

### *Fifth Sunday of Great Lent*

The church service for this Sunday is devoted to the memory and glorification of the spiritual efforts of Saint Mary of Egypt (See Apr. 1), who "has cut down with the sword of abstinence the desires of your soul and the passions of your flesh. You have choked your sinful thoughts with the silence of the ascetic life, and you have watered all the wilderness with the streams of your tears, and caused the fruits of repentance to spring up for us" and "with works of Lenten fasting", "as the sun she shines revealed as a guide to all who have sinned". In her life the Holy Church pays attention to two contrasts: on the depth of her sinful falling and on the height of her graceful rising, that it points out that true repentance wipes away the very heaviest sins, and can uplift the repenting trespasser to a high degree of spiritual perfection. The Odes of the Canon opens the parable about "the rich man and Lazarus". This parable through its imagery gives a lesson on the efforts of fasting that they, fasting physically, fasted also spiritually, that is, they helped their needy brothers and eased the portion of the suffering; but the suffering and the deprived are inspired by patience and magnanimity, by the example of Lazarus who for these virtues "was worthy of Paradise of sweetness". Inspiring those who fast with the necessity of charity, the Holy Church hymns: "The Kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and abstinence with holiness; therefore the rich shall not enter into it, but those who entrust their treasures into the hands of the needy. This is what David the prophet teaches us saying: the righteous man shows mercy all day, his delight is in the Lord, and walking in the light he will not stumble. All this was written for our admonition, that we should fast and do good, and the Lord will reward us with heavenly things instead of earthly things". The Resurrection gospel proclaims the approaching time of the coming Passion of Christ, and the Epistle reading explains the saving actions of the offering of the Savior on the cross. With these reminders of the parable about the rich man and Lazarus and suffering, death and resurrection of the Savior, the Holy Church relates the fifth Sunday to a relationship of the coming end of the Lenten effort with the memory connected to Him.

### *Troparion, tone 8*

**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.**

*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, O most glorious Mary, you are a bride of the kingdom.**

**At Matins** we sing the Irmoi of Great Saturday: "Beneath the waves of the sea ... " and so forth. The **Liturgy** of St. Basil the Great. **Epistle:** Heb. 9:11-14; sel. 21; Venerable Mary: Gal. 3:23-29; sel. 250. **Gospel:** Mark 10:32-45, sel. 47; Venerable Mary: Luke 7:36-50; sel. 33. If this Sunday falls on the feast of the 40 Martyrs or the Forefeast, the Afterfeast or the feast of the Annunciation, we sing the order for the Venerable Mary, if the ecclesiarch decides.

*S. V. Bulgakov, **Handbook for Church Servers**, 2nd ed., 1274 pp. (Kharkov, 1900) p. 525-6  
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