



ΙΕΡΟΣ ΝΑΟΣ ΑΓΙΩΝ ΜΑΡΙΑΣ ΜΑΓΔΑΛΗΝΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΑΡΚΕΛΛΗΣ



STS. MARY MAGDALENE & MARKELLA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

2020 APRIL NEWSLETTER



3714-16 Dublin Road, Darlington, MD 21034

PRESIDING PRIEST

THE REV. FR. ELEFTERIOS PLEVRAKIS

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OFFICE HOURS

TUESDAY - FRIDAY

10:00 A.M. - 2:45 P.M.

QUESTIONS? CALL OR VISIT US

(FOR OFFICE VISITS PLEASE CALL IN ADVANCE)

LETTER FROM THE PRIEST

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I hope and pray that you are all doing well. As I have said many times in the beginning of my homilies, today is another day that God has bestowed on us the opportunity to wake up and live within the glory of His unceasing love; a love that finds its powers not from worldly standards or human wisdom, but rather from His own Uncreated Energies. This means that just as much as we cannot sit and create this Divine reality, we are not in the position to define it or negate it from what is deemed “essential.” The Holy Tradition of the Church cannot be understood in those “prescribed” worldly parameters, because the revelation itself is the moment paradise came to settle in the fallen world so that the world can be transformed, and thus be cured from the common diseases that are attributed to man’s bodily and spiritual death.

Events such as the Holy Annunciation, Holy Nativity, Holy Theophany, and the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord happened not because we were healthy, but because we were sick. No longer was man in need of a treatment, but a cure. Jesus Christ, the God-Man, was and continues to be that cure that is curing us even today. That is why we believe we are not simply saved by one single act or moment in time, but we are continuously in need of being saved. How, then, can we allow a disruption to our Orthodox life when our salvation is what is deemed crucial and is truly a matter of life or death?

As I am writing this letter, I hope and pray that every single person that sees God through the lens of faith will rise up and extinguish the fires of the devil that are engulfing our lives today and preventing us from living our Orthodox faith to the fullest. I am calling out to all the faithful - Do not let the feelings of loss or doubt come in like a parasite to take over what is rightfully not its own.

I want to remind all those individuals out in random society that have seemed to “forget” what it means to be followers of Christ; that to follow Him is to carry the physical cross that He was burdened with on His way to Golgotha. Furthermore, I want to add that the blood that He shed for us is not in any way less red today than when the nails first went in. Thus, do not let our spiritual lives get hijacked by the calamities of the world that have the power to bring us doubt. See these moments not as if our lives are fragmented, but they are slowly and painfully mending themselves. Where there are cracks there are weaknesses, and, most importantly, spaces in which the devil is able to take advantage of. Work hard during this time to develop your spiritual life so you may strengthen your defenses towards evil and worldly natural calamities. See martyrdom not reserved for those “special people,” but a calling that we all have when we decide to live as followers of Christ.

I write this letter feeling energized by the experience I had on the previous Divine Liturgy service. Even with the Church being practically empty, other than our two chanters, God spoke to me and comforted me. He also emboldened me so I, as a soldier of Christ, will speak to the world unafraid and full of fervor to prepare for the greatest day of our life, and that is Pascha. I had realized during the service that out of all the news outlets that have been broadcasting and writing newspapers, 99.9% of them have not mentioned at all the fact that millions of Christians are getting ready to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ through Pascha (Easter). I find it appalling

