

FAMILY GOSPEL LESSON

Mark 10:32-45

On this final Sunday before we enter Holy Week, the Church again turns our attention to the theme of repentance by remembering St. Mary of Egypt. She was a harlot who repented of her sins then lived alone in the desert for 47 years, praying and fasting. The Gospel passage shows an interaction Jesus had with His disciples shortly before his entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. He gives clear instructions on how His disciples are to minister to the flock not as rulers but as servants. This is important to keep in mind in today's society where ambition and status are valued more than helping our neighbor. To be first in the kingdom of heaven, which is better than being first in anything in this life, we must be last and a servant to all.



For Consideration

- What did James and John ask Jesus? How did Jesus respond? What was the baptism to which Jesus was referring?
- How did the other disciples respond when they heard what James and John did? How did Jesus respond to them?
- What does this Gospel passage mean for our lives?

TO DO TOGETHER

St. Mary of Egypt's Story

St. Mary's life is a truly inspiring story of repentance. You can read more about her life on the following Web site: http://lent.goarch.org/saint_mary_of_egypt/learn/

Confession

Take some time to help your children understand and prepare for the Sacrament of Confession. For understanding, take a long string and have your child hold one end while the other end rests at an icon of Christ. Show them that when we sin we cut our connection to Christ; take a pair of scissors and cut the string. Next, show them that when we confess our sins the connection is restored; tie the two pieces of string back together. Repeat this several times until your children realize that each time you tie the string it becomes shorter. Discuss how confession not only repairs our broken connection but actually brings us closer to Christ.

Take a Hike

Go for a hike in a somewhat remote location. While there, talk with your family about what it would be like to live there for 47 years with none of the luxuries to which we are accustomed. Tell them that this is exactly what Saint Mary of Egypt did to repent of her sins.

CLOSING PRAYER

Holy mother, Mary, pray for us.

Intercede with the Creator on behalf of those who praise you, holy mother, that we may be delivered from the sufferings and afflictions which overwhelm us on all sides, that being delivered from our temptations we may unceasingly magnify the Lord Who glorified you.

-From the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete

FINAL THOUGHT

When we show our wounds to the doctor, we mention our pains, our troubling, our illnesses without hiding anything, thus also in confession. We strip our soul, we reveal our wounds, we confess our illness and our personal pain. If this does not occur, we will remain unhealed. Our wounds will grow, the pollution and rotting will advance, the illness will continue undermining our being and sooner or later will lead us to death.

-from Return by Archimandrite Nektarios Antonopoulos

