

## **The Fifth Sunday of Great Lent**

### **Mark 10:32-45**

And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him, Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles: And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again. And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared. And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.(KJV)

### **St. Mary of Egypt**

#### **Luke 7:36-50**

And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace .(KJV)

The last week of Great Lent has arrived. The time remaining until the arrival of Holy Week is brief and precious. If we are to benefit greatly, we must invest extensively in the remaining days.

The Lord God is good and merciful, Today's Gospel from St. Luke describes the Lord Jesus Christ's willingness and power to forgive sins. Jesus recognized and responded to the repentant woman's great faith.

The remaining time until the arrival of Holy Week is a time for repentance and completely focusing on the Lord Jesus Christ. The arrival of Pascha will soon be with us.

Now is the time to ready ourselves for the arrest, trial and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus' great and immeasurable love for each person as exemplified on the Cross and merits a central place in the heart, mind and soul.

Today and each day we need to guard our heart, mind and soul that we do not put our soul in peril. Evil abounds in today world. That which appears good may actually be evil.

Serious prayer and fasting keep the believer vigilant and on guard against evil attacks and perilous temptations. The Lord God will strengthen and guide attentive and vigilant believers to the Heavenly Kingdom.

In today's Gospel of St. Mark, Jesus describes His forthcoming arrest, abuse, death and Resurrection. Let us use the days ahead to seriously contemplate all that Jesus has done in love for each of us.

Worldly distractions and events need to be set aside. Jesus deserves our increased focused attention with each arriving moment. Jesus' love will heal our deepest hurts and cleanse our transgressions.

When we repent, we give ourselves to Jesus Christ and become unified with Him. When we repent, Jesus fills our heart, mind and soul and transforms us. The Body and Blood of Christ renews us, guides us and empowers us in Christ.

The Divine services of the Church today and each day strengthen, educate and offer healing. We learn of Christ and draw closer to Christ with each service we attend.

The time of life comes only once. We do well to invest our time wisely, seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteous. (Mt.6:33) The Church keeps us on the narrow path to the Kingdom, salvation and eternal life.

Let us heed Jesus' lessons on forgiveness and service in the Name of the Lord as recorded in the Gospels for today. May we recognize Jesus' unsurpassed love and humility and make them a part of our daily lives.

Thank God for the Church and the opportunity to repent. Thank God for the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us always be thoroughly mindful of Jesus' suffering, death on the Cross and Resurrection which changed the world forever.