



*I am the vine
you are the branches.*

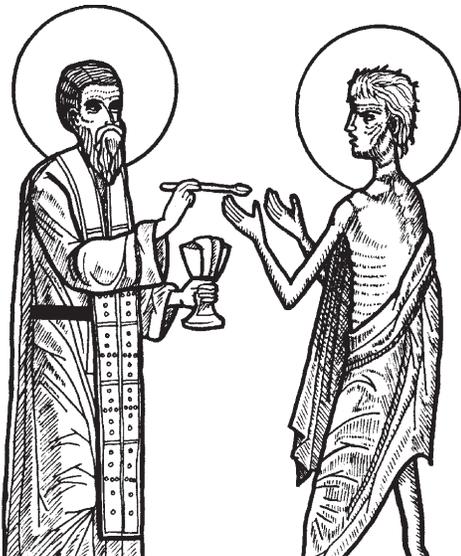
John 15:5

Grapevine

A NEWSLETTER OF ST. LAWRENCE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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St. Mary of Egypt
Sunday, April 14, 2019



CALENDAR

- Apr. 12** 6 p.m. Lenten Teaching w/ Meal
- Apr. 13** 9 a.m. Workday at Clausings
- Apr. 14** 11:30 a.m. Clergy Meeting
- April 21** Palm Sunday Fish BBQ
at Clausings's

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Saint Mary of Egypt

“Salvation is possible for anyone who truly repents”

St. Mary of Egypt's life story is one of the most profound and inspirational stories one will ever hear. It is impossible to begin reading about her journey and not yearn to know the end. While there are literally hundreds of stories of various Saints in the Church, I cannot think of one that has had such an impact on the lives of others, outside of the life and trials of Job. If St. Mary's life were not of such noteworthiness, then why would the Church appoint her as the person to emulate, giving her the distinction of occupying the 5th Sunday of Great Lent? Not only this, but the Church believed her life to be of such significance to the faithful, who are collectively called to deepen their own life of repentance, that the reading of her entire life was assigned during the service of the Great Canon of St. Andrew of Crete.

The greatest takeaway from her life is that salvation is possible for anyone who truly repents. This may not sound like a profound statement, until you realize that her adult life was spent as a prostitute. We do not know her upbringing, her family of origin, what she had encountered by way of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. But we could surmise that her upbringing was not ideal, otherwise, why would she “choose” such a path as prostitution? This is not for us to know, at least at this time. If this information were important she would have revealed these details. What is of importance are the details of her life that she gave to Zosimos the priest, information that she dreaded sharing. What courage it took for her to expose the depth of her sin and the shame that accompanied her actions.

“When I start my story you will run from me, as from a snake, for your ears will not be able to bear the vileness of my actions. But I shall tell you all without hiding anything, only imploring you first of all to pray incessantly for me, so that I may find mercy on the day of Judgment.”

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FROM THE PARISH



ACADEMY CORNER

Apr. 15 2:45 p.m. Youth Choir

Apr. 16 Hot Lunch

Apr. 25- May 3 No School

Nearly Summer Soirée, Bring on the wine!

The NSS is set for May 19th, and we would love to have everyone donate one bottle of their favorite wine (value about \$15 or more) once again this year and we are opening this up to the parish, too. We will then mix and match them into smaller and larger racks, baskets, etc. for the raffles. Wine is always a popular item and we hope to do well this year! You can drop them off in the office. Thank you!



LENTEN TEACHINGS RECORDED

If you miss out on one of the Friday night Lenten teachings, or just want a review, the recordings will be available for a few short weeks at www.slocc.com/Lenten_teachings. Take a listen and look over the handout material (PDF) from each week's teaching.

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Through these words, St. Mary was exhibiting some very powerful feelings and emotions: shame, fear, and also courage. St. Mary had never shared her story prior to the day she met Zosimos the priest and thus we take the narrative she shared as her confession to this man of God. Here, too, lies a very important lesson for all of us, and that is, do not allow shame to stand in the way of courage when it comes to approaching our Lord Jesus Christ in the mystery of Holy Confession.

Shame is a very powerful thing and can prevent us from connecting with others, including God. Shame is also painful. We are all flawed and we do things we are not proud of, and yet, we are loved and we do belong to the One Who has given us life. Being flawless or sinless has never been a prerequisite for being loved by God for "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). God's love for us is not contingent on anything because God is Love (cf. I Jn 4:8), and He cannot not love us, no matter what we do.

God loved Mary of Egypt even when she was a prostitute, and His love for her was perfect and complete. He loved her just the same as He loved Peter, John the Baptist, and His own mother. This is difficult for us to comprehend because our experience of being loved has been tainted by our relational experience with others, mostly our primary caregivers. We then take these experiences and project them on to God as a god who can be mad at us or who withdraws from us when we mess up. Yet this is not the case at all. God never leaves us, for this is impossible. He is in us, around us, present in all places at all times. It is the experiences that we've had in life that gives us the sense, the idea, and the belief that this happens. This is how our learned history distorts reality and that what we believe is not what actually is.



Through her deep repentance, bearing the shame of her deeds, and turning her life toward God, St. Mary of Egypt experienced the love of God in a most transformative way. Though she bore the scars of her transgressions, and painfully related them to Zosimos, she knew she was forgiven and loved by God. The combination of her repentance and God's forgiveness and seeing the scars of her sins held her in a place of deep humility, and this is what moved Zosimos to tears and great reverence for this woman of God. May we all carry with us the life of St. Mary of Egypt all the days of our life and hold it up as an example of what is possible for those who love God.

