

Saint Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church
971 St. Clair Rd, Johnstown, PA 15905
Rev. Presbyter Dragan Vukovic
(814) 244-4063

Thomas Sunday
(05.12.2024.)

John 20:19-31

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He shewed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the LORD. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My LORD and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name. (KJV)

Hristos Voskrese! Vaistinu Voskrese!

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

God's Holy Church is continuing to celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Resurrection joy continues to permeate the Divine services and believers' hearts, minds and souls.

Today's Gospel describes the Resurrected Jesus appearing to the Holy Apostles at a time Thomas was absent. The Apostles blessed to be present when the Risen Jesus appeared were convinced of His Resurrection.

When Thomas learned from the other Apostles of their experience, he remained doubtful. Thomas wanted proof for himself that Jesus had risen from the dead.

Jesus appeared to the Apostles again when Thomas was present. Thomas had the opportunity to reach forth and touch the Risen Jesus. He was convinced and proclaimed "My Lord and my God!"

Since Jesus' ascension into heaven, believers have not had the opportunity to view the Risen Jesus in person. Beginning with the Holy Apostles and continuing through the centuries, the Church has proclaimed the truth about Jesus' Resurrection.

The Church offers teachings and experiences with Jesus through the Divine services and Holy Mysteries. Jesus told Thomas in the present Gospel "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

At Holy Baptism, believers confess belief in Jesus Christ as King and as God. Believers reaffirm belief in Jesus Christ's Virgin Birth, Death on the Cross and Resurrection each time The Creed is recited during the Divine Liturgy.

Believers experience Jesus Christ in Baptism, Chrismation, when partaking of His Precious Body and Blood during the Divine Liturgy, in the marriage service, during ordination and when being anointed at Holy Unction.

Believers experience Jesus in prayer and in daily life occurrences. Jesus is alive in believers' hearts, minds and souls and has always been. Proof of Jesus' presence is verified by believers of every age from their personal experience.

Skeptics and naysayers about Jesus are always present. Opponents and enemies of Jesus always exist. Evil seeks to triumph over Jesus and Jesus' followers. Serious believers take heart and draw strength from their personal experience.

Serious believers know from personal experience that Jesus Christ is very much alive in their hearts, minds and souls. On Holy Saturday believers hear reassuring words from the Risen Christ.

In St. Matthew's Gospel read on Holy Saturday, the Risen Jesus tells His disciples: "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Mt.28:20) The Church will continue to celebrate Jesus' Resurrection until the Feast of Ascension.

Every Divine Liturgy is a celebration of Jesus' Resurrection. Believers have opportunities to share the joy of Jesus' Resurrection with others in daily life. Jesus' defeat of death is message to share with others and not to be kept hidden.

Jesus' defeat of death is the antidote to the depression and gloom prevalent in today's world. Jesus Christ risen from the dead is the triumphant joy filling hearts of believers in all of life's circumstances.

Pascha is called the Feast of Feasts because death is defeated and the possibility of eternal life is verified. The joy of Pascha is a joy to share with others unaware of the true meaning of the Resurrection.

The Risen Jesus is triumphant over evil and death! The Risen Jesus brings joy that cannot be stifled. The Risen Jesus shines the Light capable of eradicating the world's darkness. The Risen Jesus is the peace that passes all understanding. (Phil.4:7)

Hristos Voskrese! Vaistinu Voskrese! Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

**Thomas Sunday. St. Basil of Ostrog, Wonderworker. Holy Martyr Basil, Baker from Pech.
April 29/May 12, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.**

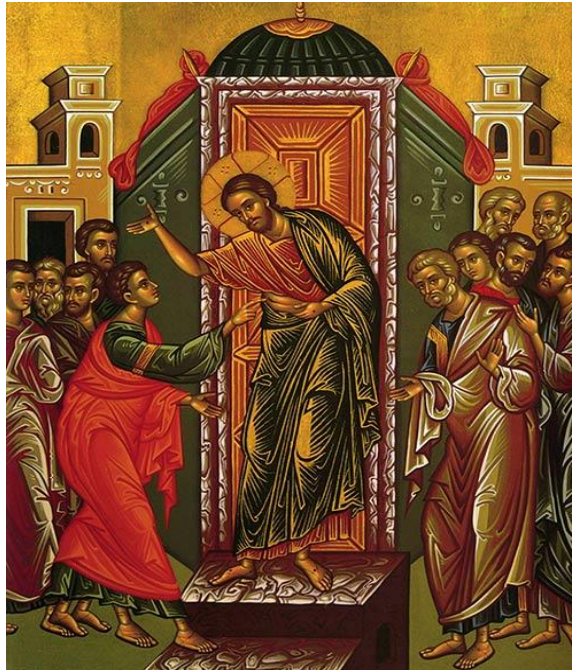
Father Rodney Torbic

Sunday of Thomas

The Orthodox Church observes the Sunday of Thomas one week following the celebration of the Sunday of Holy Pascha. The day commemorates the appearance of Christ to His disciples on the evening of the Sunday following Passover. It also commemorates the appearance of the Lord to His disciples eight days later when Thomas was present and proclaimed "My Lord and my God" upon seeing the hands and side of Christ.

