

March 29, 2026



THE IMAGE...

(Jn 12:45 & 14:9; Heb 1:3; Col 1:15)

www.stjohnofdamascus.org

Publication of St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church, Poway, CA

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT—TONE 1
SUNDAY OF ST. MARY OF EGYPT

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Welcome!

...to all who have gathered to follow Jesus Christ and manifest the Kingdom of God in the Liturgy of His Church.

If this is your first time with us, give us a chance to get to know you.

Please join us for our fellowship meal following the service

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A Word...

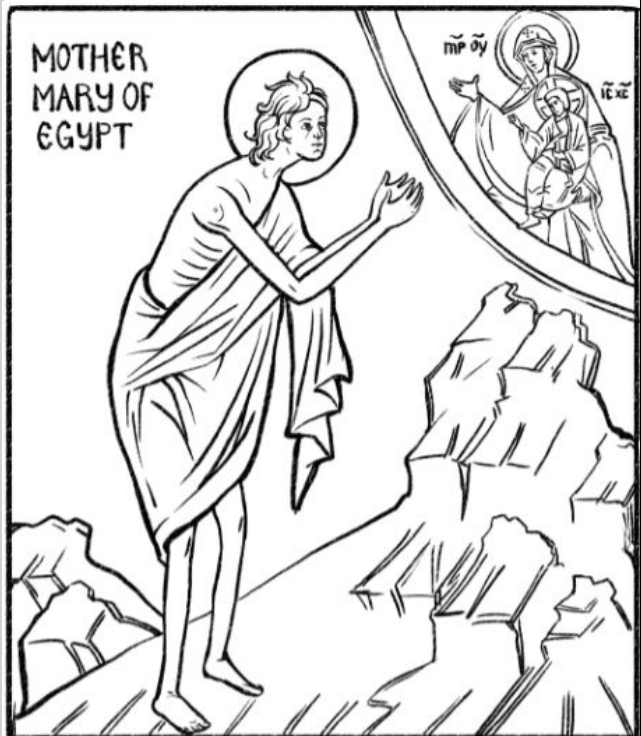
Believe me, I have not seen a human face ever since I crossed the Jordan, except yours today. I have not seen a beast or a living being ever since I came into the desert. I never learned from books. I have never even heard anyone who sang and read from them. But the word of God which is alive and active, by itself teaches a man knowledge.

St. Mary of Egypt

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Include Something in the Bulletin or Receive our Weekly Parish E-mails

E-mail info@stjohnofdamascus.org with your request.



On the fifth Sunday of Lent, we commemorate St. Mary of Egypt. By her example, we are reminded of the extraordinary power of repentance and God's mercy, by which even the greatest sinner may be transformed and sanctified.

Parish Life

San Diego Inter-Orthodox Services

April 13 -- 10am -- Bright Monday Paschal Divine Liturgy - St John of Damascus Church -- Poway, CA

April 26 - 6pm - Sunday of the Myrrh-bearers -- Paschal-tide Vespers - St John of Damascus, Church -- Poway, CA

Easter-time Bake Sale

**April 4
Help Needed**

Our Easter-time Bake Sale is coming up on April 4. The Auxiliary is gathering on Thursdays from 9am-12pm to get all the goodies ready. If you are able to help, please come. If you can't come on Thursdays but want to do your part speak to Tanya, Phyllis, or Linda for ideas.

So **Save the Date** and plan on being part of the celebration! Don't forget to share with your family and friends.

Flyers/Menus have been sent via email and are available in the hall.

Service Books for the Faithful Available in Bookstore

It is a long-standing tradition for people to have a service book that they bring to help keep them focused during services.

St Tikhon's Monastery has printed a new edition which includes Vespers, Matins as well as the Liturgies of St John Chrysostom, St Basil & the Presanctified Liturgy.

They also include the prayers in preparation for Holy Communion as well as the Thanksgiving Prayers for after having received.

They are available at our bookstore for \$25.

MINI-CONCERT TODAY

After Divine Liturgy today we will be having a mini-concert (2-3 songs).

Please join us for this faith-filled collection of songs.



Upcoming Potluck Meals

With increased attendance during the next couple weeks we will be having potlucks on the following days.

4/3 — Lazarus Saturday Pancake Breakfast (Caviar) & Potluck

4/4 — Palm Sunday Festival (Fish, Wine & Oil) Potluck

4/11 Paschal Night Potluck

4/12 — Agape Vespers Paschal BBQ & Potluck

We typically have many visitors on these days. Please bring something to share.



DONATIONS FOR PASCHAL FLOWERS \$1000 GOAL

We are collecting funds so that we can decorate our temple with flowers for Pascha. Our usual flower order comes to be about \$1000.00.

