

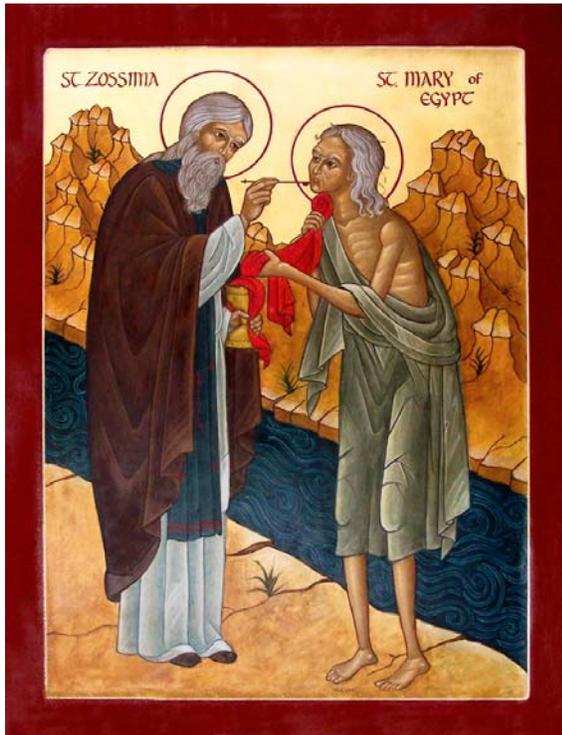
# Holy Cross

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Fr. Michael Kallaur  
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Dn. Frank Dickos

Weekly Bulletin

Sunday, April 17, 2016



## Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt

Our holy mother Mary was born in Egypt. She had left her parents at the age of twelve to go to Alexandria, where she spent the next seventeen years in debauchery and the greatest profligacy. Living on charity and linen-weaving, she nevertheless offered her body to any man, not being forced to it by dire necessity as were so many poor women, but as though she were consumed by the fire of a desire that nothing was able to appease.

One day, seeing a crowd of Lybians and Egyptians moving towards the port, she followed them and set sail with them for Jerusalem, offering her body to pay her fare. When they arrived in the Holy City, she followed the crowd that was thronging

towards the Church of the Resurrection, it being the day of the Exaltation of the Cross. But, when she reached the threshold of the church, an invisible force prevented her entering in spite of repeated efforts on her part, although the other pilgrims were able to go in without hindrance. Left alone in a corner of the narthex, she began to realize that it was the impurity of her life that was preventing her approaching the holy Wood. She burst into tears and smote her breast and, seeing an icon of the Mother of God, made this prayer to her: "O Sovereign Lady, who didst bear God in the flesh, I know that I should not dare to look upon thine icon, thou who are pure in soul and body, because, debauched as I am, I must fill thee with disgust. But, as the God born of thee became man in order to call sinners to repentance, come to my aid! Allow me to go into the church and prostrate before His Cross. And, as soon as I have seen the Cross, I promise that I will renounce the world and all pleasures, and follow the path of salvation that thou wilt show me."

She felt herself suddenly freed from the power that had held her and was able to enter the church. There she fervently venerated the Holy Cross and then, returning to the icon of the Mother of God, declared herself ready to follow the path that the Virgin would show her. A voice replied to her from on high: "If you cross the Jordan, you will find rest."

Leaving the church, she bought three loaves with the alms a pilgrim had given her, discovered which road led to the Jordan

and arrived one evening at the Church of Saint John the Baptist. After having washed in the river, she received Communion in the Holy Mysteries, ate half of one of the loaves and went to sleep on the riverbank. The next morning, she crossed the river and lived from that time on in the desert, remaining there for forty-seven years without ever encountering either another human being or any animal.

