

FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST
MEMORY OF OUR MOTHER MARY OF EGYPT



Icon of Saint Mary of Egypt

March 13, 2016: Fifth Sunday of Great Lent

Epistle: Heb. 9: 11-14

Gospel: Mk. 10: 32-45

Mon., March 14	8:00	+ George & Olga Kropilak (Legate)
Tues., March 15	8:00	+ Michael Spryn (Mary Ann Spryn)
Wed., March 16	8:00	Akathist to the Passion of Christ 6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy
Thurs., March 17	8:00	+ Susan & Andrew Horvath (Family)
Fri., March 18	8:00	Akathist to the Passion of Christ 6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy
Sat., March 19	8:00	+ Andrew & Anna Smagula (Son Joseph) 10:30 Confessions 2:00 pm Confessions 4:00 pm + Eleanor Chowanec (Family)
Sun., March 20	9:00	+ Mary Bohn (St. Cyril's Choir) 11:30 For Our Parishioners; Baptism

Easter Pastoral Letter

Christ is Risen!

John 20:16-20

Indeed He is Risen!

“Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to him in Hebrew, “Rabbouni,” which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, “Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” Mary of Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and what he told her.”

Today, we share a joy, a joy of wonder, a joy that comes from within, because Christ is Risen! Today, we share the same joy of the disciples to whom Mary Magdalene had brought the Good News that Jesus Christ is risen, and she has seen Him.

This joy of resurrection starts from a personal encounter with risen Christ. What does it take for Mary Magdalene's tears to give way to Easter joy? Noth-

ing less than meeting the risen Christ. Meeting the risen Savior Himself! Even this is not so straightforward. Jesus appears to her, but Mary doesn't recognize Him. But then, Jesus calls her name, Mary. She turns, and now when she looks; her world is transformed. Before her is no gardener, but the resurrected Christ, alive and free from death. Around her is no tomb of lifeless rock, but the living Savior who calls her out of darkness and into a marvelous light. After encountering the risen Jesus Mary Magdalene obeys the Lord's command to tell the news of the resurrection to the disciples.

The same joy is experienced by the disciples on the road to Emmaus. This personal encounter with the risen Lord gives them courage and strength to run back to the disciples and tell them what happened on the way and how they recognized Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

On Easter morning what we celebrate is that Christ has overcome sin and evil and death. There is forgiveness and hope and new life even from the very rock bottom of suffering and despair. And so, the Easter gospel is not only about life from death, but also about this encounter Mary has with the resurrected Christ. Jesus is raised, but then He also meets us. And not merely as a dazzling figure we do not recog-

nize, Jesus meets us – calls our name, opens our eyes, and invites us to see.

At the Resurrection Matins we sing: *“Let us rise at early dawn and bring to our Master a hymn instead of myrrh, and we shall see Christ the Sun of righteousness Who enlightens the life of all.”* (Resurrection Matins, Ode 5).

The risen Christ wants us to experience the joy of encountering Him and living for Christ and not for self—the joy of being liberated from the sins which trap us in self-centeredness and discover the blessing of Christ's self-giving love. No matter what may be happening in our lives, we can still experience spiritual joy through the love of God and living the way God made us to live, which is for self-giving love.

The Easter gospel is not just about new life, but new life that comes to us. Not just Christ raised from the dead, but the risen Christ meeting us and calling our names. Easter is an encounter, a call and a summons. Go and tell what you have seen and heard. Christ is alive, and more than that He has sought us out and called us by name. Whatever our doubts and our fears, whatever our failures and betrayals, whatever the wounds we try to protect – today is a new day. We are all to become witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus. We are called to bring that 'ray' of the light of the Resurrection into the various human situations: into

those happy ones, rendering them more beautiful, and into those sorrowful situations, bringing serenity and hope.”

In this Year of Mercy, Pope Francis encourages us “*to experience the opening of our hearts to those living on the outermost fringes of society*” and to “*keep alive the desire to know how to welcome the numerous signs of the tenderness which God offers to the whole world and, above all, to those who suffer; who are alone and abandoned, without hope of being pardoned or feeling the Father’s love*” (*Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis).