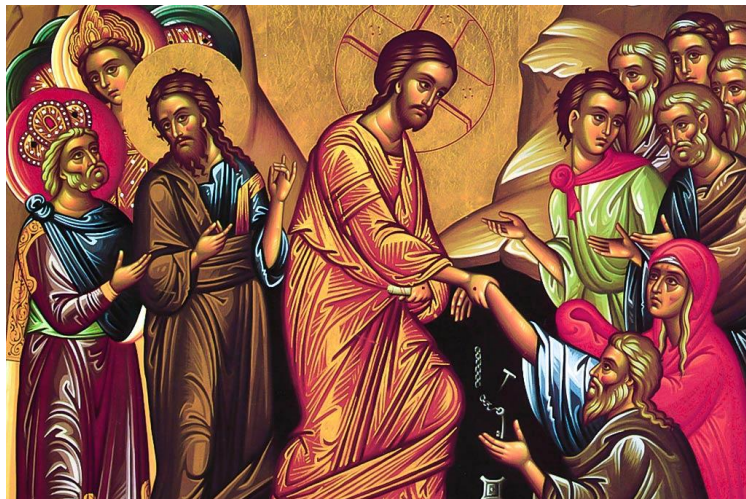
and quite shocking that in a time that so many people are suffering and are in need of God, the house of worship has been seen completely irrelevant by National Media and many followers of this philosophy. The importance of religion has been deleted from most conversations I read out in the platforms. The only messages that come through with a loud voice are vile and poisonous ones that harp only on what seems to be Church negligence.

As we enter into the final stretch of Holy Great Lent, I want all the faithful to continue in their prayerful life and to bring Christ into the center of your waking moments. Do not let the TV, Radio, or Internet be your lifeline, but the lives of the saints, your prayers, your icons, and, most importantly, the light of Christ. I will continue to pray for all of you and light candles and commemorate names when they are requested. I will be doing all the services that are on the schedule with Palm Sunday and Holy Week being streamed through the computer. I will give more information on that soon. When there is more information regarding Holy Week, I will reach out to everyone. I pray that everyone stays safe and I seek your forgiveness in these difficult times.

God bless and Kali Anastasi!

In Christ,

Fr. Eleferios



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

The joyous day of Holy week will be with us shortly. Through this uncertain time in our life, we need to get excited and allow Christ's Passover to bless us and to feel his grace with us. We must recognize that God never abandons us. We must project the hope of the Resurrection. There is uncertainty about us been able to worship in our beloved church but let us take the time to reexamine our lives and our relationships with Family and Friends. We need to focus on putting aside the feelings of anger, fear and false pride. We can seek closer relationship with God through prayer in our own homes and to walk with him through his Crucifixion and Resurrection.

Let us all ask our Lord to bring healing, peace and forgiveness to our souls so we can celebrate the most Holy Day of Pascha with joy.

The Parish Council wishes everyone "KALI ANASTASI".

With Love in Christ

Fotini Kaminaris – Parish Council President





Sts. Mary Magdalene & Markella Ladies Philoptochos Society, #1043

The Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society, Inc., is the duly accredited women's philanthropic society of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. The mission of the Society shall be:

- To help the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, the handicapped, the victims of disasters, to undertake the burial of impoverished persons and to offer assistance to anyone who may need the help of the Church through fund raising efforts; and
- To promote the charitable, benevolent, and philanthropic purposes of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, through instructional programs, presentations, lectures, seminars and other educational resources;

2018 Philoptochos Membership

The ladies Philoptochos society of Sts. Mary Magdalene & Markella is a very active and integral part of our church supporting her growth and charitable projects in a variety of ways.

Becoming a member of our Philoptochos does not require a lot of your time, nor does it require that you attend every meeting and/or event. Please consider joining the Philoptochos and experiencing the true meaning of Philoptochos - philanthropy, fellowship and faith in action.

Member Name: _____

Member Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Home telephone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Stewardship Amount: \$ _____ **

** Please note that for each paid member \$15 will be sent to National Philoptochos and \$8 will be sent to our Metropolis on NJ Philoptochos to support national and regional initiatives. Any stewardship amount over \$23, will stay with our chapter and be applied to our many local and charitable projects. **

Please complete the form and mail your stewardship check to: Sts Mary Magdalene & Markella Ladies Philoptochos, #1043, Attention: Tina Stavrou, Treasurer, PO Box 1575, Bel Air, MD 21014.