During the first seventeen years, her clothes soon having fallen into rags, burning with heat by day and shivering with cold by night, she fed on herbs and wild roots. But more than the physical trials, she had to face violent assaults from the passions and the memory of her sins and, throwing herself on the ground, she implored the Mother of God to come to her aid. Protected by God, who desires nothing but that the sinner should turn to Him and live, she uprooted all the passions from her heart by means of this extraordinary asceticism, and was able to turn the fire of carnal desire into a flame of divine love that made it possible for her to endure the implacable desert with joy, as though she were not in the flesh.

After all these years, a holy elder called Zosimas (April 4), who, following the tradition instituted by Saint Euthymios, had gone into the desert across the Jordan for the period of the Great Fast, saw one day a human form with a body blackened by the sun and with hair white as bleached linen to its shoulders. He ran after this apparition that fled before him, begging it to give him its blessing and some saving words. When he came within ear-shot, Mary, calling by name him whom she had never seen, revealed to him that she was a woman and asked him to throw her his cloak that she might cover her nakedness.

At the urging of the monk, who was transported at having at last met a God-bearing being who had attained the perfection of monastic life, the Saint recounted to him with tears the story of her life and conversion. Then, having finished her account, she begged him to come the following year to the bank of the Jordan with Holy Communion.

When the day arrived, Zosimas saw Mary appearing on the further bank of the river. She made the sign of the Cross and crossed the Jordan, walking on the water. Having received Holy Communion weeping, she said: "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation" (Luke 2:29). She then took leave of Zosimas, asking him to meet her the following year in the place where they had first met. When the year was past, Zosimas, going to the agreed spot, found the Saint's body stretched on the ground, her arms crossed and her face turned towards the East. His tearful emotion prevented him from noticing at once an inscription traced on the ground by the Saint, which read: "Abba Zosimas, bury here the body of the humble Mary; give what is of dust to dust, after having prayed for me. I died on the first day of April, the very night of the Passion of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, after having partaken in the Holy Eucharist." Consoled in his grief by having learned the Saint's name, Zosimas was amazed to discover that she had, in several hours, covered a distance of more than twenty days' march.

After having vainly tried to break up the earth with a stick, he suddenly saw a lion approaching Mary's body and licking her feet. On the orders of the Elder, the beast dug a hole with its claws, in which Zosimas devoutly placed the Saint's body.

On his return to the monastery, he recounted the marvels that God had wrought for those who turn away from sin and move towards Him with all their hearts. From the hardened sinner that she had been, Mary has, for a great many souls crushed under the burden of sin, become a source of hope and a model of conversion. This is why the Holy Fathers have placed the celebration of her memory at the end of the Great Fast as an encouragement for all who have neglected their salvation, proclaiming that repentance can bring them back to God even at the eleventh hour.

The feast day of Saint Mary of Egypt is April 1, the day of her repose, however the Orthodox Church also commemorates the Saint on the Fifth Sunday of Lent. As a Sunday of Great Lent, the commemoration is celebrated with the Divine Liturgy of Saint

Basil the Great, which is preceded by a Matins (Orthros) service. A Great Vespers is conducted on Saturday evening.

Scripture readings for the Fifth Sunday of Lent are the following: At the Orthros (Matins): The prescribed weekly Gospel reading. At the Divine Liturgy: Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 10:32-45.

Saint Mary of Egypt is also commemorated on the Thursday before the Fifth Sunday of Lent, when her life is read during the Great Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete. A canon in her honor is read at the end of each Ode. In parish churches the service and the canon is most often conducted on Wednesday evening.

- See more at:

[http://lent.goarch.org/saint\\_mary\\_of\\_egypt/learn/#sthash.piuCS9eT.dpuf](http://lent.goarch.org/saint_mary_of_egypt/learn/#sthash.piuCS9eT.dpuf)

## **Hymns of the Day**

### **Resurrectional Apolytikion in the Plagal First Mode**

Let us worship the Word, O ye faithful, praising Him that with the Father and the Spirit is co-beginningless God, Who was born of a pure Virgin that we all be saved; for He was pleased to mount the Cross in the flesh that He assumed, accepting thus to endure death. And by His glorious rising, He also willed to resurrect the dead.

