

# Lenten Synaxarion

## *Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt*

*The spirit departed, the flesh was left untended long ago;  
hide, O Earth, the mortal bones of Mary.*

On this day, the fifth Sunday of the Fast, we have been enjoined to make commemoration of our righteous Mother Mary of Egypt.

She, while yet twelve years of age, came to Alexandria unbeknownst to her parents, and there lived a profligate life for seventeen years. Afterwards, being moved by curiosity, she departed with many other worshippers for Jerusalem, in order to be present for the Exaltation of the Precious Cross. There, she gave herself over to every form of licentiousness and impropriety, and dragged many others down to the depths of destruction. On the day in which the Cross was exalted, she, when she desired to enter the church, felt some invisible power preventing her from passing through the entrance, though she tried a third and even a fourth time, and though the multitude that was with her passed through the same entrance unhindered. Because her heart was wounded by this, she decided to change her life, and to propitiate God through repentance. And thus when she returned to the church, she entered easily therein. After venerating the Precious Cross, that very day she withdrew from Jerusalem, passed over the Jordan, entered the inner regions of the desert, and there she lived the hardest life, a super-human life, for forty-seven years, praying alone to God alone.

Concerning the end of her life: After meeting a certain monastic, Zosimas by name, and fully recounting to him her life from the beginning, she begged him to bring to her the spotless mysteries for Communion. And he did this very thing the following year, on Holy Thursday. The year after that Zosimas, coming once again, found her dead, stretched out upon the earth; and beside her was written the following: "Abba Zosimas, bury here the body of wretched Mary. I departed in death the very day in which I communed of the spotless mysteries. Pray for me." Her death took place in the year 378.

The memory of this righteous woman is celebrated on the first of every April; but the same is also appointed for today, since the end of the sacred forty-day fast now draws near, in order to rouse the slothful and the sinners unto repentance, since they have an example in her, the Saint who is being celebrated.

*Through his prayers, O God,  
have mercy on us  
and save us.  
Amen.*