# Sunday of St. Mary of Egypt

∽ Going to Church is a good thing. In fact, it's a great experience for us.

What would you do if you were prevented from going to church? Would you be mad? Would you wonder **why this was happening to you**?

### Self-reflection

This is what happened to St. Mary of Egypt when she was 29 years old. She was attempting to enter a church in Jerusalem, but **felt an invisible power** preventing her from going in.

After thinking about what this could mean, Mary saw an icon of the Theotokos, and began to praying, **asking the Virgin Mary to entreat God's mercy**, allowing her to enter the church. In return, Mary promised to spend the rest of her life in repentence for her sins.

**God answered her prayer,** Mary went into the church, bowing before the Cross in gratitude and repentence. Immediately, **she changed her ways**, and went to live in the Palestinian desert for the next 46 years!

### **Be Serious**

We don't need to run to the desert, but during Great Lent, we still have time to **be like St. Mary of Egypt**, thinking seriously about what we do, and **repenting of our sins**.

## ~ 15 Ideas to Make Lent Real at Home (during a Pandemic)

- 1. Read the life of St. Mary of Egypt: https://bit.ly/stmary-egypt
- 2. Stay connected with friends and relatives
- 3. Learn the Paschal greeting in Aleut
- 4. Observe the fast from food
- 5. Read 3 different Psalms a day
- 6. Say morning, evening, and mealtime prayers together
- 7. Maintain hope and a positive attitude
- 8. Make a donation to your parish

- 9. Take a walk, enjoying the beauty of God's creation
- 10. Minimize screen time
- 11. Practice singing the Paschal troparion
- 12. Learn a new skill to do at home
- 13. Support IOCC or FOCUS North America with a financial donation
- 14. Keep doing St. Ephraim's Prayer together
- 15. Read the daily bible lessons, available at: www.oca.org/readings

### ← The Festal Hymns for the Sunday of St. John Climacus

### Troparion — Tone 8

The image of God was truly preserved in you, 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, holy mother Mary, Rejoices with the angels!

### Kontakion — Tone 3

- 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, most glorious Mary, you are a Bride of the Kingdom!

### The Scripture Readings

for the Sunday of St. John Climacus

Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 Gospel: Mark 10:32-45



Parents, Church School Teachers & Youth Directors: Watch for the ♡ to indicate topics/questions you can use to inspire conversations with youth. Or use the corresponding study guide for this resource.



# Reassemble the Icon of St. Mary

St. Mary of Egypt was born in Alexandria, on north African coast of Egypt, in 445 AD. After traveling to Jerusalem and encountering God, she repented of her sinful life, living in the Palestinian desert until she reposed in the Lord, in 522 AD.

He encountered St. Mary twice while praying in the desert during Great Lent.

We know of St. Mary's radical change of lifestyle thanks to a monk named St. Zosimas who lived at a monastery not far from Jerusalem.

St. Mary of Egypt is an example and inspiration for us, showing how God loves us, accepting our repentance, and by living a life of humility with prayer and fasting, we care for our soul and can encounter Christ every day of our life. *Holy Mother Mary, pray to God for us!* 

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### Instructions:

- 1. Cut out all of the puzzle pieces below
- 2. Put a dot of glue on the back of each piece
- 3. Complete the puzzle using the grid on the previous page
- 4. Can you identify what and who is portrayed in the icon?
- 5. Place the icon in your family's icon corner or in your room and say the troparion/kontakion to St. Mary of Egypt on April 1 every year.



Can you complete the puzzle and reassemble the icon?