The Path to Theosis in the Life of Saint Mary of Egypt

 johnsanidopoulos.com/2019/04/the-path-to-theosis-in-life-of-saint.html

By Metropolitan Hierotheos of Nafpaktos

Many people nowadays, because of various unstable circumstances in their lives, are tormented by states of guilt, which inevitably lead to existential suffering, depression and despair. The Church, however, offers us consolation by showing us ways to escape from disillusionment, the devil's strongest weapon for man's destruction, and making us aware of the fact that we have enormous potential for transformation through the energy of divine grace. However bad the state in which we find ourselves, we can attain to deification. We can become by grace what God is by nature.

The whole of ecclesiastical life is focused on this goal, because without this perspective the Church becomes secularised. The theology of [theosis] deification is evident in every part of the Church's life: in the definitions and canons of the Ecumenical and Local Councils; in patristic teaching; in the sacramental prayers of the Church, particularly those of the great Sacrament of the Divine Eucharist; and in the ecclesiastical arts, such as hymnography and iconography.

The Church is not content, however, just to teach about theosis, but presents us with specific examples to demonstrate how a person in the most wretched condition can experience blessed deification [theosis]. One such example is St Mary of Egypt, whose memory the Church has appointed to be celebrated not just on the day of her repose (1st April) but also on the 5th Sunday of Great Lent, to encourage each of us on our path to deification and sanctification.

In the following pages we shall cite some elements from the life of St Mary of Egypt, and then we shall set out the theological teachings that can be drawn from the truly extraordinary and moving life of this blessed woman, in order to see God's wonderful works.

1. The Life of St Mary of Egypt

The life of St Mary of Egypt was written by St Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem, a saintly patristic figure of the 6th to 7th century. He is also the author of various ascetical texts and hymns imbued with the spirit of Orthodox theology and the ascetic tradition. He wrote this biography from the accounts of the fathers of the monastery where Abba Zosimas had lived, which had been passed on by word of mouth. The text is now preserved in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*. There are also translations of the life in circulation as independent publications.

The narrative tells us that the hieromonk Abba Zosimas was adorned with sanctity of life. He saw divine visions and had received the gift of divine enlightenment, having lived until the age of fifty-three in great asceticism, and he was renowned in the surrounding region. Then, however, the thought came to him that he was in some way spiritually superior, and he began to wonder if there was any other monk alive who had anything to offer him, or

could teach him any new form of ascesis. In order to instruct and correct him, God revealed to him that no one can reach perfection. He then told him to go to a monastery situated on the River Jordan (2-3).

Abba Zosimas obeyed God's voice and went to the Monastery of St John the Baptist as he had been told. He met the Abbot and the monks, and perceived that they were radiant with theoria and praxis, and lived an intense monastic life in poverty, great asceticism and ceaseless prayer (4-5).

There was a rule at this monastery that on Cheese Sunday, just before the beginning of Great Lent, when all the monks had received Holy Communion, prayed and greeted each other, they should take a few provisions and leave for the desert on the other side of the Jordan, to undertake ascetic struggles during the period of Great Lent. They would return to the monastery on Palm Sunday to commemorate the Passion, Cross and Resurrection of Christ. The brethren were not allowed to meet one another in the wilderness, nor to ask each other on their return what kind of asceticism they had undertaken during this period (6-8).

Abba Zosimas put this rule into practice. Taking some meagre provisions, he left the monastery and went into the desert. His desire was to go as far into it as he could, in the hope of encountering a Father who could help him to attain what he longed for. He prayed as he walked, eating very little, and sleeping wherever he happened to be.

After he had walked for about twenty days, while he was sitting down to rest and singing psalms, he saw in the distance a shadow that looked like a human form. At first he thought it was a demonic delusion, but then he realised that it was a person. The human being he saw was naked, had a black body – the colour was due to the sun's rays – and had a few white hairs on his or her head that reached no further than the neck (9-10).

