



# Main Church Iconography

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

TOGETHER, LET US ADORN OUR PARISH

*Sponsor an Icon today!*



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

*April 1 & the Fifth Sunday of Great & Holy Lent*



St. Mary followed the passions of the body and ran away from her parents at age twelve for Alexandria. There she lived as a harlot for seventeen years. One day, she joined a group of young men heading toward Jerusalem for the veneration of the Holy Cross. But when she reached the church in Jerusalem, she was prevented from entering by an unseen force. After three attempts, 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, and promised she would leave her worldly desires and go where the Theotokos may lead her.

After this heart-felt conversion, she fled into the desert to live as an ascetic. She survived for years on only three loaves of bread and then on herbs of the land. After years of temptation, she overcame the passions and was led by the Theotokos in all things. After 47 years in solitude, she met the priest, Zosima, in the desert, told him her story with great humility and demonstrated her gift of clairvoyance. He agreed to meet her again the following year at sunset on Holy Thursday by the banks of the Jordan. Mary then received communion and walked back across the Jordan. The following year, St. Zosima found her body lying next to a message in the sand asking him for burial; St. Mary had died immediately after receiving Holy Communion the year before. Zosima began to dig but soon tired, after which a lion approached and helped him dig.

*Apolytikion: The image of God, was faithfully preserved in you, O Mother. For you took up the Cross and followed Christ. By Your actions you taught us to look beyond the flesh for it passes, rather to be concerned about the soul which is immortal. Wherefore, O Holy Mary, your soul rejoices with the angels.*