

Family Connections

5th Sunday of Lent: St. Mary of Egypt

Hebrews 9:11-14 & Mark 10:32-45



Repentance is the daughter of hope and the denial of despair. It is not despondency but eager expectation. It is not self-hatred but the affirmation of my true self as made in God's image. To repent is to look, not downward at my own shortcomings, but upward at God's love; not backward with self-reproach, but forward with trustfulness. It is to see, not what I have failed to be, but what by the grace of Christ I can yet become.

—St. John Climacus (7th century)

EXPLORE TOGETHER:

St. Mary of Egypt Hike—St. Mary's life is a truly inspiring story of repentance. She lived a life of complete debauchery fulfilling her many desires—but through

her repentance and confession she lived 47 years in the desert and is numbered among the virgin martyrs. Find a place to go for a hike as a family—away from the hustle and bustle of town. When you find a quiet place to rest, share the story of St. Mary of Egypt. Although most of us aren't being called to retreat from the world, discuss how we can “retreat” each day to connect with God. Visit www.lent.goarch.org for information about St. Mary of Egypt and resources to guide your Lenten journey.

Confession—As we are quickly approaching Holy Week, now would be a good time to again encourage everyone in your family to go for confession. To help your children understand the sacrament, 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 they move closer to Christ. Discuss how confession not only repairs our broken connection but actually brings us closer to Christ. Watch the four-minute Be the Bee episode #36 “Confession” (bethebee.goarch.org/) as a family in preparation.

**Before church next week, read the scripture passages for the
Palm Sunday: Triumphant Entry
Philippians 4:4-9 & John 12:1-18**

FOR MORE INFORMATION FOR COUPLES AND FAMILIES, VISIT:



Center for Family Care of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America
www.family.goarch.org