



March 18, 2018
FIFTH SUNDAY OF THE GREAT FAST
ST MARY OF EGYPT



The Sanctuary Lamp continues to burn before the presence of Our Risen Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ in our church during the week of March 18 thru March 25 for +Nicholas Soltis reqd by wife Mary .

Liturgical Schedule

Mar 17 (Sat) Divine Liturgy	5:00pm
<i>+Fr. Edward Lucas</i>	
Mar 18 (Sun) Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast	
St. Mary of Egypt	
ECF	9:00am
Divine Liturgy	10:30am
<i>+Denis Rinkacs req by Family</i>	
Ham Bingo	1:00pm
Mar 20 (Tue) Lenten Hour & Enrichment Session	9:00am
<i>Enrichment Session</i>	
Mar 21 (Wed) Presanctified Liturgy	7:00pm
Mar 22 (Thu) Penance Service	7:00pm
Mar 23 (Fri) Presanctified Liturgy	7:00pm
Mar 24 (Sat) Divine Liturgy	5:00pm
Blessing of Palms and Willows	
<i>Ronald & Janice Bishop — 45th Wedding Anniversary</i>	
Mar 25 (Sun) Solemn Entry Into Jerusalem—Palm Sunday	
Annunciation of the Theotokos	
ECF Classes	9:00am
Divine Liturgy	10:30am
Blessing of Palms and Willows	



Let us remember in our prayers all of our friends and parish family members who are sick at home or in a nursing facility and for all who are in need of our prayers.

James Abraham, Tillie Abraham, Diana Abraham, Ron Bishop, Rosella Busko, Marion Campbell, John Fekete, Carl Magdic, Clarence Rizzi, Helen Rizzi, Rose Marie Rupnik, Joseph Rusinko, Sue Sabol, Ed Suzina, Mary Soltis, Terry Soltis, Margaret Weber, John Voron Sr.

PRAYER OF ST EPHREM

*Lord and Master of my life,
 Spare me from the spirit of indifference, despair,
 Lust for power, and idle chatter.*

Prostration

*Instead, bestow on me, your servant,
 The spirit of integrity humility, patience and love.*

Prostration

*Yes, O Lord and King, let me see my own sins
 And not judge my brothers and sisters,
 For you are blessed forever and ever. Amen .*

Prostration

March 11, 2018
 Our Tithe to our Parish—\$1,719.00
 March Pirohy Sale—\$4403.00

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

The Great Lenten season is indeed our season of renewal. It is the springtime of the spirit. As such, it is also our special time of repentance and reconciliation.



Even though Confession is not as common as it once was in the Church, nevertheless it is an essential part of our lives as Byzantine Catholics. As Pope Francis so often notes, it is our time of experiencing the healing mercy of our God who desires that we come to him for his healing touch.

Those who desire to be reconciled with God and with others are encouraged to plan to come during this season. It should not be put off until the last minute ... rather, Reconciliation should take place in an atmosphere of recollection and calm ... not rushing in breathlessly!

Thus there will be a Penance Service on Thursday, 22 March at 7:00 pm. Fr Robert Pipta, the Rector of the Byzantine Catholic Seminary and Fr John Cuccaro, pastor of SS Peter & Paul Church in Duquesne PA, will be available for Reconciliation at that time. Please make plans to participate at this time.

LOOKING AHEAD

As you may recall, we have had a wonderful and prayerful experience the last several years on Good Friday for the Burial Service of our Lord, especially due to the moving singing of a small group who have added their voices to the Service. Once again they will be participating in the Service and will begin practicing each Sunday after the morning Divine Liturgy.

They would like to add a few more voices to this group. If you are willing to join them it would be wonderful. Please be free to come to the Educational wing at noon on Sundays and add your voice to the singing group.

KOLBASSI SALE

Once again the Men's' Club of SS Peter & Paul Church in Duquesne PA will be selling their popular Kolbassi before Pascha. The sign-up sheets are in the entrance of the church; so please place your order as soon as possible.

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ST. MARY OF EGYPT

Sometimes change and conversion take place gradually ... as we saw last week in the image of St. John Climacus. He described the Christian life in terms of the steady, gradual ascent ... of the thirty steps of a "Ladder of Perfection."

At other times, conversion can take place *suddenly* ... and without warning or even preparation.

This is the story of Mary of Egypt, whom our Church remembers on this fifth Sunday of the Great Fast.



As we probably remember, Mary was living a very dissolute life in the city of Alexandria in Egypt. One day, drawn by curiosity, she joined a ship filled with pilgrims to the Holy Land. On the way, she continued her sinful way of life ... seducing many of the sailors as well as the passengers. She even continued her sinful life in Jerusalem.

On the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Sept. 14), Mary went along with the others to the church of the Holy Sepulcher where the relic of the true cross was to be venerated. She tried to enter the church with the others ... but at the threshold, something like an invisible force held her back. She could not enter.

Then her eyes fell upon the icon of the holy Mother of God over one of the doors of the church ... and she began to pray fervently with many tears. Then she found that she could enter the church and venerate the Holy Cross.

After venerating the Cross, she left the city and crossed over the Jordan (*an image of Baptism*) ... taking only a little bit of bread with her (*a symbol of the Eucharist*) ... and there she lived alone in the desert for forty-seven years ... until a priest, Zossima, found her by accident. He heard her story, gave her Holy Communion, and eventually returned to bury her.

Her story is a powerful image of repentance ... without any instruction ... without any person's help ... she was simply struck with a deep awareness of her own sinfulness ... and she repented.

Whether gradually ... or suddenly ... let us also follow the path of repentance during this Lenten season.