Abba Zosimas attempted to draw near to ascertain what he was seeing, but the person went further away. Abba Zosimas ran, and so did he or she. Weeping, the Abba shouted to the figure to stop so that he could receive a blessing. There was no response. When the Abba reached a stream and was worn out, the other person, who caused the Abba great amazement by addressing him by his Christian name, told him that she could not turn round to face him because she was a naked woman and the parts of her body were uncovered. She asked him, if he would, to throw her a rag from his clothing to cover her naked body and then to give her his blessing. The Abba did as she said, and she then turned towards him. At once the Abba knelt down to receive her blessing, and she did the same. Both remained on their knees "each asking the other to bless". This was the first encounter between Abba Zosimas and St Mary of Egypt, whose name had not been revealed to the Abba (and would not be until after her death) (11-12).

As the Abba was wondering whether she might be an immaterial spirit, she told him that she was a sinful woman who had been walled about by Holy Baptism, and was dust and ashes, not an incorporeal spirit (15).

Conversing with Abba Zosimas in an atmosphere of penitence, St Mary revealed her life to him.

According to the account of the woman whose name was later, after her death, revealed to him to be Mary, from the age of twelve she had lived a dissolute life in Egypt, having lost her virginity at that tender age, and she

possessed an uncontrollable and insatiable passion for sexual intercourse (18). She did not earn money by her manner of life, but simply satisfied her passion. She told him, "I was a public provocation to depravity, not, I swear to you, for the sake of money", for she did what she did without payment, but "fulfilling my own desire". As she disclosed to him, she had an insatiable desire and irrepressible yearning to wallow in her filthy life, and her way of thinking was a disgrace to human nature. (18).

Because of her immoral life and carnal desire, she followed the pilgrims going to Jerusalem to venerate the Precious Cross. She did not do so in order to venerate the Precious Cross, but so as to have many lovers willing to satisfy her passion (19). She describes very realistically how she embarked on the ship (20). As she herself disclosed, there was no form of lewdness, mentionable or not, that she did not teach those wretched travellers in the course of the journey. She expressed her surprise that the sea endured her depravities and the earth did not open its mouth and swallow her up, so many souls did she ensnare. In the course of this journey she was not content just to corrupt her young fellow-travellers, but also defiled many others, both inhabitants of the city and foreigners (21). When she arrived in Jerusalem during the feast of the Precious Cross she went round the streets "hunting for young men" (22).

She was brought to a sense of profound repentance, however, by a miraculous event. As she was going into the Church to venerate the Wood of the Precious Cross, some sort of power prevented her from proceeding. Then she stood before an icon of the Holy Mother of God, showed great repentance, and sought guidance and help from the Mother of God. With her help she entered the Church this time without hindrance and venerated the Precious Cross. Then, having thanked the Holy Mother of God, she heard a voice urging her to go to the desert on the other side of the Jordan. She asked the Mother of God for her assistance and protection, then made her way to the desert, after first passing by the Monastery of St John the Baptist beside the River Jordan and partaking of the Most Pure Mysteries. For forty-seven years she lived in the desert without ever meeting anyone.

For the first seventeen years in the desert she wrestled fiercely to vanquish her thoughts and desires, essentially to overcome the devil who was making war on her through memories of her former life.

As she confessed herself, for seventeen years she lived in the desert "fighting with irrational desires as if with wild beasts". She often desired different sorts of food and drink, as well as "immoral songs", and she had many thoughts urging her to fornication. However, whenever a thought arose in her, she would fall to the ground, water the earth with her tears, and not get up "until such time as that sweet light shone around me, and drove away the thoughts that were troubling me". She prayed continuously to the Holy Mother of God, who was her guarantor in the life of penitence that she was leading (28-29). Her clothing became torn and wore out, and from then on she was naked. She was burnt by the intense heat and trembled with the freezing cold, and "many times I fell down and stayed there barely breathing and motionless" (30).

