection: \$745.00. Building Fund: \$129.  
Weekly Budget: \$1150. March Total: \$4015.91. Monthly Budget:  
\$4600

## SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK

*Confessions are heard before and after Vespers or by appointment.*

**Sunday, April 2:** 9:10 AM Hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy and Social Hour

**Monday, April 3:** Rector's Sabbath

**Tuesday, April 4:** 8:30 AM Lenten First Hour

**Wednesday, April 5:** 8:30 AM Lenten Daily Matins

6 PM Pesanctified Liturgy

**Thursday, April 6:** 8:30 AM Lenten First Hour

**Friday, April 7:** 8:30 AM Lenten First Hour

9:20 AM Cornell ocf Morning Prayers in Anabel Taylor Hall

6 PM Presanctified Liturgy

**Saturday, April 8:** Tonsuring of Ivan Bazarov in Elmira Heights; Hierarchical Divine Liturgy

6 PM Great Vespers

**Sunday, April 9:** 9:10 AM hours, 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy and Social Hour

## PRAYER FOR CHURCH GROWTH

Again, we pray to Thee, O Lord our God, that Thou wouldst renew us and this parish by the Power of the Holy Spirit. Fill us with love and longing for Thee. Grant that we would seek not our own will, but to do Thy will in all things and to be willing to lay down our lives out of love for Thee and for our neighbor. Draw thirsty souls to this place and remove their spiritual blindness, granting them through Thy grace to see the beauty of Thy Holy Glory in this place. Fill this community with new life, spiritual vigor, and an insatiable desire to live godly and holy lives. Forgive us all of our sins as we fall down before Thee. Bring us all to a greater repentance and to an amendment of our lives as we look to Thee, the only merciful and loving Lord, Who calls all to salvation. We beg Thee, our merciful Lord, hear us, grant all of these petitions and all of our requests unto salvation: we pray Thee, hearken and have mercy.

## FROM THE TRIODION

As we begin with eagerness, O ye faithful, the sixth week of the holy Fast, let us sing a hymn in preparation for the Feast of Palms, to the Lord who comes with glory to Jerusalem in the power of the Godhead, that He may slay death. So with reverence let us prepare the branches of the virtues, as emblems of victory; and let us cry Hosanna! to the Creator of all.

*Glory to God for all things!*

# HOLY APOSTLES ORTHODOX CHURCH LANSING, NEW YORK



SUNDAY, APRIL 2, 2017  
SAINT MARY OF EGYPT

# A SERMON ON SAINT MARY OF EGYPT

## Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) of Sourozh

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

We keep today the memory of Saint Mary of Egypt in the gradual progression from glory to glory which Lent is, and which must lead us step by step to facing the supreme glory of the Divine Love crucified, the sacrificial love of the Holy Trinity.

Saint Mary of Egypt was a sinner, someone whose sin was known to everyone and not to God alone; perhaps she was the only one who was least of all aware of it because sin was her life. And yet, one day, she wanted to go and venerate an icon of the Mother of God in a church. The supreme beauty of womanhood in the Mother of God reached her heart, touched it. But when she came to the gate of this church, a power prevented her from crossing the threshold. The Publican had been able to stand there because his heart was broken; Mary of Egypt had no broken heart, and the entrance of the church was forbidden to her. And she stood there, aware that what she was, was incompatible with the holiness of the Presence, the presence of God, the presence of the Mother of God, the presence of all that is holy on earth and in heaven.

And she was so profoundly shaken by this experience that she left all that had been her life, retired into the desert, and with a life which the service books define as 'extreme', fought to conquer her flesh, her soul, her memories – everything that was sin, but also everything that could lead her away from God. And we know how glorious her life was, the kind of person she became.

What lesson can we receive from her life? How often is it that we have knocked at the door of God in the way in which Mary tried to come into His presence? How often have we tried to pray, to be in His presence in silence? How often has our longing been to God, and how often have we felt that between our prayer and Him, between our silence and Him, between our longing and Him there was a barrier which we could not pass. We were crying, praying into an empty sky, we were turning towards icons that were silent; all we could perceive was the Divine absence, and an absence so frightening, because not only could we not reach Him, but we perceived that unless we reached Him, our soul was laid waste, there was within us nothing but emptiness, an emptiness that if it continued, if it became our definitive condition would mean more than death – ultimate separation.

But how often also has God knocked at the door of our heart. You remember the word of the Book of Revelation: I stand at Thy door and I knock... How often has God, in the words of the Gospel, in the events of our life, in the weak promptings of our soul, in a whispering of the Holy Spirit, in all the ways in which God tries to reach us – how often has He knocked at this door, and how often have we made sure that this door does not open. Either didn't we simply care to open it because we were busy with things that mattered to us at that moment more than His interrupting, disturbing presence; and how often did we refuse to open the door because the coming of the Lord to us would have meant the end of things which were precious

to us, which mattered to us... And the Lord stood knocking, and the door was shut in His face: exactly in the same way in which every door was shut in the face of the Mother of God and Joseph on the night of the Nativity.

We may not be aware of it with the intensity which should be ours; and yet for each of us, simply, the proof of it is that we are here, and millions of other people at some moment have suddenly perceived the presence of God, have heard His knocking, have let perhaps the door ajar, have listened to what He was saying, had a moment of elation, a moment when suddenly we came to life, and then we shut the door again. We chose our aloneness, we chose to be without Him, and what we imagined to be 'free' from Him: we are never free; we are never free not because He enslaves us, not because He hunts us down. We are never free because He is ultimately in the end the only supreme longing of our whole being, because He is the fullness of life, the glory of life, the exultation of life for which we long and which we try to glean right, and left in vain.

Mary of Egypt confronted with the Divine absence, with God's refusal to allow her into His presence, confronted with a shut door within herself felt that unless the door opened, everything was vain. And she turned away from everything that stood between her and God, and life, and fullness, and exultation.

Isn't she for us an example, a call, an image of what could be the life of each of us? But we may say, Yes, this applied to her, she was a prospective saint... Each of us is called to commune with God in such a way, that God and each of us should become one, that each of us should become partaker of the Divine nature, a living member, a brother, a sister, a limb of Christ, a temple of the Holy Spirit, a son and a daughter of the Living God! This is our vocation; but can that be achieved by our own strength? No, it cannot! But it can be achieved by God in us if we only turn to Him with all our mind, all our heart, all our longing, determinably, yes: it is determination, and it is longing, a passionate, desperate longing... And then – and then all things become possible. I have said so often that when Saint Paul asked God for strength to fulfil his mission, the Lord said to him, My grace sufficeth unto thee, My power deploys itself in weakness... And at the end of his life, having fulfilled his vocation, Paul, who knew what he was saying, said, all things are possible unto me in the power of Christ Who sustains me... All things are possible, because God does not call us to more than can be achieved by Him with us and in us.

How much hope, how much inspiration can we find in each of the Saints of God, as frail as we are, and in whom the power, the glory, the victory, the life unfolded itself, deployed itself gloriously.

Let us once more receive inspiration from what we hear, receive inspiration from what we meet face to face in the Gospel, in Holy Communion, in prayer, in the silence in the presence of God. And let us move one step more forward towards the vision of the love of God made manifest in Holy Week, in the last steps of the way of the Cross, in the final victory of crucified Love, and in the victory of the Resurrection of God. Amen

# WEEKLY HYMNS FOR SUNDAY, APRIL 2

## Troparion, Tone 8 (*Resurrection*)

You descended from on high, O Merciful One!  
You accepted the three day burial to free us from our sufferings!//  
O Lord, our Life and Resurrection, glory to You!

## Troparion, Tone 8 (*St Mary of Egypt*)

The image of God was truly preserved in you, O Mother,  
for you took up the Cross and followed Christ.  
By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh for it passes away;  
but to care instead for the soul, for it is immortal.//  
Therefore your spirit, O holy Mother Mary, rejoices with the angels.

## Kontakion, Tone 3 (*St Mary of Egypt*)

Having been a sinful woman,  
you became through repentance a bride of Christ.  
Having attained angelic life,  
you defeated demons with the weapon of the Cross.//  
Therefore O most glorious Mary, you are a bride of the Kingdom.

## Prokeimenon, Tone 8

Pray and make your vows before the Lord, our God!

v: In Judah God is known; His name is great in Israel.

**Another, Tone 4:** God is wonderful in His saints, the God of Israel.

## Alleluia, Tone 8

v: Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!

v: Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with songs of praise!

**Tone 1** v: I waited patiently for the Lord; He attended to me and heard my supplication.

## Communion Hymns

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest!

The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not fear evil tidings.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

# A HYMN OF PRAISE

## St. Mary of Egypt, By St. Nikolai of Žiča

A wonderful penitent, self-tormentor,  
Mary hid herself from the face of men.

Yea, O sinful me,  
by passion darkened.

Passions are beasts which eat at our heart;  
Like serpents they secretly weave in us a nest.

Yea, O sinful me,  
By passion consumed!

In order to save sinners, Thou didst suffer, O Christ,  
Do Thou now not loathe me, the impure one!

Hearken to the cry of Mary,  
The most sinful of all!

The Lord showed compassion, He healed Mary;  
Her darkened soul He whitened as snow.

Thanks be to Thee, O All-good one,  
O Lord most dear!

Thou didst cleanse an impure vessel and gild it with gold,  
Thou didst fill it to overflowing with Thy grace.

This is true mercy.

To Thee, O God, be glory!

And Mary became radiant with the Spirit,  
Girded by strength as an angel of God,

By Thy power, O Christ,  
By Thy mercy, Most-pure!

What is this fragrance in the awesome wilderness,  
Like beautiful incense in a temple coffer?

Mary breathes it,  
She exudes sanctity!

