

**Russian Orthodox Church of the
Resurrection of Christ**

1201 Hathaway Lane NE
Minneapolis, MN 55432-5720
Phone: 763-574-1001 / Fax 763-574-7560
web site: www.skete.info/ email:
monach@skete.com

Schedule for the Week of March 21 - 27, 2010

Today Mar 21	St. Mary of Egypt
Saturday Mar 27	Lazarus Saturday / 6:00 PM Vigil
Sunday Mar 28	Palm Sunday / Нед. Вай 8:30 AM Confessions, Nocturns 9:00 AM Divine Liturgy / Литургия
Holy Thursday / Вел. Четверток Apr 1	6:00 PM Passion Gospels 12 Евангелий
Holy Friday / Вел. Пяток Apr 2	1 PM Vespers / Вынос Плащаницы 6:30 PM Matins & Procession Погребение
Holy Saturday / Вел. Суббота Apr 3	10:45 PM Confessions / Исповедь, 11:15 PM Nocturns / Полунощная 12 Midnight - Procession, Paschal Matins, Liturgy Пасхальная Заутреня, Литургия
Pascha / Светлое Христово Воскресение Apr 4	10:00 AM Paschal Vespers / Вечерня

Покаянные труды

Первым вошел в рай благоразумный разбойник. Ему потребовалось крайне мало времени на покаяние – один предсмертный вопль: «Помяни мя, Господи, во Царствии Твоем». Но глубину его покаяния нам не измерить, она прорезала небеса до врат рая и стала лестницей разбойнику в Царство Небесное, от глубины ада – в рай.

Знаем мы и житие Марии Египетской, 17 лет крайне греховной жизни возбраняли ей вход даже и во храм. Но сила ее покаянного чувства исходатайствовала ей возможность приложиться к Животворящему древу Креста, а 48 лет трудов покаянной жизни сделали ее святой. Вот и довольно с Вас примеров... А покаянные труды одновременно и тяжки, и легки: легки от взирания на будущее воздаяние, тяжки от приражения демонских сил, целящихся за трудника, возжелавшего спасения. *(из письма ахимандритом Иоанном Крестьянкиным)*

Преподобная Мария Египетская

Пятая неделя Великого поста посвящена воспоминанию подвигов прп. Марии Египетской (+552).

Впервые о прп. Марии узнал инок Зосима, который подвизался в Иорданском монастыре. По существующему в обители обычаю, дни святой Четыредесятницы Зосима проводил в пустыне. На 20-й день своего постничества авва увидел обнаженного человека с черным от солнечного зноя телом и выгоревшими волосами. Велико же было удивление Зосимы, когда он узнал в том человеке женщину. Преподобный просил рассказать причины, побудившие ее покинуть мир и предаться уединению в пустыне. Мария, а это была она, со слезами поведала о своей прежней греховной жизни, о раскаянии, о чудесном голосе, повелевшем искать спасения за Иорданом. Долгие годы провела Мария в безмерном борении с различными напастями, бедами и искушениями, пока не достигла святости.

Через два года прп. Зосима пришел к месту первой встречи со святой. Мария лежала мертвая. Совершив погребение, преподобный вернулся в монастырь и поведал игумену и братии, что видел и слышал.

Help us beautify the Church for Pascha

На украшение Плащаницы

From: _____

In Memory/Honor of: _____

Thank You! Спаси Господи!

Today, we remember the life, struggles, and victory of our Mother among the saints Mary of Egypt. And verily she is our Mother in the faith, as more people have been inspired by her well-known life than there were Corinthians in the days when Apostle Paul wrote his letter to them. Yet so very often we remain distant and strangers to the treasure of Saint Mary's life experience.

We hear of her life in sin and tell ourselves that surely we have not lived our lives in such filth. Then we read of her most genuine repentance and radical change, and sadly we must admit that neither

is our repentance as genuine as hers, nor do we find the resolve in ourselves to turn away as radically from sin and change our lives as Mary did. Finally, we read about her marvelous life in the desert, and here we again find ourselves rather short of the feats of faith that our Mother Mary accomplished. Thus we are left with a fairytale that is not applicable to our “unique” condition in the modern world. But is this really so?

Satan, the enemy of mankind, is not very original in his craft and continues to employ the same traps and temptations to catch modern humans as he used on Adam and Eve. In part, this is because the devil is not a creator and cannot be original. He can only corrupt and pervert that which God has created and ordained. In part, this lack of originality may be due to the fact that these old entrapments continue to work quite well on us modernly “unique” humans. In fact, the ancient tempter offered the same temptations to Eve in the Garden of Eden, to Christ in the wilderness, to Saint Mary in Alexandria, and continues to offer them to us.

“Did God say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?’”—the ancient serpent asked Eve (Gen. 3:1; RSV here *et passim*). Of course, he knew the answer very well, but he also knew that humans have bodies and that they need to eat. We are intimately connected to this world, but we are to yearn for God, not material things. The Psalmist wrote: “As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for Thee, O God” (Ps. 42:1); but how great is the temptation to long for that which fills the belly! “Eat to live” or “live to eat”—the same three words, but how much is changed by corrupting and perverting the order of things! “You shall not eat of any tree of the garden...”—this was sure to get Eve’s attention; Satan took God’s commandment about His highest gift to humans—freedom, twisted it, and made it about food supply. ...

