



**Our Righteous Mother Mary of Egypt  
Whom The Holy Church Commemorates on April 1  
and on the Fifth Sunday of the Great Fast.**

When Mary was only twelve years old, she left her parents and departed to Alexandria, where she lived a depraved life for seventeen years. Then, moved by curiosity, she went with many pilgrims to Jerusalem, that she might see the exaltation of the venerable Cross. Even in the Holy City she gave herself over to every kind of licentiousness and drew many into the depth of perdition. Desiring to go into the church on the day of the Exaltation of the Cross, time and again she perceived a certain invisible power preventing her entrance, whereas the multitude of people about her entered unhindered. Therefore, wounded in heart by this, she decided to change her way of life and reconcile herself to God by means of repentance. Invoking our Lady the Theotokos as her protectress, she asked her to open the way for her to worship the Cross, and vowed that she would renounce the world. And thus, returning once again to the church, she entered easily. When she had worshipped the precious Wood, she departed that same day from Jerusalem and passed over the Jordan. She went into the inner wilderness and for forty-seven years lived a most harsh manner of life,

surpassing human strength; alone, she prayed to God alone. Toward the end of her life she met a certain hermit named Zosimas, and she related to him her life from the beginning. She requested of him to bring her the immaculate mysteries that she might partake of them. According to her request, he did this the following year on Holy and Great Thursday. One year after this, Zosimas again went thither and found her dead, laid upon the ground, and letters written in the sand near her which said: “Abba Zosimas bury here the body of wretched Mary. I died on the very day I partook of the immaculate Mysteries. Pray for me.” Her death is reckoned by some to have taken place in 378, by some in 437, and by others, in 522. She is commemorated on the Fifth Sunday of Great Lent. Her life was recorded by Saint Sophronius of Jerusalem.

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*Dismissal Hymn. Plagal of Fourth Tone.*

**I**N thee the image was preserved with exactness, O Mother; for taking up thy cross, thou didst follow Christ, and by thy deeds thou didst teach us to overlook the flesh, for it passeth away, but to attend to the soul since it is immortal. Wherefore O righteous Mary, thy spirit rejoiceth with the Angels.

*Another Kontakion. Second Tone*

**B**Y the toils of thy struggles, O God-inspired one, thou didst hallow the hardness of the desert. We glorify thy memory, as we honour thee with hymns, O Mary, glory of the righteous.

(Selections from *The Menaion* follow)

## APRIL 1

Our Righteous Mother Mary of Egypt

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Brookline, Massachusetts 02445

## VESPERS

*For* Lord, I have cried, *we chant the following Stichera:*

*Plagal of Second Tone. Having laid up all their hope*

**T**HOUGH thy body, which had been \* defiled with reckless abandon, \* hindered thee from vision of \* the august and holy things \* thou didst long to see, \* yet did thy consciousness \* and thy clear perception \* of deeds that thou hadst done before \* graciously work a turn \* in thee for the better, O godly-wise; \* for when thou hadst looked on the pure \* icon of the blest Mother of God, thou \* on passing judgment \* against thyself for all thy former sins, \* didst freely worship the precious Wood, \* Mary who art praised of all.

**W**ORSHIPPING with joy of heart \* the places hallowed by Christ God, \* in thyself thou didst receive a saving viaticum \* for the virtues' path: \* filled with zeal and good cheer, \* thou didst run the good course; and on crossing past the Jordan's streams, \* thou dweltest eagerly \* where the holy Baptist had lived before. \* And by thy righteous way of life, \* thou didst tame the passions' ferocity, \* godly-minded-Mary, \* our Mother ever-memorable in truth; \* for thou hast quelled with thine abstinence \* all the tumults of the flesh.

**D**WELLING in the wilderness, \* thou didst religiously blot out \* from thy soul the images \* of thy passions, and with all \* virtues and travails, \* didst inscribe in thy soul \* that most God like image; \* and thou shonest so exceedingly \* that thou didst lightly walk \* on the very waters with nimble step; \* and thou wast lifted in the air \* during thine entreaties and prayers to God. \* All glorious Mary, \* as thou with boldness now dost stand before \* the Saviour Christ, do thou fervently \* pray Him in our soul's behalf.

