



Weekly Bulletin

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church

A Community of the Orthodox Church in America

Witnessing to the Apostolic Faith in Lake County for 50 Years

Father Andrew Clements, Pastor

Volume 37

2023

Number 13

Sunday	Apr 2	<i>5th Sndy of Lent / Tone 1 / St Mary of Egypt</i>
		9:00 am Church School
		10:00 am Divine Liturgy Coffee Hour
		5:00 pm Holy Unction Service / St Nick's Mogadore
Wednesday	Apr 5	<i>Sixth Wednesday of Lent</i>
		4:00 pm Confession
		6:30 pm Presanctified Liturgy
Friday	Apr 7	<i>Eve of Lazarus Saturday</i>
		6:30 pm Vespers of Lazarus Confession
Saturday	Apr 8	<i>Lazarus Saturday</i>
		9:30 am Divine Liturgy / Baptisms / Coffee Hour
		4:00 pm Confession
		5:30 pm Great Vespers & Litya Last Confessions
Sunday	Apr 9	<i>Palm Sunday / Tone 2 / The Lord's Triumphal entry into Jerusalem</i>
		Readings: Phil 4:4-9 John 12:1-18
		9:00 am Church School
		10:00 am Divine Liturgy / Procession Coffee Hour
Beginning of Holy Week		5:30 pm Bridegroom Matins

ATTENDANCE / STEWARDSHIP / Mar 26

Attendance	138
Operating	\$2,231.00
Maintenance	25.00
OCA Assessments	60.00
Charities	40.00
Alms	325.00
Uganda	70.00
Deanery	50.00
Flowers	80.00
Pierohi Sale	379.00

CATECHUMENS TO RECEIVE HOLY ILLUMINATION

Please keep our Catechumens in your prayers this week: Joseph, Venessa, Lillith & Vasili Pohl and Collin Urbana will all receive Baptism and Chrismation on Lazarus Saturday, April 8.

VIGIL AT THE TOMB

The sign-up is posted for those who wish to read at the Lord's Tomb beginning Holy Friday evening following the Burial Service.

CATECHUMEN CLASS

Tuesday, April 3 at 6:30 pm. We will conclude discussing the Nicene Creed. Everyone is invited.

CONFESSION NOTE

Confessions will be heard for the last time after the Vespers of Palm Sunday. College Students can approach anytime as they make their way home.

PRAYER CORNER + + + + +

Perry (Capitan), Julian, Sarah Crivella, Joella (Lu-Ann D's dghtr), Paris Santone (Debbie C's nephew), Anna Como, Barb (Renda frnd), Nick Covelli, David Campbell (Deb's bro), Norma K, George H, (Maryann S's frnds), the suffering Christians in Ukraine and the Middle East.

Birthdays: Lucia Rosca (4/4), Emily Schlotzer (4/8).

Expecting: Stephen & Rebecca, Maxim & Mindy, Collin & Laiken, Patrick & Elizabeth, David & Maria.

Our Missionaries: Scott.

Celebrating our 50th Anniversary

The Limits of Holiness

by Fr Steven Freeman

I saw a commercial recently that proclaimed, “Freedom has no limits!” It sought to capture the modern imagination with what is a patently absurd statement. Everything in creation has limits – that is the nature of created things. It is nonetheless the case that we can imagine our life without limits – a shameless existence where nothing impedes our pleasure. This was the inner world of a young woman in Alexandria who would later be known as St. Mary of Egypt.

She left home, according to her own testimony, and took up a life of unbridled pleasure: sex, alcohol, whatever she imagined and desired. From what we can tell, that lifestyle came without consequences, for she was running ahead at full throttle when she came face-to-face with a limit. The limit was an invisible force that would not let her cross the threshold of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

She had traveled to Jerusalem on a lark, partying with pilgrims, using her shamelessness to draw others into her pleasure. The True Cross of Christ, fully intact (it was the 6th century), was set to be displayed for veneration on the Feast of the Cross. The Cross, the Church, the Tomb, Golgotha, all that filled that holy place, were themselves to be reduced to objects of her pleasure, souvenirs of a good story. But there are limits.

The limit she encountered was obviously a gift from God. We are not told the nature of the invisible force that prevented her from entering the Church. Angel or the hand of the Most High – we do not know. Three times she was rebuffed and turned back.

In the years before that moment, she had no limits. As such, she had no knowledge of herself or the world. Everything was appetite and passion. We only know the world or ourselves by the limits that describe us. Interestingly, both the word “describe” and the word “define” are rooted in the notion of a limit, a boundary. When God made Himself known to us in the Incarnation of Christ, He allowed Himself to have a limit and a definition. He who was uncircumscribable became circumscribable. It is why we can make an icon of His image. When we dwell without limits (“unfettered freedom”), in some manner, we cease to have any meaningful existence. Who I am also means who I am not.

St. Mary met her limits. She embraced them and entered the desert. There, in years of prayer and fasting, she found, within her limits, the depth of her being and the depth of God. Its paradox is that this life within revealed limits is the only true freedom. Freedom is not the ability to do anything, to have no limits, but the ability to truly be who and what you are, which can only be known through the revelation of limits.

It is of note, I think, that the name of this saint was not made known until the day of her death, when she wrote it in the sand, leaving instructions for the Elder Zossima for her burial. She named herself, “The sinful Mary.” The limits that had been made known to her revealed her to be a saint, one who even walked on water. Such self-knowledge is also the path to knowledge of God whose service is perfect freedom.