



Sunday Bulletin April 17, 2016

Greek Orthodox Church of the

Annunciation

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Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis, Presiding Priest-Proistamenos

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### **Epistle Reading Hebrews 9:11-14**

BRETHREN, when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

### **Gospel Reading Mark 10:32-45**

At that time, Jesus taking the twelve again, he began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him to the Gentiles; and they will mock him, and spit upon him, and scourge him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise." And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came forward to him, and said to him, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." And he said to them, "What do you want me to do for you?" And they said to him, "Grant us to sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, or to be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?" And they said to him, "We are able." And Jesus said to them, "The cup that I drink you will drink; and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized; but to sit at my right hand or at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those for whom it has been prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be indignant of James and John. And Jesus called them to him and said to them, "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

*Message from Fr. Michael....*

Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

I pray that you are enduring the self-sacrifices and an ascetic mind set as we continue on our journey through the desert of Great Lent. Today, as we commemorate the life of St. Mary of Egypt, a woman that knew whom Zosimas was from afar, who knew God's will for Zosimas to fulfill one last wish of hers that she would have the Holy Mysteries the following year, we recognize that she was a woman who, when she prayed, levitated. We have difficulty lifting up our eyes to heaven, and she was one who stood in the heavens when she prayed. She walked upon water as if on dry land. In the shadow of her humility, she called herself a miserable sinner. For many years, she struggled after she repented for her sinful lifestyle of earlier years. She had lived a life loose, sinful living and depravity. When Mary repented, she understood something that we would benefit in understanding: Labor. The key to the Christian life is laboring in Christ. The church understands this. St. Mary the sinful woman, who had been a prostitute, was a repentant of whom our Savior later said, "The harlots and the tax-collectors are coming into heaven before you", when speaking to the Pharisee. The Lord went into the home of the Pharisee and a prostitute comes in, and anointed the feet of our Lord with her tears, and with ointment. This was done as a labor of love. Because previously she had been forgiven it *changed* her. She was thankful from the depths of her heart. This is what motivated her to anoint His feet - love.

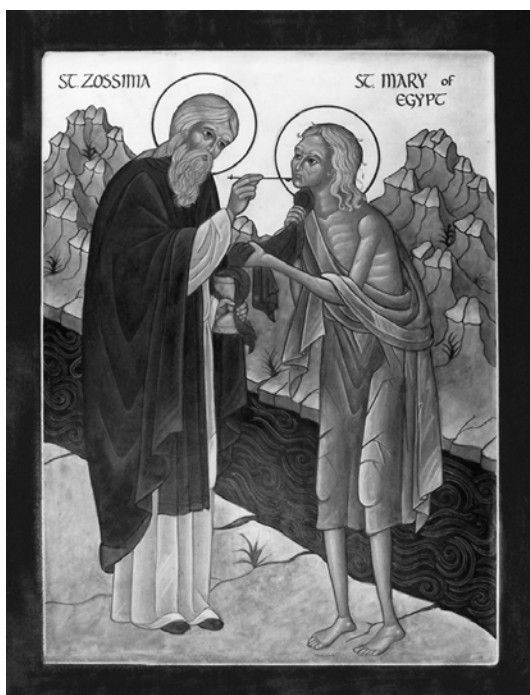
Without labor we cannot be saved. St Mary of Egypt realized what God had done for her, and what the Mother of God had done, by praying to her Son, and helping her. We are to be inspired by her divine example and labor for the glory of God. This is the key to the Christian life. This is why the Church presents this woman, as great among women. St. Mary of Egypt, was great among the saints. We must stop and reflect that she had been given the same tools that we had been given. The church spoke of St. Mary of Egypt as an *angel*. She had gone above the flesh, and this was contrary to the way previously had lived.

The Christian life is simple. All we have to do is labor in Christian love. In order to understand laboring for love in the Lord is, we must understand that it is realizing on what God has done for us, and we are to act upon it. May we continue to labor in love as we serve our fellow Christians.

Prayerfully with contrition of heart serving and laboring in Christian love, before His Holy Altar, I remain

Your humble servant,  
+Fr. Michael

## Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt



The memory of this Saint is celebrated on April 1, where her life is recorded. Since the end of the holy Forty Days is drawing nigh, it has been appointed for this day also, so that if we think it hard to practice a little abstinence forty days, we might be roused by the heroism of her who fasted in the wilderness forty-seven years; and also that the great loving-kindness of God, and His readiness to receive the repentant, might be demonstrated in very deed.

### Apolytikion of Sun. of St. Mary of Egypt in the Plagal of the Fourth Tone

The image of God, was faithfully preserved in you, O Mother. For you took up the Cross and followed Christ. By Your actions you taught us to look beyond the flesh for it passes, rather to be concerned about the soul which is immortal. Wherefore, O Holy Mary, your soul rejoices with the angels.

### Seasonal Kontakion in the Second Tone

O Protection of Christians that cannot be put to shame, mediation unto the creator most constant: O despise not the voices of those who have sinned; but be quick, O good one, to come unto our aid, who in faith cry unto thee: Hasten to intercession and speed thou to make supplication, O thou who dost ever protect, O Theotokos, them that honor thee.

### Symeon the Holy Martyr and Bishop of Persia

This Martyr was Bishop of the royal cities Seleucia and Ctesiphon in Persia. As the number of Christians increased in Persia, building churches and appointing clergy, the Magi, guardians of the Persian religion, and the Jews, who also envied them, accused Symeon to Sapor II, King of Persia, saying that Symeon was a friend of the Roman Emperor and his spy. Then began Sapor's persecution of the Christians of Persia, about the year 343. The Magi together with the Jews destroyed the churches. Saint Symeon was brought before Sapor, and, refusing to worship the sun, was imprisoned. On Holy and Great Friday of that year, Saint Symeon was brought out of prison with a hundred others, bishops, priests, and deacons. As each was taken to be slain, Saint Symeon exhorted him to be of good courage; he was slain last of all. It is said that 1,150 Martyrs were slain; an innumerable multitude of Christians were slain throughout Persia during this persecution, among them Saints Acepsimas, Joseph, and Aethalas (see Nov. 3).

At the conclusion of Divine services today, we will have a Trisagion service for Linda, the mother of our beloved choir director, Jeanet Hazar, on the 15th year anniversary on her falling asleep in The Lord. May her memory be eternal!

**Holy Week Schedule for the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation for 2016 Presiding Priest/Proistamenos: Rev. Dr. Michael Bahlatzis**

**Saturday of Lazaros, April 23rd:** Orthros 9 AM Divine Liturgy 10 AM

(There will be a childrens' breakfast served following the Liturgy and this will be followed by the making of crosses from palms afterwards)

**Palm Sunday, April 24th:** Orthros 8:45 AM Divine Liturgy 9:45 AM

**Palm Sunday evening, April 24th:** Service of the Nymphios/Bridegroom matins 6:30 PM

**Holy Monday, April 25th:** Service of the Bridegroom matins 7:30 PM

**Holy Tuesday, April 26th:** Service of the Bridegroom matins and Hymn of Kassiani 7:00 PM

**Holy Wednesday morning, April 27th:** Pre-sanctified Liturgy 9 AM  
(Annunciation Church)

**Holy Wednesday evening, April 27th:** Service of the Sacrament of Holy Unction 7:00 PM (Annunciation Church), 3:00 PM (Holy Trinity Church, Binghamton)

**Holy Thursday morning, April 28th:** Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great 9:00 AM

**Holy Thursday evening, April 28th:** Service of the Holy Passions of our Lord and the 12 Gospels 6:30 PM

**Holy Friday morning, April 29th:** Service of the Royal Hours 9:30 AM

All are invited to assist in the flower decoration of the Epitaphios at the conclusion of this service. Fr. Michael will provide written excuses for school absences for those children who spend the day at the church.

Camp Annunciation Holy Friday Program begins with decorating the Epitaphios followed by a light Lenten lunch at 12 noon. All are encouraged to bring and share a dish to pass that conforms with the fast of Holy Friday. A JOY/HOPE meeting will be at 1 PM. All adults and children are invited to attend.

**Holy Friday afternoon, April 29th:** Service of Great Vespers of the Apokathelosis (The un-nailing of our Lord from the cross) 3 PM

**Holy Friday evening, April 29th:** Service of the Lamentations matins 6:30 PM

**Holy Saturday morning, April 30th:** Vespereal Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (The First Resurrection of our Lord raising Adam and Eve from the dead) 10 AM

**Holy Saturday night, April 30th/May 1st:** Matins of the Pascha 11:00 PM

'O Come and Receive Ye the Light...' 11:45 PM

Reading of the Gospel of the Resurrection of our Lord 12 AM midnight  
followed by the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom

**Easter Sunday (Pascha), May 1st:** Vespers service of Agape (Annunciation Church) (The Gospel will be read in multiple languages. Please see Fr. Michael if you are interested in reading the Gospel in ANY other language besides Greek and English) 11 AM

### **Grecian Festival News**

Our 2016 Grecian Festival will be held June 2-5 this year. We are asking for everyone's help as much assistance is needed to continue our success and support our church. Please see Festival Chairman Steve Anastos to volunteer. As a reminder, please do not purchase any food or supplies for the festival as this is all pre-planned. If you have any questions or concerns, please see the festival chairman. Thank you all for your assistance.