

# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

A PARISH OF THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

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Department of  
**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**  
ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

## She Toiled Alone and in Silence

**On April 1 we remember the great desert saint, Mary of Egypt. She is such a revered person, such an example of holiness, that we read the story of her life every year in church.**

We know many of the elements of her story. Years of what must have been a miserable childhood at home made her run away to the city of Alexandria. Then there were years of living as a beggar, and of superficial and soul-wounding encounters with men. We know how she followed a crowd of pilgrims to Jerusalem, even going with them to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. At first she was barred from entering, until the Theotokos answered her prayers, allowed her to enter the church, and then sent her on her way across the Jordan to spend decades in the wilderness, repenting and through great effort growing into a seasoned spiritual warrior.

Mary's journey into the desert puts her in the company of another great figure we read about on this day. Genesis 12:1-7 is the account of God telling Abram to "go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you." Abram receives the promise that God will make of him a great nation, and bless him, and make his name great.

Mary received a promise, too: the assurance of the Theotokos that the wilderness would bring her true peace. But for Mary, as for Abraham, doing God's will required a huge life change. For Abram (later Abraham) it meant leaving everything familiar and fundamental in his life. Along the way to his new home he would have to face famine, an angry Pharaoh, warring groups, and the continuing sadness of being childless.



March 27, 2016

### SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

St. Gregory Palamas

• **9:00am** – Divine Liturgy of St. Basil

Epistles: Heb. 1:10-2:3

Heb. 7: 26-8:2 (Saint)

Gospel: Mk. 2:1-12

Jn. 10:9-16 (Saint)

• **Coffee Hour**

• **“O” Club Meeting**

## Schedule of Services

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30**

6:00pm - Presanctified Liturgy

**FRIDAY, APRIL 1**

6:00pm - Akathist to the Divine Passions & Panikhida for the Departed

**SATURDAY, APRIL 2 - MEMORIAL SATURDAY**

6:00pm - Great Vespers

**SUNDAY, APRIL 3 - SUNDAY OF THE CROSS**

9:00am - Divine Liturgy

## Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Genevieve Bobenko, Mary Fechisin, Edward Fedush, Nancy Filak, Mary Hadginske, Helen Kurnewitz, Margaret Lawler, Kathleen Lazorczyk, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozi, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Nadia Sojka, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Ann

For Mary, who had fewer ties and far less stability than Abraham, the life change meant struggling to conquer the demon of lust that had driven and often overpowered her for so many years. She would have no human companions to help her, and she too would be in a new and unfamiliar place. She and Abraham both had to trust God completely.

One thing differentiates Abraham's experience from Mary's. He was constantly talking to people, sometimes to explain himself, sometimes to get himself out of bad situations, and sometimes to keep peace. Whether telling his wife Sarah to pose as his sister or giving his nephew Lot first choice of grazing land, Abraham's life was, and had to be, inundated with words and encounters.

For Mary, there were no words of conversation, and until the monk Zossimus found her there were no encounters. Instead there was silence, the profound silence of the desert. Another reading for this day gives us an idea of the value of silence: "In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to want" (Proverbs 14: 23). Mary's toil led to immense spiritual profit. The absence of "mere talk" was a necessary part of her effort, and her victory.

## Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday to **Chris Bzik**, who celebrates his birthday tomorrow. May God grant you and all who celebrate their birthdays this week good health and happiness for Many Years! Mnohaja Lita!



## Announcements

◆ **“O” Club meeting** will be following the Coffee Hour today. All members please plan to attend.

◆ The **2016 Annual Lenten Teen Retreat** is scheduled for **April 1-3, 2016**. It is a wonderful opportunity for teens to gather in fellowship and faith. **Complete information and registration documents are now available on the diocesan website.** For more information please see the event poster at the bulletin board.

◆ **Deanery Mission Vespers** (beginning at 4:00pm) are as follows:

**March 27** - Mother of God Church, 904 Cherry Hill Rd, Princeton, NJ.

**April 3** - Holy Spirit Church, 102 Rte. 284, Wantage NJ.

**April 10** - Holy Assumption Church, Clifton, NJ.

**April 17** - Holy Trinity Church, 120 Dover-Chester Rd, Randolph, NJ.

**Wed. May 4**, Bright Wednesday, **7:00pm** - Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus, NJ. For more information please see a flyer at the bulletin board.

◆ **Pre-Sanctified Liturgies** during this Great Lent (starting 6:00pm) will be as follows:

**Mar. 30** - our own, followed by potluck (bring a dish to share if you wish)

**Apr. 6** - our parish will host the joint service.

**Apr. 13** - Holy Assumption Church in Clifton.

**Apr. 20** - our own, followed by potluck

◆ If you would like to share some information, like announcements, Anniversaries/Birthdays/events etc. in this weekly bulletin, please call the Rectory or email it to [fr.igorksn@gmail.com](mailto:fr.igorksn@gmail.com).