



**March 21, 2010**

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF GREAT LENT:  
SUNDAY OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT**

**RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE EIGHT:**

You did descend from on high, O Merciful One! You did accept the three day burial to free us from our sufferings! O Lord, our Life and Resurrection: Glory to You!

**ST. MARY OF EGYPT TROPARION - TONE EIGHT:**

The image of God was truly preserved in you, O Mother, for you took up the Cross and followed Christ. By so doing, you taught us to disregard the flesh for it passes away, but to care instead for the soul, since it is immortal. Therefore your spirit, O holy Mother Mary, rejoices with the angels.

**RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE EIGHT:**

By rising from the tomb You did raise the dead and resurrect Adam. Eve exults in Your Resurrection, and the world celebrates Your Rising from the dead, O greatly Merciful One!

**ST. MARY OF EGYPT KONTAKION - TONE THREE:**

Having been a sinful woman, you became, through repentance, a Bride of Christ. Having attained angelic life, you defeated demons with the weapon of the Cross. Therefore, O most glorious Mary, you are a Bride of the Kingdom.

**KONTAKION TO THE THEOTOKOS - TONE SIX:**

Steadfast Protectress of Christians and constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners; but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

**HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS (INSTEAD OF "IT IS TRULY MEET"):**

All of creation rejoices in you, O full of grace; the assembly of angels and the race of men. O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins, from whom God was incarnate and became a Child, our God before the ages. He made your body into a throne, and your womb He made more spacious than the heavens. All of creation rejoices in you, O full of grace. Glory to you!

## EPISTLE & COMMENTARY

### **THE PROKIMENON IN THE 8<sup>TH</sup> TONE:**

*Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!*

### **AND IN THE 4<sup>TH</sup> TONE:**

*God is wonderful in His saints; the God of Israel.*

### **HEBREWS 9:11-14**

Brethren, Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

### **GALATIANS 3: 23-29 (for St. Mary of Egypt)**

Brethren, before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

### **ALLELUIA**

*Come let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior! Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with psalms!*

### **COMMENTARY on HEBREWS 9: 11-14**

Jesus Christ finalized our salvation, fulfilled the Law of Moses, and paid the ultimate price for our sins. Through washing in the blood of the Lamb, as it says in the Apocalypse of John, we can make our garments pure and white once more. However, this is only possible if we participate in Christ. We must truly "put on Christ" and become one with Him in order to have our sins cleansed. The only way to do this is through His Body, the Church. We must participate in the sacramental life of the Church to be washed in the Blood of the Lamb. We must be initiated into this life through Baptism and Holy Chrismation, and fulfill this initiation through regular reception of the Body and Blood of Christ. And when we stumble, and in our sinfulness, we will stumble, we must get up, turn from our sin and re-enter into the Church through Holy Confession. May Christ our God grant us the humility to accept His Saving Offering, and to joyfully participate in His Royal Priesthood, which saves us all!

## GOSPEL & COMMENTARY

### **MARK 10: 32-45**

At that time, they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them, and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes, and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again." Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other one on Your left, in Your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared." And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

### **LUKE 7: 36-50 (For St. Mary of Egypt)**

At that time, one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." "There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?" Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My

feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

### **COMMENTARY on LUKE 36-50**

Jesus Christ is continually waiting for us to ask forgiveness of our sins. His forgiveness is unending, so long as we repent, and ask for it. This pericope describes the relationship between the nature of the sin and how we are to ask for forgiveness. We cannot ask for forgiveness if we do not repent. This is why Christ describes the only unforgiveable sin as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit--or put more simply--an unwillingness to repent. Like every human being is unique, so are our sins. Similarly, so is how we are to repent for them. The woman's sins were of a very physical nature; and so also is her repentance. Although she never explicitly says, "Forgive me," every single act she performs declares this. We too must ask for forgiveness with such fervor. May Christ our God grant us the ability to beg for our forgiveness with the same intensity and humility of spirit as the woman in the Gospel!

### **SPIRITUAL ARTICLES**

**From *The Prologue for Mar. 8/Mar. 21* by St. Nikolai Velimirovic:**

#### **Saint Theophylactus, Bishop of Nicomedia**

When the emperor's advisor Tarasius, a layman, was elected Patriarch of Constantinople, then many of his friends, admirers, and other laymen received the monastic tonsure either with him or by him. Among them was Theophylactus. Tarasius appointed him Bishop of Nicomedia. As a bishop, Theophylactus was a good shepherd to his entrusted flock and proved to be exceptionally compassionate toward the less fortunate and indigent. After the death of St. Tarasius, the patriarchal throne was occupied by Nicephorus. Shortly after that, the imperial throne was occupied by Leo the Armenian, an iconoclast. As such, he raised up an absolute storm in the Church of Christ. Even though iconoclasm had been anathematized by the Seventh Ecumenical Council [Nicaea, 783], nevertheless, Emperor Leo reinstated it and wanted thereby to supplant Orthodoxy. St. Theophylactus opposed the emperor to his face. When the emperor would not yield, Theophylactus said to him: "O Emperor, great ruin will unexpectedly befall you, and you will find no one to deliver you from it." Because of these words and by the order of the emperor, Theophylactus was removed from his see and sent into exile. There he spent thirty years undergoing many hardships and insults, and in the end he rendered his soul to the Lord in about the year 845.