We know how the poor need help. We know how the sick need healing, how the oppressed need justice, how the grieving need comfort. We know how the spiritual life needs exercise, with daily prayer, meditation, study, and the companionship of kindred, seeking souls. Being people of the resurrection, graced with this knowledge, it is our calling to talk to people on the road and announce the Good News of the risen Christ to them. During this period of contemplating Christ’s mercy, we are reminded that Jesus not only preached mercy, but He put into action works of mercy as He assisted the poor, consoled

the lonely and outcast, relieved suffering and affliction and taught the ignorant. No one person can give what they do not have, thus each one of us must know Christ personally. We need to know Him personally so that we can go out and proclaim Him to every person we encounter.

Today is our time of joy and renewed evangelical spirit to proclaim the Good News of the risen Christ to others. Our parish communities should become places to encounter the living Christ! This is what Christ is inviting us to do! *This is the day that Lord has made, let us exalt and rejoice in it.* This is the calling to each of us, so we may bring this joy of encountering, the risen Christ to others. Will we be able to share this personal encounter with the risen Christ with our families, our friends, and people we encounter in our daily lives? Let us experience this Easter morning joy and let us radiate this joy in our lives. Let the Mercy of Christ shine in our lives and deeds!

Our fervent prayer is that our Resurrected and Living Lord may bestow his peace and grace upon you and your loved ones, upon all our brothers and sisters scattered throughout the world!

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

+Stefan Soroka (Archbishop of Philadelphia for Ukrainians)
Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States

+Richard Seminack (Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago)

+Paul Chomnycky, OSBM (Eparch of Stamford)

+ Bohdan J. Danylo (author) (Eparch of St. Josaphat in Parma)

+John Bura (Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia)

From the Archbishop's Chancery... Spiritual Regulations for the Great Fast

Although our Church traditionally prescribed abstinence from meat and dairy products in days gone by for the entire duration of the Great Fast, the following are the minimal Lenten regulations today:

Abstinence from meat and all dairy products on the First Day of the Great Fast and on Good Friday.

Abstinence from meat only on all Fridays of the Great Fast as well as Holy Saturday. It is also traditional to abstain from meat on Wednesdays during the Great Fast.

Reception of the Holy Mysteries of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist during the period from the onset of Great Fast to the Wednesday before Ascension Thursday.

On Wednesdays and Fridays of the

Great Fast, **the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is to be celebrated.** Typika may be used the other days. The Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is to be celebrated for Sunday Liturgies during this time.

During Holy Week, the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is to be celebrated Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. On Holy Thursday evening, Vespers with Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great should be celebrated. On Good Friday, March 25, which is also the Feast of the Annunciation, special services which include the Divine Liturgy are to be celebrated. On Holy Saturday evening, Vespers with the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great is to be celebrated.

Lenten Services — Have You Attended Yet?

Five weeks of Great Lent are now over. One more to go until Flowery (Palm) Sunday and Holy Week. Have you made the effort to come to church for our weekday Lenten services? This week offers several

golden opportunities for you to come to church. Make it your plan to attend more of these services before Easter. Take extra care about your spiritual well-being!

Easter Confessions

There will be several priests hearing confessions next Saturday, March 19, 2016.

This will be the FINAL opportunity to go to confession before Easter. As usual, con-

fessions will be heard at both 10:30 am and 2:00 pm.

Pussy-Willow Watch

Flowery (Palm Sunday) is just two weeks away! Once again this year, we turn to our Parishioners for help in procuring our pussy-willows. If you have any bushes, please share them with us.

You can either bring them in or arrangements can be made to have them picked up. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Feast of the Annunciation

This year the feast of the Annunciation happens to fall on Good Friday, March 25th. You may have noticed that there are envelopes dated for March 16 for the Annunciation. THIS IS A MISTAKE. The feast of the Annunciation will be observed on March 25th as always.

This year, however, we have a “Dou-

ble Feast” since we celebrate both the Annunciation and Good Friday. While we normally do not celebrate a Divine Liturgy on Good Friday, the feast of the Annunciation is so important that a Divine Liturgy is celebrated. Books will be available for the special Annunciation/Good Friday service this year.