Glory: both now. *Theotokion*

**R**EADY is that marriage feast \* made for the heavenly Bridegroom; \* even now the heralds cry; \* why, O darkened soul, dost thou tarry willingly? \* Truly thy garments are \* all exceeding filthy with licentious deeds and lewd desires; \* how shalt thou enter in, \* thou unhappy wretch? But before the end \* come fall down and cry aloud \* to the Ever-virgin with all thy heart: Sprinkle me and cleanse me, O pure one, with the hyssop of thy prayers; \* vouchsafe that bridechamber unto me, \* so that I may magnify thee.



## MATINS

*Reading from the Psalter and the Canons as appointed, with the following of the Saint. Before the Troparia, we say, O Saint of God, intercede in our behalf.*

*A Composition of Theophanes*

*Second Tone*

**ODE ONE**

*Troparia*

**S**INCE thou hast now found the illumination of that full-shining splendor and that bright-shining brilliance, O glorious Mary, I pray thee, by thine entreaties to the Lord enlighten my soul, which is darkened with passions.

**T**HOUGH thou hadst once slain thy soul through the serpent's plotting, and because of deluded deeds hadst slipped and fallen towards the pit of destruction, thou chocest better things and didst scorn that which is temporal.

**P**ASSIONATELY staining the original unenslaved nobility of thy soul with unseemly thoughts, and wearing the most foul vesture of corruption, thou wast unmindful of thy Creator's incomprehensible glory.

**F**EEDING thy mind with incontinence and the vanity of pleasures, and disparaging the lovers of a better communion, O admirable Mary, thou didst wall thyself off, exchanging it for the impudence of every sin.

*Theotokion*

**O** FULL of Grace, who didst conceive the enhypostatic and life-streaming immortality, rescue me from my stumbling, and cleanse me who am defiled in mind with passions, bruised by transgressions, and terribly shaken.

**ODE THREE**

*Troparia*

**T**HOU didst soar aloft on transcendently divine longing; and casting corruptible glory far from thee drew nigh unto the Master while crying out: There is none holy as our most holy God, and there is none righteous but Thee, O Lord Most High.

**H**AVING approached the tree of sin and been initiated into knowledge that bringeth death, thou didst run to the life-giving Tree while crying out to

Christ: Thou art our God, and there is none righteous but Thee, O Lord Most High.

*Theotokion*

**T**HROUGH thy childbirth, we have been joined to the choirs of Angels, O Theotokos, for thou didst ineffably conceive our Maker and gavest a body to Him Who is incomprehensible; wherefore we all reverence thee as the Mother of God.

SESSIONAL HYMN

*Plagal of Fourth Tone. By conceiving the Wisdom*

**B**RIDLING all the revolts of the fallen flesh \* with ascetical labours, thou didst reveal \* the valorous temp'rament \* of thy soul, O all-blessed one; \* for in longing to see the Lord's Cross, thou didst change thy ways, \* crucifying thyself to the world with a holy life. \* Wherefore, with great fervour thou didst rouse thy whole being \* to boundless and holy zeal \* for the blessed angelic life. \* O renowned Mary, for this cause \* we honour thy remembrance with faith, \* and we ask that pardon of our trespasses \* mat be abundantly granted \* by thine intercessions with God.

Glory; both now. *Theotokion*

**I**N the mire of my sins I am now stuck fast; \* there is no certain standing in me at all; \* a tempest of trespasses \* overwhelmeth me terribly. \* Thou who barest the Word and only true Friend of man, \* look upon me, O Virgin, and quickly deliver me out of every sin, and from the soul-slaying passions, \* and all evils brought on me \* by the merciless enemy; \* that I may chant to thee with joy: \* Entreat thy Son and God that He grant \* the forgiveness of transgressions unto them \* that flee with faith to thy refuge, O all-spotless Bride of God.