After a hard struggle, through the grace of God and the constant protection of the Holy Mother of God, she was freed from thoughts and desires. Then the rational and passible parts of her soul were transformed, and even her body was deified. She herself informed Abba Zosimas of this with great humility.

Because of the high spiritual state St Mary had reached, she had received from God the gift of discernment. By means of this gift she not only knew Abba Zosimas's name, but also his deeds (13). She even saw what he was thinking (15).

She was naked, but her body had overcome its natural needs. She said, "I am a woman and naked, as you see, and the shame of my body is uncovered" (12). Her body was nourished by the grace of God: "I am fed and covered by the word of God Who upholds all things" (30). In her case, as in the case of other saints, we observe that the energies of the body are suspended. This suspension of bodily energies came about because her soul received the energy of the Triune God, and this divine energy was transmitted to her body as well. "The grace of the Spirit, she said, is sufficient to sustain the essence of the soul intact" (36).

During this first encounter Abba Zosimas saw St Mary of Egypt while she was praying. She had unceasing prayer, and Abba Zosimas actually saw her lift her eyes to heaven, spread out her hands and "begin to whisper a prayer, but her words could not be distinguished". At one point, while he was sitting watching fearfully, "he saw her raised about a foot above the ground and praying while suspended in the air" (15).

When Orthodox theology speaks of the deification of man it means the deification of his thoughts, his desires and his body: the deification of his complete psychosomatic organism. This is clearly demonstrated in the life of St Mary of Egypt.

At this first meeting, when St Mary had revealed her whole life to Abba Zosimas, she asked him to come the following year on Holy Thursday to a particular place on the bank of the River Jordan, close to an inhabited area, to give her Holy Communion after many years of profound repentance that had transformed her being. "I now desire this with the unquenchable longing of love," (32) she told him. She had an irresistible longing to partake of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Abba Zosimas returned to the monastery without telling anybody what exactly had happened to him, as was in any case the rule in that monastery. He continuously besought God, however, to count him worthy to see "that dear face" again the following year. He was vexed at how slowly time passed, wishing that whole year could be a single day (22-23).

The next year, as St Mary had foretold to him, an illness prevented Abba Zosimas from leaving the monastery for the desert like the other fathers at the beginning of Great Lent, and he had to remain in the monastery. When the other fathers of the monastery returned on Palm Sunday, he prepared to go to the place that the Saint had indicated to him, to give her Holy Communion.

On Holy Thursday he took with him the Body and Blood of Christ in a small chalice, as well as a few figs and dates and some soaked lentils, and left the monastery to meet St Mary. As she was late arriving at the agreed place, the Abba prayed to God in tears not to deprive him, on account of his sins, of the opportunity to see her again (33-34).

After fervent prayer, he saw her coming from the other side of the Jordan. She made the sign of the Cross, stepped onto the water of the river "and walked on the surface of the water, coming towards him" (35). The Saint asked him to say the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, then she greeted him and partook of the life-giving Mysteries. After that she raised her hands to heaven, sighed tearfully and said, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation" (25).

After entreating him to come again the following year to the stream where he had met her the first time, she asked him to pray for her. The Abba touched the Saint's feet, sought her prayers, and let her leave, "lamenting and mourning" because he did not dare "detain the one whom nothing could hold back". She left in the same manner as she had come, walking on the water of the River Jordan (36).