Cemetery Cleanup

Easter is quickly approaching (March 27) and it is time to remove the Christmas Decorations from the Cemetery. If

you fail to do so, the Cemetery Maintenance crew will have to do so.

LUC Meeting

North Anthracite Council - League of Ukrainian Catholics will meet on Tuesday, March 15, 2016 at 6:30pm in the private dining room of Grotto Pizza, 36 Gateway Shopping Center, Route 11, Edwardsville.

Main agenda items include the upcoming May 21st bus trip to New York

City to attend the annual St. George Ukrainian Street Festival in Manhattan's Lower East Side with an extended side trip to Brooklyn's "Little Odessa" at Brighton Beach; the April 24th Women's Day of Prayer at Scranton's St. Vladimir Church; and, dates of future meetings including the annual August picnic.

Members are reminded that membership renewals for the year 2016 can be completed at the meeting or by contacting Janina Everett at 570 759-2824. For

additional information about the organization, please contact Dorothy Jamula, President at 570 822-5354 or any LUC member of your parish.

Baked Fish Dinner

Our Parish will once again be sponsoring a "BAKED HADDOCK" FISH DINNER on FRIDAY MARCH 18, 2016 from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the REGAL ROOM (Ballroom/side entrance), 216 Lackawanna Avenue. Sit Down or Take Out!! Tickets are: \$13.00 per ticket/

dinner: Baked haddock, potato, vegetable, cole slaw, roll and dessert. Call 570-383-9487 for Reservations. *Deadline for pre-sold Tickets is Monday, March 14, 2016. *LIMITED amount of Dinners will be available a the Door \$15.00

Parish Meeting

There will be a Parish Meeting on Saturday, April 2, 2016 following the 4:00 Divine Liturgy. It is hoped that more people will be able to attend the meeting at this time. Among the topics of this meeting will be an update on the sale of

the Parish School, future plans for the New Hall (kindergarten building), and a possible Pilgrimage on the occasion of the Year of Mercy. All are invited to attend.

Collection Processing Team...

The Collection Processing Team for the month of March 2016 is Team #3: Helen

Pagnotti, Marlene Zelno, Dorothy Zinsky and Cheryl Matuszewski.

Sunday Collection for March 5 & 6, 2016: \$

Altar Boy and Lector Schedule for March 19 & 20, 2016

	Altar Boys	Lectors
4:00 pm	David Slachtish -- Daniel Chylak	Michael Shumek
9:00 am	Patrick Marcinko -- Michael Roberts	Pat Marcinko
11:30 am	Brian Radle -- Jordan Radle	Frank Lesnefsky

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Rev. Nestor Iwasiw, Pastor

St. Mary of Egypt

At this point in the Great Fast, we're very often tempted by the demons to lessen our efforts, to make some concessions to the desires of the flesh. We're tempted by thoughts of, "what are we doing, anyway? Are we actually accomplishing anything by all this fasting and spiritual struggle?"

The life of St. Mary of Egypt shows us how easily our temptations can gain control over us. She was so given to her life of sin that she lived by begging, she lived on the streets, she wasn't even able to properly care for herself. All of her time was spent seeking after the sin of her choosing. She lost herself – she was totally consumed by her desires, and she became something that would later shock even her. She laments to the Abbot Zosimos how many people she led astray by her life of sin. Not only was her own life practically destroyed before her conversion to Christ, but the lives of others were affected in a very sinful and

negative way.

St. Mary shows us that overcoming passions and temptations is a long and difficult process, even for those who have no other desire than to please Jesus. It takes a great struggle to put off the old person and be clothed in the new. But God gave her the grace in every step of the way. He was always there with her, supporting her, holding her hand, and guiding her to the Heavenly Kingdom. The life of St. Mary gives us a lot to think about as we come to the final weeks of the Great Fast. If we truly desire Christ, her story will make us reflect on the lives we're living, to hold ourselves up to the measure of Christ's teaching, and ask ourselves am I living my love for Christ every day of my life in every aspect of being?"

For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit
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