ODE FOUR

*Troparia*

**T**HOU wast taken from thy country, O glorious Mary, providentially sailing to the land of Sion because of thy desire; and through thy confession there, O righteous Mother, thou foundest the absolution of thy deeds.

**I**MPELLED forward unawares, O glorious one, and unexpectedly seeing the inexpressible effulgence of a better vision, thou madest thy mind to be master and didst learn the hidden things of that which thou hadst not known.

**M**ADE strong with saving grace, and beholding the divine and light-bringing illumination, thou drewest nigh with thine eyes and thy heart unto the all-worshipful Cross, and from it didst partake of salvation.

**J**OYFULLY looking upon the luminous image of the Virgin Theotokos, O all-blessed Mary, thou didst run unto her with tears, making a covenant with her for the whole of thy life.

*Theotokion*

**B**Y an ineffable behest and a providence beyond compare, He that of His own counsel; hath given all things their being; and having issued from thee bearing flesh, O all-pure Virgin, He wholly reneweth me.

ODE FIVE

*Troparia*

**S**YMBOLICALLY departing this life and pressing on to the divine path of dispassion, O godly-minded Mary, thou didst cross the famous waters of the Jordan with longing and didst attain to unspeakable glory.

**S**INCE thou hadst a manly soul, thou wentest forth unto struggles, contending with determination against the stubborn delusion of the adversaries, and persevering with all the vigour of youth, O Mary, adornment of abstinence.

**S**HAKING off thy womanly nature with steadfast resolve, O Mother, and washing off the passions through abstinence, thou wentest about in the wilderness as in a divine meadow, rejoicing to behold the beauty of thy Creator.

**H**E that once secretly corrupted Eve in Paradise with his words, and with manifold devices banisher her from everlasting delight, is now hurled down and tramples underfoot by thy most manly wrestlings, O Mother.

*Theotokion*

**O** VIRGIN, we know thee to be the dawning of the Sun of Glory, the King's brilliant chariot, whereon the Son of the Most High hath mounted, and an ark of goodness that bringeth Christ into the world.

ODE SIX

*Troparia*

**T**HOU wast wholly captivated with desire for the appearing of Christ, O all-blessed Mary; and strengthened by the Spirit, thou didst beat back the assaults of the passions.

**M**ADE bright with the beauty of thy works, thou didst crush the rebellions of darkness; and with ascetic labours, thou didst darken the faces of thine enemies.

**T**HOU didst mightily fix thy gaze on her who alone is altogether blameless, O all-famed Mary, calling upon her and daily staying thyself upon her.

*Theotokion*

**T**HOU art the King's throne higher than the heavens, O all-blameless one; for thou hast bodily contained the fullness of His divine sovereignty.

**KONTAKION**

*Third Tone. On this day the Virgin*

**T**HOU who once wast wholly filled \* with every wanton defilement \* art today shown to be \* a bride of Christ through repentance. \* Thou didst long to live the godly \* life of the Angels; \* with the Cross, thou didst subdue and trample down demons. \* Wherefore, O all-modest Mary, \* now in the Kingdom \* thou art an hon'rabl e bride.

**OIKOS**

**T**hee, the lamb and daughter of Christ, we now acclaim with songs, O all-celebrated Mary, who though thou camest to light as a nursling of the Egyptians, didst flee their every error, and wast offered right well to the Church as a precious shoot; for in abstinence and prayer thou strovest in asceticism above the measure of human nature. Wherefore, through thy life and works thou wast exalted in Christ, O all-modest Mary, and in the Kingdom of Heaven thou art an honorable bride.

**SYNAXARION**

*The Month of April hath thirty days.  
The day hath thirteen hours, and the night eleven.*

✠ On the first of this month we commemorate our righteous Mother Mary of Egypt.

*Verses*

Spirit rose up, flesh melted away erewhile;  
Hide, O earth, the worn bones of Mary's body.  
On the first of April died Mary, boast of the desert.

✠ On this day our righteous Father Barsanuphius of Optina reposed in peace in the year 1913.

✠ On this day we commemorate the holy new Hieromartyr, the Bishop Macarius, of the Monastery of Saint Macarius the Roman near Saint Petersburg, who was slain by the atheists in the year 1944.

By the intercessions of Thy Saints, O God, have mercy on us. Amen.

ODE SEVEN

*Troparia*

**T**HE destroyer that boasteth and vaunteth himself without measure, that seeketh to vanquish the whole earth, is vanquished of a woman; and he is slain that slew man and cast him from life-giving delight.

**H**E Who once strangely fed the people in the wilderness became refreshment and consolation unto thee, O godly-minded Mary; and in His unspeakable power He gave thee food and drink as thou didst cry: Blessed art Thou the God of our Fathers.

**M**IGHTILY hedged about with the Cross, thou didst shake off the swelling billows of passions, parting them like the God-seer parted the sea; and passing over to the land of promise in thy dispassion, thou madest thine abode in the inheritance that passeth not away.

**W**ITH all his numberless attacks, he that layeth plots against the pious availed not to overthrow the constancy and steadfastness of thine endurance; wherefore thou didst scoff at his ruin, while crying out: Blessed art Thou, the God of our Fathers.

*Theotokion*

**T**HE Incomprehensible is incarnate of thee, O hallowed Virgin Mother; and since He is good, He formeth mankind anew in thy womb. Wherefore, as we hymn thee as the Mediatrix of these awesome things, we say: Blessed art thou who didst conceive God in the flesh.

ODE EIGHT

*Troparia*

**T**HOU are brilliantly arrayed in gleaming rays of virtue, and the sound of thine achievements hath now gone forth into all the world; wherefore we faithfully glorify thy memorial.

**T**HE godly-minded Zosimas was found worthy of ineffable joy when he clearly saw thee in the wilderness and cried: O ye works, praise ye the Lord,

and supremely exalt Him unto the ages.

**P**ARTAKING of thy rewards and deemed worthy of divine recompense, O God-bearer, thou knewest Zosimas' origins; and chanting with him, thou didst say: Thee do we supremely exalt, O Christ, unto the ages.

*Theotokion*

**O** SAVIOUR, that Thou mightiest wrest man away from the slayer of mortals, Thou, being God, didst truly appear on earth bearing flesh, while preserving her pure that gave Thee birth; wherefore we hymn Thee unto the ages.

**ODE NINE**

*Heirmos*

**O** THOU Who from thy virginal loins ineffably lentest a body unto the Luminary that was before the sun, even God, Who hath dawned upon us, and dwelt among us in the body: O blessed and all-pure Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

*Troparia*

**W**HEN with yearning thou hadst partaken of the Mysteries, and wast filled with shining glory, and hadst been vouchsafed the ineffable grace of thy Bridegroom, O all-blessed Mary, thou wast deemed worthy of a most blessed and divine translation.

**K**NOWING the secret of thy departure, O God-bearer, thou didst walk upon the waters while remaining dry; and translated from things of earth, O all-venerable Mother, thou hadst laid hold upon the inconceivable beauty and delight of thy Creator.

**B**EARING thy lamp and bedecked in the splendor of the virtues, O Mary inspired of God, thou beholdest the throne of the King of all and delightest in His sweet beauty, dancing for joy with the righteous.

**A**S ye richly enjoy the rewards from God for your pains and labours, O Mary and godly-minded Zosimas, make Him gracious now unto us all, that our souls be granted the forgiveness of failings.

*Theotokion*

**T**HOU hast proved higher than all things created, O Maiden and Lady; for beyond all telling, thou didst carry the Master of all bodily in thy womb and

as a mother didst suckle Him with milk; wherefore we all magnify thee.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers  
Lord Jesus Christ our God have mercy on us.  
Amen.



Eight Righteous Women  
through whose supplications  
do Thou visit us, O God.

The Eight Righteous Women above are:  
Ss. Photini, the woman at the well in Samaria; Melania the Roman,  
Eudocia the Samaritan; Pelagia; Macrina, sister of Saint Basil the Great;  
Mary of Egypt; Mary Magdalene; and Mary of Mesopotamia.