### **Apolytikion for Sun. of St. Mary of Egypt in the Plagal Fourth Mode**

In thee the image was preserved with exactness, O Mother; for taking up thy cross, thou didst follow Christ, and by thy deeds thou didst teach us to overlook the flesh, for it passeth away, but to attend to the soul since it is immortal. Wherefore, O righteous Mary, thy spirit rejoiceth with the Angels.

### **Apolytikion for the Church in the First Mode**

Save, O Lord, Your people, and bless Your inheritance. Grant victory to the faithful against the adversaries of the faith. And, protect Your people by the power of Your Cross.

### **Seasonal Kontakion in the Second Mode**

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.

## This Week at Holy Cross

<b>Monday</b>	6:30 pm Compline/Bible Study
<b>Tuesday</b>	10 am First Steps of Christ 7-9 pm GOYA Meeting and Volleyball Practice
<b>Wednesday</b>	4:30 pm Greek School 6 pm Pre-Sanctified Liturgy Followed by GOYA Dinner Out
<b>Thursday</b>	5:30 pm Senior Greek Dance 7 pm Chant Class 7 pm Vacation Church School Meeting
<b>Friday</b>	9 am Pre-Sanctified Liturgy 6:30 pm Cut Palms for Cross Folding
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Saturday of Lazarus</b> 8:30 am Orthros 9:30 am Liturgy Following Liturgy - Lenten Luncheon, Cross Folding, Clean Church, and Confession
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Palm Sunday</b> 8:15 am Orthros 9:30 am Divine Liturgy Philoptochos Fish Luncheon to Follow Liturgy 5 pm Bridegroom Service

### Memorials

Altar Candles were donated in honor of **+Fr. Vladimir Milinkovic** - 10 Years  
Peter (Panayiotis) Emmanuel Teris – 9 Days

**Coffee Hour** is sponsored by the **Milinkovic Family** in memory of Father Vladimir.

Please sign up for coffee hour. Check the calendar online: [www.holycrosspgh.org](http://www.holycrosspgh.org), click "Events", then "Coffee Hour", then scroll down to calendar, click on date to see its availability.

Then email [holycrosspit@mail.goarch.org](mailto:holycrosspit@mail.goarch.org) or call the church office to request date

## **Epistle Reading**

The reading is from St. Paul's Letter to the 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**

The Reading is from 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."

## **Stewardship at a Glance**

As of March 13, we have received 338 pledge cards, for a total pledge amount of \$403,776, making the average 2016 pledge thus far \$1,194.60

About Stewardship

To be a member in good standing, it is necessary to submit a pledge card. Although pledge envelopes are mailed out to everyone, we still need you to submit your 2016 pledge. That is what stewardship is. It is making a commitment in support of our Holy Cross community. We base our budget on the pledge income and this determines what we can, and cannot do. You can pick up a pledge card in the narthex of the Church, pledge on-line at [www.holycrosspgh.org](http://www.holycrosspgh.org) or call Nena in the church office at 412-833-3355. If you have already turned in a pledge card, please try to stay current. We depend on your support.

Thank you.

Ted Sofis, Stewardship Chair

## **Welcome**

We warmly welcome all visitors and seekers in our midst today, trusting that your experience here will be an uplifting and enriching one. The Greek Orthodox Churches are the ancient and native Christian communities of the biblical world, with centers in the Holy Lands, Syria, Egypt and Asia Minor, and by extension in Greece, Cyprus and throughout the world. Like the ancient Christians, we engage the whole person, heart, mind and all senses in Divine Worship. This experience has been so powerful to seekers in the past that it was often said “We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. We knew only that there God dwelt among human beings.” (Russian Primary Chronicle) That communion experience of heaven on earth and God in our midst forms the heart of all Orthodox worship. It culminates in the sharing of Holy Communion, which not only unites us with the Divine, but also expresses the deep unity in faith and life between all Orthodox believers. Since Holy Communion expresses that deep unity in belief and practice alike, it is reserved for observant Orthodox Christians. This does not mean, however, that non-Orthodox are ‘excluded’ – rather, the Orthodox choose not to make an external display of unity when actual unity does not exist. While working to restore the full communion that did exist in antiquity, today we offer the sign of the blessed bread at the service’s conclusion as a symbolic gift of hospitality and growing unity that is offered to all present. If you would like to learn more about the Orthodox way of life, or have any questions about worship or Holy Communion, please approach Fr. Michael or one of the clergy following services.