On the Mount of Temptation, Satan urged Christ to turn stones into bread. It is true, people need bread. And Christ Himself hungered according to His human nature after fasting in the wilderness for forty days (Luke 4:1). “Command these stones to become loaves of bread,” (Matt. 4:3)—said the tempter, “You told the man to toil in the sweat of his face (*cf.* Gen. 3:19), but now he is tired and hungry. Turn these stones into bread, and eat, and give to men, and they will follow You, all who labor and are heavy laden, and You will give them rest (*cf.* Matt. 11:28).”

Is this not the same temptation given to the modern man? Seek first the things of this world, and the kingdom of God shall be added to you. Seek and be anxious about what you should eat and what you should drink, long for it, be consumed by it, and an occasional prayer or visit to a church will suffice for your spiritual life. The Apostle Paul says that the end of such people is destruction, their god is their belly, and that they set their mind on earthly things (Phil. 3:19). Their hearts unite with that which is to perish, and they follow their hearts to perdition (Matt. 6:19).

But “is not life more than food?” (Matt. 6:25) God humbled Israel in the desert and allowed them to hunger, that He might make them know: “man does not live by bread alone; but that man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD” (Deut. 8:3). It is not that man shall not live by bread, but that the divinely ordained hierarchy might be restored in the man: the body is subject to the soul, and the spirit guides all toward God.

The second lie that the devil tells us is that we will not surely die if we indulge our desires and passions that separate us from God (Gen. 3:4). Go ahead and taste that against which God warned you (Gen. 3:5), “throw yourself down” from the roof (Matt. 4:6), “Have fun. Right now.” There is no harm in disobeying God’s law. Do not even think about consequences, take everything from life—you deserve it! But how little we are said to deserve! How low the bar is set! Does the world ever urge us to feed our immortal soul, or to indulge our spirit that so longs for God? No! The world tells us to indulge our bodies that lead us into the grave and to feed our passions that lead us into the eternal fire.

“Do as I say, and you will be like God,” says the devil (*cf.* Gen. 3:5), “The whole world I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me” (*cf.* Matt. 4:9). But “what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life?” (Matt. 16:26) Satan offers to humans that which is corruption, dust, non-existence, that which today is, “but tomorrow is thrown into the oven” (Luke 12:28). To Eve, he offered the knowledge of “good and evil” (Gen. 3:5). But she already knew good in her communion with God, so she learned only evil as she brought it into being in her act of disobedience. ...

To Christ, the devil offered “all the kingdoms of the world” (Matt. 4:8), knowing very well “that the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up” (2 Pet. 3:10), and that the only kingdom worth getting is the one which is not of this world. And for that kingdom, searching with her heart, Saint Mary forsook all she had and acquired great treasure in heaven (Matt. 13:45-6; 6:20).

Looking for life outside the will of God, people commune with a phantom, that which has no being; because the reality of being is only in Christ, and in Him only is the reality of life (John 1:3, 4). They take in corruption and acquire emptiness; they seek that which is to perish and earn destruction; they devour that which has no life and inherit death.

Christ does not offer us a better life, a better alternative—He offers us the only alternative, because in Him only there is life. And it is not just a “better” life, but life abundant (John 10:10); it is not simply “the only thing that we can get,” but all that we will ever need.

When God’s people left the earthly bread of Egypt and chose to eat the heavenly manna in the desert, when Saint Mary left the fancy garments of Alexandria and chose nakedness in the desert, when in the desert Christ preferred the kingdom which is not of this world to all of the worldly kingdoms—in the eyes of the world they made a bad choice. So, we must not be surprised if the world fails to understand our choices as we choose to live with God. We must not be surprised that we are mocked for choosing the narrow door and the hard way when there is an easy way and a wide cattle gate nearby, “and those who enter by it are many” (Matt. 7:13). It was the same in the days before the flood when men “were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark” (24:38). They also thought that Noah was making a bad choice, until “God made foolish the wisdom of the world” (1 Cor. 1:20).

Let us—together with Noah and all the saints “of whom the world was not worthy” (Heb. 11:38)—seek refuge in the ark of our salvation that is the Church. Sins are the waters that drown the sinners and passions are the fire that burns those who are consumed by them. But God gives us refuge from both inside his Holy Church. Satan lays out his snares, his temptations, but Christ delivers us from their bondage, and the saints—humans just like us—guide us along the true path. This path is not only for strong men with stern faces and flowing black robes. Mary of Egypt, a passionate and careless young woman, made the decision to follow Christ, and He showed her as one of the greatest saints of all times. She gave Him her wasted and corrupt life, and He restored it, healed it, and adorned it with the beauty of the gifts of His Holy Spirit.

(*excerpted from <http://frsergei.wordpress.com/2010/03/18/the-fifth-sunday-of-great-lent-satan%e2%80%99s-temptations/#more-396>. See that site for full article*)