- Excerpted from Father Timothy Pavlatos', Saint Mary of Egypt (2016)

PERSON TO PERSON

Work Day for Pascha Picnics

Everyone is invited to help prepare the Clausings property for our Palm Sunday and Pascha picnics on Saturday, April 13. The Clausings have graciously opened their property to us year after year and put hours and hours of work into it themselves on our behalf. Let's show our appreciation and help them with our added hands. Tasks for all, including spreading mulch, raking, setting up tables, etc. Lunch will be provided.

FROM THE PARISH

Sing! Process and Sing!

On two upcoming holy days of Lent we will process around the church singing the prescribed hymns. On Palm Sunday we sing "By Raising Lazarus," and on Holy Friday (Lamentations) we process with the shroud of Christ entombed while singing the slow and somber melody "Holy God, holy Mighty, holy Immortal, have mercy on us." The clergy lead the procession and the choir leads the singing, but it is the privilege of every believer to embrace and carry the song. At times, given the weariness of the Fast, a procession appears to be an opportunity to simply stretch our legs and perhaps even chat with our neighbor. Rather, let us celebrate in song the momentous events that we have committed to "anamnesis"; a celebratory remembrance granting mystical participation.

Pascha Events

Make sure to check your church boxes for information on the Pascha events and picnics. There will be a table set up after Church, April 14th, to answer any questions you may have and to accept your donations that will help cover the cost of the events. So remember to bring your

checkbooks and cash.

Lenten Teachings Recorded

If you missed out on one of the Friday night Lenten teachings, or just want a review, the recordings will be available for a few short weeks at www.slocc.com/our-faith/lenten-teachings-2019 Take a listen and look over the handout material (PDF) from each week's teaching.

NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

Room Needed

Catechumen Maddy Horton, is looking for a room to rent someplace in the San Lorenzo Valley, so she can be closer to the church. If you have any leads please contact her at 430-8362.

Pascha Candles

Vasiliki Mendes will again have Pascha candles for sale from the Life Giving Spring Monastery, Dunlap. These beautiful decorated candles cost \$20 and are great for yourself to bring the Holy Light at home or for the Godparents to give them as a gift to their Godchildren. You can get one after church, call her at 532-5006 or email her joevicky@sbcglobal.net for reserving them.

AWAKENING'S NEWS

Fr. John Takahashi has some of his wonderful Pascha greeting cards and copies of his illustrated Orthodox faith and history booklets in the bookstore. Be sure to check them out! Also, coming soon, a Pascha booklet!

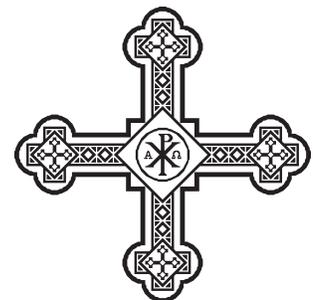
TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Sprinting to the Finish Line

Make sure, if you have not already done so, to make arrangements so that you can attend as many of the Holy Week and Paschal services as possible. If you live far from church, you might want to make arrangements to stay with someone for the end of Holy Week and the day of Pascha itself. Perhaps time will have to be taken off from work or schedules altered in other ways, but the services of Holy Week and Pascha are the most important of the Year and everyone should do their best to prepare and participate in them.

The Fountain of Life

The Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts is one of the most marvelous and moving services of the Church. At the same time, it is an urgent call to frequent Communion of the Holy Gifts of Christ. In it we hear a voice from distant centuries, the voice of the living, ancient tradition of the Church. This voice says that a believer cannot live the life in Christ unless he constantly renews his connection with the fountain of life, by communing of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. For Christ is, according to the words of the Holy apostle Paul, "our life" (Colossians 3:4).



SHOP THE ABBOT'S!

This Week You May Find

- ✦ Crockpots
- ✦ Microwaves
- ✦ Bread machines
- ✦ Whimsical Vases
- ✦ Hardwood backed stools
- ✦ Body Rider Dual Trainer
- ✦ Glider Rocker
- ✦ Paper cutter
- ✦ Games: Aggravation, Taboo, Crossword Dominoes
- ✦ Frog Collection
- ✦ Play Glow bracelets
- ✦ Hedgehog hand puppet
- ✦ baseball mitt corner shelf
- ✦ Quick-freeze ice cream maker
- ✦ Chocolate fountain - in box
- ✦ Lighted Easter village



SAINT LAWRENCE

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Return Service Requested

HEAR YE, HEAR YE!

SERVICE SCHEDULE

Fri. Apr. 12 (Mar.30)	<i>No Services</i>
Sat. Apr. 13 (Mar. 31)	7 p.m. Great Vespers
Sun. Apr. 14 (1)	7:30 a.m. Matins 9 a.m. Divine Liturgy
Mon. Apr. 15 (2)	<i>No Services</i>
Tues. Apr. 16 (3)	7 p.m. Vespers
Wed. Apr. 17 (4)	6 p.m. Presanctified Liturgy
Thur. Apr. 18 (5)	<i>No Services</i>

SCRIPTURE READINGS

For Sunday, April 14 /1
Hebrews 9:11-14
Mark 10:32-45

BIRTHDAYS

Vasiliki Mendes	April 12
Katherine Woodthorp	April 18
Megan Fox	April 18
Meredith Useldinger	April 18

MEMORY ETERNAL

4/14/2010 Christopher Reed

CLEANING TEAM

April 13 Susan M., Maria D., Tia G.,
Pres. Susan, Molly K.

CONTACT THE GRAPEVINE

E-mail: newsletter@slocc.com
Phone: (831) 335-0300 Fax: (831) 335-0353
Submissions by e-mail are preferable!

Deadline for announcements: Tuesday noon for Friday's issue

Please specify how long you want the
announcement to run. Default is 2 weeks.