If you can help, please put your donation in the basket on the Welcome Table labeled for Pascha Flowers.

Today's Worship — Hymns

TROPARIA

Resurrection—Tone 1

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews,
while the soldiers were guarding Your most
pure body, You rose on the third day, O
Savior, granting life to the world. The powers
of heaven therefore cried to You, O Giver of
Life: "Glory to Your Resurrection, O Christ!
Glory to Your Kingdom!!! Glory to Your
dispensation, O Lover of mankind!"

St John of Damascus —Tone 8

Teacher of Orthodoxy, piety, & purity!
Enlightener of the universe!
& divine inspiration to monastics
by your teachings we are all enlightened,
& by your spiritual music, O all-wise John of
Damascus,
pray to Christ our God for the salvation of our
souls!

St. Mary of Egypt—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, for it is
immortal.//
Therefore your spirit, O holy Mother Mary,
rejoices with the angels.

KONTAKION

St John of Damascus — Tone 4

Let us the faithful sing praises to John,
worthy of great honor the composer of hymns.
The star & teacher of the Orthodox Faith,
the defender of its doctrine.
Through the might of the Lord's Cross he
overcame heretical error!
Now he is fervent in prayer to Christ God,
to grant forgiveness of our sins.

St. Mary of Egypt—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.

Steadfast Protectress—Tone 6

Steadfast Protectress of Christians,
Constant advocate before the Creator:
Do not despise the cry of us sinners,
But in your goodness, come speedily to help
us who call on you in faith.
Hasten to hear our petitions and to intercede
for us, O Theotokos,
For you always protect those who honor you!

Holy Unction—March 31 6pm

The Sacrament of Holy Unction will be celebrated on Tuesday March 31. It is for the healing of soul and body but is not just a general anointing service. As a holy sacrament if we are planning to be anointed, we should come knowing what we are seeking healing from and should prepare by prayer and fasting.

For more information on Holy Unction see:

<https://www.oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/worship/the-sacraments/holy-unction>

Today's Worship — Epistle Readings

Epistle — Hebrews 9:11-14

¹¹ But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. ¹² Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Epistle — Galatians 3:23-29

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. ²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

PROKEIMENA

Tone 1 (*Resurrection*) — Let Your mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on You! (*Ps 32/33:22*)

v: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just! (*Ps 32/33:1*)

Tone 4 (*St. Mary of Egypt*) — God is wonderful in His saints, the God of Israel. (*Ps 67/68:35*)

ALLELUIA

Tone 1 — V. God gives vengeance unto me, and subdues people under me. (*Ps. 17:48*)

V. He magnifies the salvation of the King and deals mercifully with David, His anointed, and his seed forever. (*Ps. 17:51*)

Tone 1 --V. I waited patiently for the Lord; He attended to me and heard my supplication. (*Ps. 39:1*)

Today's Worship — Gospel Readings

Gospel — Mark 10:32-45

³² Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: ³³ Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; ³⁴ and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again. ³⁵ Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask." ³⁶ And He said to them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" ³⁷ They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory." ³⁸ But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" ³⁹ They said to Him, "We are able." So Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; ⁴⁰ but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared. ⁴¹ And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. ⁴² But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. ⁴⁴ And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Gospel — Luke 7:36-50

³⁶ Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷ And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ³⁸ and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. ³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner." ⁴⁰ And Jesus answered and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." So he said, "Teacher, say it." ⁴¹ There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more? ⁴³ Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have rightly judged." ⁴⁴ Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. ⁴⁵ You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. ⁴⁶ You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. ⁴⁷ Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little. ⁴⁸ Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." ⁴⁹ And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" ⁵⁰ Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

Reflecting on the life of St. Mary of Egypt

"Where shall I begin to weep for the actions of my wretched life? What first-fruit shall I offer, O Christ, in this my lamentation? But in Thy compassion grant me forgiveness of sins." (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 1, vs. 2.)

During Great Lent we remember and venerate Saint Mary of Egypt both on April 1 and the Fifth Sunday of Lent. With the Canon of St. Andrew, read in many churches during the first and fifth weeks of Lent, we uphold her as an icon of repentance, an example for every Orthodox Christian to emulate. Yet for many years, she lived a life of bondage to sexual passions. If St. Mary of Egypt were alive today, would we welcome her into our assembly?

"I confess to Thee, O Savior, the sins I have committed, the wounds of my soul and body, which murderous thoughts, like thieves, have inflicted inwardly upon me." (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 1, vs. 12.)

