

**Orthodox Parish of St Martin & St Helen
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the
British Isles and Ireland
Patriarchate of Antioch and all the East**

Charity number: 1192469

Sunday 29 March 2026. Issue 22.

Tone 1

**Fifth Sunday of Great Lent; Commemoration of our Righteous
Mother Mary of Egypt; Martyr Mark, bishop of Arethusa;
Martyr Cyril the deacon of Heliopolis and those with them;
Martyrs Jonah and Barachisios of Persia and those with them.**

**Epistle Reading
Hebrews (9:11-14)**

Prokeimenon in Tone I

Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, as we have put our hope in Thee.

Verse: Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous; praise becometh the just.

Brethren, Christ having appeared a High Priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; neither through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having found eternal redemption. For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of bulls and goats and with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Alleluia.

Verse 1: It is God who avengeth me, and who subdueth the peoples under me.

Verse 2: He magnifieth the salvations of the King and shows mercy unto his anointed, unto David and his seed for evermore.

Gospel Reading **Mark (10:32-45)**

At that time, they were on their way up to Jerusalem, and as Jesus was going in front of them, they were stunned; and those who followed were afraid. Again, he took the Twelve [aside] and began to tell them about the things that were going to happen to him. "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem. The Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death and deliver him to the Gentiles. They will scourge him, mock him, spit on him, and kill him. On the third day, he will rise again." James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached Jesus and said, "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we will ask!" He replied, "What do you want me to do for you?" They answered, "Grant to us that we may sit, one at your right hand, and one at your left hand, in your glory." But Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you are asking! Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They replied, "We are able!" Jesus said to them, "You shall indeed drink the cup that I drink, and you shall be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with! However, to sit at my right hand and at my left hand is not mine to give, but it is for whom it has been prepared." When the ten heard this, they became upset with James and John. Jesus called them, and told them, "You know that those who are recognized as rulers over the nations lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you! Whoever wants to become great among you shall be your servant. Whoever of you wants to become first shall be slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Troparion of the Resurrection. Tone 1.

When the stone had been sealed by the Jews; while the soldiers were guarding Thy most pure Body; Thou didst rise on the third day, O Saviour, granting life to the world. The powers of heaven therefore cried to Thee, O Giver of Life: Glory to Thy Resurrection O Christ! Glory to Thy Kingdom! Glory to Thy dispensation, O Thou who lovest mankind.

St Mary of Egypt
Troparion

The image of God was truly preserved in thee, O Mother, for thou didst take up the Cross and didst follow Christ. By so doing, thou didst teach us to disregard the flesh for it passes away; but to care instead for the soul, since it is immortal. Therefore thy spirit, O holy Mother Mary, rejoices with the angels.

St Martin the Merciful
Troparion

In signs and in miracles thou wast renowned throughout the land of Gaul. By grace thou art a light for the world, O Martin, Bishop blessed of God. Deeds of mercy and compassion filled thy life with their splendours, teaching and wise counsel were thy riches and treasures, which still thou dost dispense freely to those who honour thee.

St Helen
Troparion

We behold thee, glorious Helen, with thy God-inspired son, in the joys of the kingdom of Heaven, and we magnify Christ, for he hath revealed to us thine honoured festival, giving light more brilliant than the sun. Therefore we cry in faith: O People, exalt Christ above all forever!

To Thee the Champion Leader
Kontakion

To thee, the Champion Leader, we thy flock dedicate, a feast of victory and of thanksgiving, as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos. But as thou art one with might which is invincible, from all dangers that can be do thou deliver us, that we may cry to thee: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

St Mary of Egypt

She began her life as a young woman who followed the passions of the body, running away from her parents at age twelve. There she lived as a harlot for seventeen years, refusing money from the men that she copulated with, instead living by begging and spinning flax.

One day, she met a group of young men going to Jerusalem. Mary went along for the ride, seducing the men as they traveled for the fun of it. But when the group reached Jerusalem and went towards the church, Mary was prohibited from entering by an unseen force. After three such attempts, she remained outside on the church patio, where she looked up and saw an icon of the Theotokos. She began to weep and prayed with all her might that the Theotokos might allow her to see the True Cross; afterwards, she promised, she would renounce her worldly desires and go wherever the Theotokos may lead her.

She then fled into the desert to live as an ascetic, surviving for years on only three loaves of bread and thereafter on scarce herbs of the land. For another seventeen years, Mary was tormented by “wild beasts—mad desires and passions.” After these years of temptation, she overcame the passions.

Following 47 years in solitude, she met the priest St. Zosima in the desert. She recounted her story with great humility while demonstrating her gift of clairvoyance; she knew who Zosima was and his life story despite never having met him. Finally, she asked Zosima to meet her again the following year at sunset on Holy Thursday by the banks of the Jordan.

Zosima did exactly this, though he began to doubt his experience as the sun set. Then Mary appeared on the opposite side of the Jordan; crossing herself, she miraculously walked across the water and met Zosima. When he attempted to bow, she rebuked him, saying that as a priest he was far superior, and furthermore, he was holding the Holy Mysteries. Mary then received communion and walked back across the Jordan after giving Zosima instructions about his monastery and that he should return to where they first met exactly a year later. When he did so, he found Mary's body with a message written in the sand asking him for burial and revealing that she had died immediately after receiving the Holy Mysteries the year before. So Zosima, amazed, began to dig, but soon tired; then a lion approached and began to help him, after Zosima had recovered from his fear of the creature. Thus St. Mary of Egypt was buried. Zosima returned to the monastery, told all he had seen, and improved the faults of the monks and abbot there. He died at almost a hundred years old in the same monastery.

Source: Orthodox Wiki

Services this week

Wednesday 1 April, 6pm

Presanctified Liturgy, St Martin's Church.