Thank you for joining us, and again, we welcome you all.

## **A Note from Philoptochos**

The Philoptochos sponsored Palm Sunday Fish Luncheon tickets will be presold today, Sunday, April 17 at coffee hour. The tickets will be available at the door on April 24. If unable to purchase your tickets today, April 17, please email or call Elaine Sofis, [esofis@comcast.net](mailto:esofis@comcast.net) or 412 344-7046 to reserve your tickets. Advance sales help us to determine how much food to prepare!

Adult and teen volunteers are needed to serve and clean-up for the Palm Sunday luncheon on April 24. Please contact Elaine Sofis at 412 344-7046 or [esofis@comcast.net](mailto:esofis@comcast.net) if able to help. The next Philoptochos meeting will be Tuesday, May 3 at 7PM in the Philoptochos Room. I hope that you can attend!

Elaine Sofis  
Philoptochos President

## **Community News**

### **Myrrh bearers**

Attention parents of JOY age girls; grades 2-6. Please contact Laura Zervos if your daughter would like to participate as one of the miroforoi for the Good Friday evening service.

Laura Zervos--412-287-5679 [Laura\\_jz@msn.com](mailto:Laura_jz@msn.com)

## **Scholarship Opportunity**

### 2016-2017 UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

NEW YORK – Applications and instructions for three scholarships administered by the Department of Philanthropy of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America are available for awards to be made for the 2016- 2017 academic year. The George & Naouma (Gioule) Gioles Scholarship and the Katina John Malta Scholarship are for undergraduate studies, and the Paleologos Scholarship is awarded for graduate work of a non-theological nature. Each of these scholarships was established through generous gifts from dedicated Greek Orthodox Christians who wanted to provide financial assistance towards the education of young people from our Orthodox Christian community.

Applications can be accessed by visiting the [scholarship web page](#).

For more information, please email [scholarships@goarch.org](mailto:scholarships@goarch.org) or call 212-774-0283. The deadline for submitting an application for any of these scholarships is May 6, 2016.

### ***St. Photios Awardees from Holy Cross***

Sixty years ago Holy Cross became a church largely because of efforts of parishioners like **George Aspiotes**. His dedication, commitment and love for our church helped it to become a reality. He served as Holy Cross's first Parish Council President. His commitment has spanned six decades and continues today. Whether it was negotiating the lease for the cell tower, helping to oversee the building of the community center project, or driving to Harrisburg daily until PennDot agreed to give the church a left turn lane for their entrance on Gilkeson Road....his dedication has never wavered. He and his late wife, Ruth, devoted their time and energy to their family and congregation. At age 89, you will still see him cleaning trays and cooking lamb at our annual food fair. He works tirelessly for God and the church. He is a devoted husband and loving father and papou. His legacy and work ethic has set the standard for being a steward of Holy Cross.

**Jim Dickos** joined the fledgling community of Holy Cross about a year after its foundation. Serving as parish council president, then on the board of advisors, he encouraged younger members to take their turn serving on the council. When Holy Cross outgrew the facilities on Academy Avenue, he was a key figure in the construction of the present facilities, especially in fund raising. He also worked behind the scenes at the parish festival, keeping the supply chain running and advising on matters concerning health department compliance. But he is best known for his embrace of the stewardship program, making Holy Cross among the first parishes in the Archdiocese to replace the aging dues system. Long after he stopped his involvement with council, he was most often seen in the narthex on Sunday mornings, greeting newcomers and long time parishioners with one hand, and presenting a stewardship card with the other.

## **Save the Date**

The **St. Photios Banquet** will be Saturday May, 7th. Ad sponsorships are due by April 15th and reservations for the dinner are should be in by April 20th. Call Mary Doreza at **412-877-3415** to make reservations.

**Golden Club Members:** On May 17, 2016, our Golden Club members will be traveling to St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Church in Millvale for a conducted tour of the elaborate murals by artist Maxo Vanka (1890-1963). The murals tell the story of the Croatian peasants who left their native farm lands at the turn of the 20th century to seek a better life in the post-industrial United States of America. The evocative murals also capture Vanka's strong belief about the futility of war and his sadness about the destruction of the motherland. Prior to the tour, we will be stopping for lunch. Please see the May Cross Roads and Sunday bulletins for further information regarding this event. Contact either Rene Koett or Cynthia Kostelnik for reservations. We hope to see you all there!

**Golden Club Membership:** We encourage all parishioners, 50 years of age and older, to join our lively group as we share in fellowship and explore our region's venues, including historical sites, churches, concerts, plays, movies, opera and museums, just to name a few. Membership is only \$10 per year! Events are planned once a month from January through May and resume again in September through the end of the calendar year. If you have any questions regarding membership, please contact Rene Koett at 412-831-3142 ([rjkoett@yahoo.com](mailto:rjkoett@yahoo.com)) or Cynthia Kostelnik at 412-833-9423 ([cakostelnik@yahoo.com](mailto:cakostelnik@yahoo.com)). We hope you will consider joining The Golden Club of Holy Cross!

**Palm Sunday Preparation** Saturday April 23, following Divine Liturgy, we will be folding palm crosses and cleaning the church in preparation for Palm Sunday and Holy Week. Please join us.

**Correction:** Last week the **Paradise Family** was inadvertently omitted as contributors to the coffee hour held in honor of memorialized loved ones.

*** All information for the Sunday Bulletin should be submitted to Jonathan McClish by 11:59 pm of the Wednesday prior for inclusion. Submit to <a href="mailto:mcclish.jonathan@gmail.com">mcclish.jonathan@gmail.com</a>
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Deposit from Week of 4/10	
Account Name	Deposit
Pledges from 2015	\$175
Pledges for 2016	\$12,310
Bulletin	
Candles	\$493
Donations – Unspecified	
Flowers/Communion Wine	\$20
Loose Offerings	\$291
Greek School	
Sunday Church School	\$30
Vacation Church School	
Special Envelopes	\$440
Holy Week Envelopes	
Christmas Cards	
Baptismal Candles	
Socials/Special Projects	
Golf Outing	
Art Group	
Investment Club	
Hall Deposits for 2016	
Hall Deposits for 2017	
Hall Rental Income	
Caterers	
Miscellaneous Income	\$50
<b>Total Deposit</b>	<b>\$13,809</b>

### Mini Capital Campaign Update

	Pledged	Received	Balance
Matching Donors	\$75,000	\$62,000	\$13,000
Donations from Parishioners	\$64,745	\$65,745	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$139,745</b>	<b>\$127,745</b>	
Disbursements Made to Date			\$22,115
Building Fund Balance			\$139,568

### Financial Snapshot based on \$2,075.33 per day operating cost

Date	Weekly Collections	Weekly Collections Total	Estimated operational needs to following Sunday	Difference
<b>Total through Mar.</b>	\$173,191.73	\$173,191.73	\$195,081.02	-\$21,889.29
<b>4/3</b>	\$13,038	\$186,229.73	\$209,608.33	-\$23,378.60
<b>4/10</b>	\$13,809	\$200,038.73	\$244,135.64	-\$24,096.91

**Food Fair  
We Can Do It!**