While we don't know about the very early years of her life, we do know that she lost her virginity at age twelve and ran away from home. For the next seventeen years she was a slave to her insatiable appetite for sexual perversions, including sexual encounters with "young men," even against their will. This sounds very much like a victim of pedophilia who recoils and continues in her victimization by taking on the role of a predator herself, victimizing others in the process. Many adults who fall into the bondage of pedophilia are victims of sexual abuse as children. In a futile attempt to reconcile the horror of their own victimization, they try to regain control of their lives through exploitation, continuing to inflict wounds on their own souls and bodies.

"Like David, I have fallen into lust and I am covered in filth; but wash me clean, O Savior, by my tears." (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 2, vs. 54.) "O Lady, thou hast brought forth our Joy: Grant me the spirit of mourning that in the coming Day of Judgment I may be comforted by God." (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 9, vs. 327.) "For all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God." (Romans 3:23)

For seventeen years, Saint Mary of Egypt lived a lifestyle that isolated her from the community and God. Covered with filth amassed over the years, her heart yet longed for union with God. People in prison feel ostracized too, isolated from God and society, as they sit in shame in prison cells longing for the same tears of repentance that lead to joy and reconciliation.

"Christ became man, calling to repentance thieves and harlots. Repent, my soul: the door of the



Our Life in Christ

kingdom is already open, and Pharisees and publicans and adulterers pass through it before thee, changing their lives.” (The Canon of St. Andrew, Canticle 9, Vs. 342)

The healing of the venerable Saint Mary of Egypt was not instantaneous but required a rigorous and lengthy spiritual journey. Being led by the Holy Spirit, she retreated to the wilderness where she lived the life of a hermit for seventeen years, seeking freedom from bondage of the passions. She spent a further thirty years in the wilderness having obtained the true gifts of repentance, healing and freedom from the enslavement of sin.

During Great Lent, each of us seeks repentance, turning from our own vices and passions and setting our minds and hearts on God. Through the intercessions of the most Holy Theotokos, God grants us the gift of compunction to turn from our wounds and sins to find healing and comfort in Him.

Let us remember Saint Mary of Egypt and her wonderful redemption. During the remainder of this Lenten journey, may we pray to be freed from our imprisonment to the passions that enslave us. Let us also pray for strength for all of our brothers and sisters who are imprisoned in penitentiaries, for their struggles and their journeys to repentance.

*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! (Kontakion: Tone 3)*

KEEPING VIGIL OVER THE TOMB BETWEEN SERVICES ON HOLY FRIDAY & HOLY SATURDAY

Beginning after the Vespers on Holy Friday until the Paschal Services Saturday night it is the tradition to keep vigil over the Tomb of our Lord by people reading the Psalms or the Acts of the Apostles. For those who have taken the opportunity to do this in past years, it is always a profound and moving time to reflect on the love our Lord has for us.

There is a **sign-up sheet** in the Fellowship Hall broken down by the hour. People are encouraged to team up with others for a couple slots if they so choose.

For the late night shifts, see Fr Michael for information on how to enter the church.

If you have any questions about this, please see Fr. Michael.



LOOKING AHEAD

*The following are services & parish events **IN ADDITION** to the usual weekend services (Sat 6pm & Sun 8:30am).*

Sunday March 29

After Divine Liturgy — Mini Concert by the Faithful

Monday March 30

7:00pm — Orthodox Christianity 101

Tuesday March 31

6:00pm — Holy Unction

Wednesday April 1

6:00pm — Presanctified Liturgy followed by Lenten Potluck

Friday April 3

11:00am — Sacrament of Holy Confession

4:00pm — Sacrament of Holy Confession

6:00pm — Sacrament of Holy Confession

Saturday April 4 — Lazarus Saturday

8:30 — Hours & Divine Liturgy

10:30am — Pancake Breakfast & Potluck

11:30am — Decorate for Palm Sunday

12:00pm — Auxiliary Bake Sale

6:00pm — Vigil for Palm Sunday

Sunday April 5 — Palm Sunday

8:30am — Hours & Divine Liturgy w/ Processions

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

Monday April 6 — Holy Monday

6:00pm — Bridegroom Matins

For more dates & links please visit our website: www.stjohnofdamascus.org/calendar

Many Years!

Name Day

Eliza (Elizabeth) Boyles	3/30
Mary Caetta	4/1
Emily (Emma) Neskin	4/2

Birthday

Matthew Maximos Carter	3/29
Christine Rahal	3/31
Matthew Sladack	4/2
Edward Klavzar	4/4

PARISH CONTACT INFO:

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Priest: V. Rev. Michael Anderson, Rector

Email: powaypadre@stjohnofdamascus.org — **Phone:** (858) 717-2172

Attached Clergy: V. Rev. Alexander Federoff, Retired, Rev. John Robinson, Retired & Pdn. George Shumaik

ST. JOHN OF DAMASCUS CHURCH + THE DIOCESE OF THE WEST + THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA