

# SYNAXARIA OF THE TRIODION

by Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos

## FIFTH SUNDAY of LENT

On this day, the fifth Sunday of the Fast, we are enjoined to celebrate the memory of our Holy Mother Mary of Egypt.

### Verses

Her spirit hath departed, and her flesh decayed long ago.  
O earth, conceal the bony corpse of Mary.

### Synaxarion

When she was only twelve years old, she slipped away from her parents and went to Alexandria, where she lived a life of prodigality for seventeen years. Then, moved by curiosity, she departed for Jerusalem with many pilgrims, in order to be present at the Exaltation of the Precious Cross. During the voyage, she gave herself over to every kind of licentiousness and immorality and enticed many into the pit of perdition.

Wishing to enter the Church, on the day when the Cross was being elevated, three times, four times, she sensed an invisible force that prevented her from entering, whereas the crowd of people with her was entering without any hindrance. Smitten in her heart by this, she resolved to change her life and to propitiate God through repentance; and thus, on returning to the Church, she entered it with ease. After venerating the Precious Cross, she departed from Jerusalem that same day, crossed the Jordan, and went into the inner recesses of the desert, where, for forty-seven years, she lived a life that was very severe and superhuman, praying alone with God.

Near the end of her life, she encountered a hermit named Zosimas and, after recounting her life from the beginning, she besought him to bring her the immaculate Mysteries so that she might receive communion. He did so the following year, on Great Thurs-



day. When Zosimas returned a year later, he found her dead, stretched out on the ground, with a note near her, which read: “O Abba Zosimas, bury the body of humble Mary in this place. I reposed on the same day that I communed the immaculate Mysteries. Pray for me.” Her death is assigned to the year 378.

The memory of this Saint is celebrated on the 1st of April; but she is also commemorated on this day, as the Holy Fast is already drawing to a close, in order to arouse the slothful and the sinners to repentance, having St. Mary as an example.

By her intercessions, O God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen.