A year later, in accordance with the Saint's request, the Abba hastened to reach "that wonderful sight". After walking for many days he reached the place. Like "an expert hunter", he looked for "that sweetest prey", God's Saint, but could not see her anywhere. Then he began to pray contritely to God, "Show me, Lord, Your inviolate treasure, that You have hidden in this desert. Show me, I beseech You, the angel incarnate of whom the world is unworthy" (36). For Abba Zosimas St Mary was an untouchable treasure that the world was unworthy to possess, an angel in human form. As he prayed in these words, he saw "the Saint lying dead, with her hands placed as was fitting, and lying in such a way as to face towards the East" (37). He also found a written message from her, saying, "Abba Zosimas, bury the body of humble Mary in this place, returning dust to dust, and pray always to the Lord for me, who died on the first day of the Egyptian month of Parmoute, which the Romans call April, on the same night as the saving Passion, after partaking of the divine and mystical supper" (38).

The Saint had departed this life on the same day as she received Holy Communion, having covered in one hour a distance that Abba Zosimas took twenty days to travel the previous year. St Sophronios writes, "The same route along which Zosimas had journeyed for twenty laborious days, Mary traversed in one hour, and immediately departed to God" (38). Her body had acquired other properties: it had been transfigured.

After he had wept profusely and recited the psalms appropriate to the occasion, Abba Zosimas "said the funeral prayers" (38). Then, with deep contrition and "moistening the body with tears", he turned his attention to burying her. Because the earth was hard, however, and he was getting on in years, he was unable to dig and found himself in a dilemma. At that point "he saw a large lion standing by the body of the Saint, licking her feet". The Abba was afraid, but the lion itself "showed its good intentions towards him not only by its gestures, but by its whole disposition". The lion itself was urging and encouraging the Abba by its movements and its behaviour to proceed with her burial. Emboldened by the lion's meekness, the Abba asked it to dig the grave itself so that St Mary's body could be buried, as he could not do it himself. The lion obeyed. "While he was still speaking it immediately dug a trench with its front legs, large enough for the body to be buried" (39).

The burial of the Saint took place with the Abba praying and the lion "standing by". Afterwards both of them departed, "the lion went back into the depths of the desert like a lamb. Zosimas returned, blessing and praising Christ our God" (40).

St Sophronios, Patriarch of Jerusalem, finishes by saying that he wrote this life “as best he could” and “preferring nothing to the truth” (41).

The life of St Mary of Egypt shows how an immoral woman can become a god by grace, how a human being can become an angel incarnate, and how Christian hope can replace the despair that comes from the devil. In the person of St Mary of Egypt we see someone who sought sensual pleasure and chased after men for her own satisfaction. By the grace of God, however, she was able to be sanctified to the point that saints chased after her to receive her blessing and to venerate her revered body. Even wild animals honoured her.

Through her repentance and her profound humility, and because by grace she overcame her body’s subjection to suffering and death, St Mary of Egypt offers consolation to us all. On the other hand, she also humbles those who are proud of their ascetic achievements. She not only tamed the ferocious beasts within her, her irrational passions, but also transcended all the limits of human nature and even pacified wild animals in the created world.

This is the purpose of Christ’s incarnation and the wealth it bestows, as preserved within the Church. Through revelational theology and life in Christ, man can be completely transformed.



APRIL & HOLY WEEK DIVINE SERVICE SCHEDULE

**** (AS A REMINDER, DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS ALL SERVICES WILL BE CLOSED OFF TO THE FAITHFUL. PLEASE REFER TO OUR STREAMING SERVICES) ****

April 3: Akathist Hymn

6:00 p.m. - Service of the Akathist

April 5: St. Mary of Egypt

9:00 a.m. - Orthros

10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy

April 11: Saturday of Lazarus

9:00 a.m. - Orthros

10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy

6:30 p.m. - Great Vespers of Palm Sunday

April 12: Palm Sunday

9:00 a.m. - Orthros

10:00 a.m. - Divine Liturgy

6:30 p.m. - Bridegroom Service (Nymphios)

April 13: Holy Monday

6:30 p.m. - Bridegroom Service (Nymphios)

April 14: Holy Tuesday

6:30 p.m. - Bridegroom Service (Nymphios)

April 15: Holy Wednesday

2:00 p.m. - The Mystery of Holy Unction

6:30 p.m. - Orthros Service of Holy Thursday (Mystical Supper)

April 16: Holy Thursday

9:00 a.m. - Vespers and Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

6:30 p.m. - Service of the Holy Passion (The Twelve Gospel Readings & Crucifix Procession)

April 17: Holy Friday

12:00 p.m. – *Service of the Great and Royal Hours*

3:00 p.m. – *The Lowering of the Body of the Lord from the Cross and Preparation of His Burial.*

6:30 p.m. – *The Burial of Christ – Lamentations at the Tomb of the Lord w/ Procession of the Tomb of Christ (Epitaphios)*

April 18: Holy Saturday

9:00 a.m. – *Great Vespers of the Resurrection & Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great*

10:45 p.m. – *Midnight Service of the Resurrection*

12:00 a.m. (Midnight) – *Service of the Resurrection, Orthros and Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*

April 19: Pascha (Easter) Sunday

10:30 a.m. – *Agape Vespers (The Reading of the Gospel in Various Languages)*

April 26: St. Mary of Egypt

9:00 a.m. – *Orthros*

10:00 a.m. – *Divine Liturgy*



LIVE STREAMING OF HOLY WEEK SERVICES



WE WILL BE STREAMING THIS YEAR'S HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

MORE INFORMATION WILL BE GIVEN SOON

HAVE YOUR CANDLES LIT IN THE DIVINE SERVICES



As Orthodox Christians we believe that where there is light there is also the presence of God. In our Tradition, we light our candles to fill our hearts with God's energies and to direct our prayers to Him.

To help the faithful in their prayerful life during these difficult times, Father Eleferios will light candles and commemorate the names of people. If you would like to make an offering and/or provide a list of names for Father to commemorate at the Divine Services, please visit our website at www.stsmm.org and press on the "donations" link. Refer to the link that is titled "Candle Donations." Please specify if you would like to contribute towards a red candle. Please email the names to freleferios@gmail.com.

We hope that God continues to give all of you strength. God bless!

THANK YOU FOR THE FLOWER DONATIONS



WE WANT TO THANK ALL THE FAMILIES THAT DONATED FOR THE WEEKLY
SALUTATIONS TO THE THEOTOKOS.

MAY SHE PROTECT YOU AND ALL OF YOUR LOVED ONES.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS FOR GREAT LENT, HOLY WEEK, AND HOLY PASCHA



The following special items are needed to decorate our Holy Church during Great Lent and Holy Pascha, and to provide for the liturgical needs of the various holy services. These items cost our Church over \$4,000.00. Your generous donations will help our Church defray the costs of these needed items and provide for the beautiful services of this most solemn and holy time of the year.

1. Palms to decorate on Palm Sunday
2. Flowers for the Base of the Crucifixion for Holy Thursday
3. Candles for the Holy Cross (3 sets of 3) of Holy Thursday
4. White Bed Sheet (Queen Size) for the Apokathelosis Service on Holy Friday
5. Rose Petals to be Placed on Top of the Epitaphios
6. Candles for the Kouvouklion (Set of 4)
7. Bay Leaves for Holy Saturday Morning's Divine Liturgy
8. Flowers to decorate the Icon of the Resurrection
9. Resurrection Candle for the Priest

If you would like to contribute to any of the above items, please contact Fr. Elefterios Plevrakis.

Let us take this opportunity to be generous during the spiritual journey of Great Lent and Holy Week with the utmost humility and devotion to our faith in the Lord.

In Christ,

Father Elefterios Plevrakis

MOVIE TO WATCH DURING GREAT LENT



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wz-vegalMg>

AN INCREDIBLE MOVIE TO WATCH DURING THE TIME OF GREAT LENT IS OSTROV. IT IS A RUSSIAN MOVIE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES. IT IS A SPIRITUALLY UPLIFTING MOVIE THAT GIVES YOU AN INCREDIBLE LESSON IN OUR BEAUTIFUL FAITH AND THE ASCETIC LIFE. EVERY TIME THE MOVIE IS SHOWN THE AUDIENCE LEARNS SOMETHING NEW. HIT THE LINK AND ENJOY!



WE WANT TO LET THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY KNOW THAT WE ARE ALSO ACCEPTING ELECTRONIC PAYMENTS FOR YOUR NEXT DONATION TO THE CHURCH. HERE IS A LIST OF DEPARTMENTS THAT YOU CAN DONATE TO:

**BUILDING FUND
CHURCH SUPPLIES
GENERAL DONATION
LADIES OF PHILOPTOCHOS
STEWARDSHIP
YOUTH GROUP**

JUST VISIT THE WEBSITE AND PRESS "DONATIONS." IT IS FAST, CONVENIENT, AND GREAT FOR RECORD KEEPING.

*FOR GREEK SCHOOL, PLEASE SPECIFY BY WRITING THAT IN THE NOTES; OTHERWISE, YOUR DONATION WILL BE ADDED TO THE GENERAL YOUTH FUND.

2020 PLEDGED STEWARDS

Alatzas, George & Rene

Alsup, Andrew & Vasilias

Babiak, Christopher & Leslie

Bachman, Christina **

Batis, Nikolaos & Maria

Bilis, Amalia

Bilis, George & Tina

Bontzos, Stylianos & Kalliopi

Caprinolo, Lee & Mary

Cioloa, Bogdan & Anca

Demedis, Olympia

Dermatis, Minas & Panagiota

Diamandaras, Helen

Diniakos, Kostas & Elvira**

Fafalios, Ava

Fokianos, Konstantinos & Maria

Giannaras, Chris

Giannas, Apostolos & Maria

Giannas, Erene

Giannas, Ioannis

Giannas, Stylianos & Maria

Gikas, John & Lola

Hyde, Michael & Maryann

Kafkakis, George & Vlitchika

Kaitis, Dr. Angela

Kaliakoudas, Evangelos & Eleni

Kaminaris, Gus & Fotini

Kanaras, Julie **

Kanaras, Louis & Eleni

Karas, Aimee

Karas, Andy

Karas, Bethany Anne

Karas, Daphne

Karas, John & Belinda

Karas, Katie

Karas, Michael & Linda

Karas, Peter & Kim

Karas, Scott

Karas, Steven

Kioutas, Nick & Shellie

Konstant, Gus

Kougianos, Alex & Daniela

Kougianos, Dionisios & Argiro

Kovaleski, Timothy & Ekaterini **

Kramer, Bernie & Marsha

Marvelis, Vasilios & Efthymia

Millon, Edward & Florence **

Mimaros, Dimitrios & Argie

Mojarrad, Deanna

Nikitaras, Andreas & Nicole

Nikitaras, Christos & Angela

Pappas, Basil & Linda

Perdikakis, George & Zoe

Pikounis, Emmanuel & Helen

Plevrakis, Fr. Elefterios & Esther

Prapas, Spiros

Roros, Bill & Mary

Roros, Georgios**

Sarapis, Stavros & Marina

Sarris, Sam

Smith, Caesar & Illya M **. .

Sollon, Dafne**

Stakias, Stellios & Tina

Stavrou, George & Tina

Steber, Christopher

Steber, Paula

Stelato III, James

Sudeck, Virginia

Trikoglou, Carole

Tsiatsoulis, Leonidas & Eirini Anastasiou

Varkarota, Christina

Yiannouris, Ioannis & Shawn

Total 2019 Stewards: **72**

Number of New Stewards for 2020 (**): **8**

Pledged: **\$61,955.00** / Collected: **\$34,980.00**

Outstanding Balance: **\$27,075.00**

Average Stewardship Pledge: **\$ 879.06**