#### **The Holy Hieromartyr Theodoretus**

The Emperor Constantine built a cathedral church of exceptional beauty in Antioch. The people called this church "the Golden Church" because of the gold-plated exterior and interior and because of the many gold and silver adornments housed in it. The emperor donated a great deal of land to this church for the upkeep of the clergy, whose number was significant. The custodian of these accoutrements and all the other precious items in the

church was the presbyter Theodoretus, a priest of great faith and rare devotion. When Julian the Apostate began his reign, he (Julian) denied Christ and, even though he was baptized, stirred up a persecution against the Christians. The apostate's uncle, also named Julian, came to Antioch and began to plunder the Golden Church. He summoned Theodoretus, the custodian of the treasury, to court and counseled him to deny Christ. Not only did Theodoretus refuse to deny Christ, but he also insulted the Emperor Julian because of his apostasy from the true Faith and his return to idolatry. He compared him to a dog returning to his own vomit. When the wicked uncle, out of unruliness, urinated in the Golden Church, St. Theodoretus prophesied a horrible death for him, which shortly came to pass. Theodoretus was beheaded with an axe for his faith in Christ. From the time that the judge Julian urinated in the church, he felt pains in the lower part of his body. The entire lower half of his body was eaten away by worms, so that he vomited forth his apostate soul in the most horrible pain. Also, in accordance with the prophecy of Theodoretus, Felix, Julian's assistant, died from a hemorrhage of the mouth immediately after this righteous man was beheaded. St. Theodoretus was beheaded in the year 362 and went to the all-glorious Kingdom of Christ the King.

### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

#### Adam's Lament

Outside empty Paradise, Adam folded his hands.  
Banished and alienated, he throbbed with pain.  
The angels of heaven, until then his companions,  
As beautiful dreams flew hurriedly away—  
Away from the banished one, away from the cursed one,  
Who, until yesterday, was the mighty proprietor of Paradise!  
And Adam sobbed on the cold boulder:  
“Woe to my descendants! Woe to me, a sinner!  
For one moment I despised my Creator,  
To be despised by all that was created  
Throughout the days and nights, throughout the long centuries.  
Instead of God, to have a serpent for a companion!  
Instead of me ruling over all created things,  
Now everything will rule over me:  
The winds and the heat, the elements of nature,  
The beasts and scorpions, repulsive things and serpents.  
Instead of freedom, behold, fear grips me,  
And confuses my thoughts and chills me to the bone.  
There is only One Who is able to help:  
The One Whom I offended. Have mercy, O God!”

### **REFLECTION**

Be more confiding in the Lord than in your own mother. Confess all to Him. He will not betray you. Embrace all of His commandments as beneficial. They will not deceive you. Inasmuch as you trust in God, so also be vigilant toward your enemies—the flesh, the world and the demons. All of this was expressed much better by the glorious saint of God, Ephraim the Syrian: “In embracing the commandments of God, have simplicity; and, in warding off hostile intrigues, have cunning (as with the dove and the serpent).”

## **IMPORTANT REMINDERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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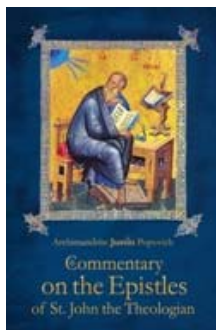
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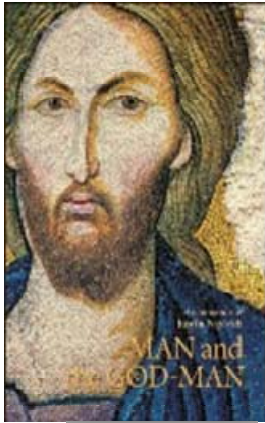


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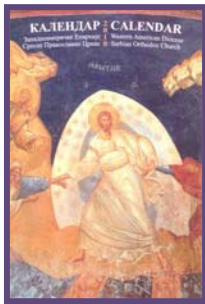


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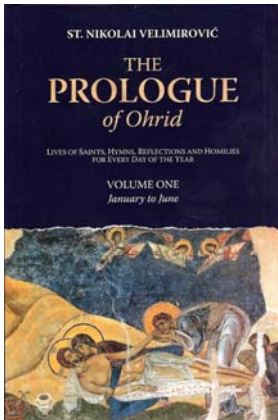
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