

Catechism Lesson for Adults and Teens
Sunday of St Mary of Egypt

The Request of James & John

Read the Gospel Passage AND the verses before it of this Sunday:
Mark 10:32-45

Contextual Background:

-This Sunday, we remember St. Mary of Egypt, who lived a hard life given over to temptation and the passions. Her repentance was great when she heard the Theotokos telling her to repent from her old life of sin. She lived the rest of her life in the desert, praying, fasting, and engaging in spiritual warfare. Her whole life was transformed by her repentance

-In this Gospel reading, we see how James and John, two of Jesus' closest disciples, asked to have royal and dignified placement in Jesus' glory. It is unclear, but James and John might have thought Jesus was come to become King of Jerusalem and all of Israel instead of considering Jesus' place as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, a Heavenly King

-Nonetheless, Jesus still invites the two disciples to "drink from the same cup" and baptized into the same baptism. Jesus here refers to His Death, and asks the two if they are willing to give up their lives to suffer and be mocked. To the martyrs and the saints are great honors bestowed

-In our faith, we hold that the royal thrones reserved were reserved for the Theotokos and for John the Baptist, which is why we depict the two always on the Icon Gate in our churches. However, King's still have a grand/large "Royal Court/Counsel", much like how our own government has an entire cabinet board who help delegate the responsibilities of the President, appointed by the President. IN the same way, all of us are invited to take place in the Divine Counsel.

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you think James and John were really seeking in their request?
 - a. A close relationship with God
 - b. Power and a position of authority
 - c. Special recognition
 - d. Spiritual security
 - e. Parental Approval

2. If you were one of the disciples who listened in on this conversation between John, James, and Jesus, how might you react?
 - a. Point out how James and John are looking for special treatment
 - b. Put your name in the lot for one of these honors
 - c. Shirk away from the offer—sounds like a lot of trouble and responsibility
 - d. Be content with following and letting others take lead

3. Which of the following do you think is typical of people in positions of authority?
 - a. Expecting others to serve them
 - b. Taking advantage of other people
 - c. Using their position to serve others
 - d. Using their position to get ahead
 - e. Not caring about others

4. What do you think being “slave of all” means?
 - a. Doing menial tasks for everyone
 - b. Being humble or obedient
 - c. Allowing others to treat you poorly
 - d. Considering others’ interests over your own

5. In what ways does Jesus practice what He preached—being the ultimate servant to all?

6. Who has been an example to you of a Christ-like servant? What effect has that person had on your life?

7. The nature of work requires sacrifice, and to act as a Servant of the Lord we all must offer some sacrifice as our labor.
 - a. What are some sacrifices you have already made to God?
 - b. What are some sacrifices are you worried/afraid to make to God?
 - c. What are some sacrifices you wish to make to God?