This Sunday is also called Antipascha (meaning "in the stead of Pascha," not "in opposition to Pascha") because with this day, the first Sunday after Pascha, the Church consecrates every Sunday of the year to the commemoration of Pascha, that is, the Resurrection. Saint Thomas the Apostle is commemorated by the Church on October 6.

Biblical Story



The events commemorated on the Sunday of Thomas are recorded in the Gospel of Saint John 20:19-29. Following the crucifixion and burial of Christ, the disciples were gathered in a room with the doors closed and locked for fear of the Jews. On the evening of the Sunday after Passover, Jesus Christ entered the room and stood in their midst, greeting them with the words, "Peace be with you." (v. 19) He showed the disciples his hands, feet, and side. (v. 20)

Thomas was not present with the disciples when Jesus appeared, and he did not accept the testimony of the other disciples concerning Christ's Resurrection. He stated, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." (vv. 24-25)

Eight days later, the disciples were gathered together again with Thomas present, and the Lord appeared in the same manner. Standing in their midst he said, "Peace be with you." He then spoke directly to Thomas and said, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." (vv. 26-27) Thomas answered, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus replied by saying, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." (v. 29)

Icon of the Sunday of Thomas

The icon of the Sunday of Thomas depicts Christ standing in the midst of the disciples. He has appeared to the eleven in the upper room, and he is inviting Thomas to come and examine his hands and his side. Thomas is reaching out to touch the side of Jesus. He is also looking to Jesus in a manner that indicates his faith and the proclamation recorded in Scripture.

Orthodox Christian Celebration of the Feast of Sunday of Thomas

The Sunday of Thomas is celebrated with the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom. On this Sunday and throughout the Paschal period until the Apodosis or leave-taking of Pascha, the day before the Feast of the Ascension, the services begin with the chanting of the troparion of Pascha, "Christ is risen..."

Scripture readings for the feast are the following: At Orthros: Matthew 28:16-20, the first of eleven resurrectional Gospel passages that are read in a cycle throughout the year during the Sunday matins. On this day the cycle always begins with the first Gospel passage; At the Divine Liturgy: [Acts 5:12-20](#) and [John 20:19-31](#).

Hymns of The Feast

Apolytikion (Grave Tone)

While the tomb was sealed, You, O Life, did shine forth from the grave, O Christ God; and while the doors were shut, You did come unto Your disciples, O Resurrection of all, renewing through them an upright Spirit in us according to Your great mercy.

Kontakion (Plagal of the Fourth Tone)

With his searching right hand, Thomas did probe Your life-bestowing side, O Christ God; for when You did enter while the doors were shut, he cried out unto You with the rest of the Apostles: You are my Lord and my God.

Services this Week

- **Tuesday (05.14.024.)**
Holy Prophet Jeremiah
– 9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy
- ***3rd Sunday of Pacha – of the St Myrrhbearers (05.19.2024.)*** **ST. NICHOLAS SLAVA ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION SUNDAY**
– Righteous Job the Long-suffering;
Transfer of the Relics of St Sava of Serbia
Divine Liturgy starts at 09:30 AM

Donations May 3-5, 2024

Offering - \$ 7,145.00 Candles - \$230.00

Easter Donations

Men's Club - \$200

Eli Cvijanovich IMO deceased brothers Thomas, George, Daniel, John, Charles and nephew Scott - \$200 to the Bell Tower Fund

Large Candles

IMO Mary Ellen Locher-Byrd from Helene Gleason

IMO Mike & Mildred Tumbas from Milica Knepp

IMO Grandparents Amelia & Pete Mastovich from Rick Kondas

IMO brother Joseph Kondas from Rick Kondas

**A very special thank you to the following for donating or purchasing flowers for Easter.
It helped make our Iconastas more Beautiful!**

Olga Bulich

Father Rodney Torbic

Dan & Diane Tomak IMO Damjena & Lazo Gjurich and Bosa & Lazo Vuckovich

Jencine Campagna

Diane Thomas

John & Patricia Pavich

Adam Lichvar IMO The Dudukovich Family

Sandra Rolley IMO The Dudukovich Family

Brandon & Melana Simms IMO Connie Bartis

Carole McAllister IMO Nick & Sara Davich and Nicholas Davich Jr.

Richard Kondas IMO Parents Amelia & Joseph Kondas and Brother Joseph

Helene Gleason IMO Lazo & Bosa Vuckovich

Joe Bartis IMO Connie Bartis

Sylvester Gjurich and Debbie & Lazo Gjurich IMO Betty Gjurich

Eli Cvijanovich IMO Ilija & Martha Cvijanovich

Joe Golden IMO Golden and Vuchev Families

Joanne Uzelac and Tony & Linda Freidhoff IMO Donald Uzelac and

Wayne & Patricia Freidhoff

Donna Zimmerman

Gojko, Rose & Kristina Marinkovich

Richard & Suzette Gardenhour IMO The Bozic, Grisin and Gardenhour Families

Danica Wess & Patricia Niel IMO Deceased Family Members

PLEASE TAKE FLOWERS THIS SUNDAY!!!!!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

ST. NICHOLAS SLAVA ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION SUNDAY, MAY 19, 2024 - Divine Liturgy 9:30 AM

Change in church time - Beginning Sunday, June 2, 2024. Divine Liturgy will begin at 9:30 AM and continue at that time until Sunday, September 8, 2024, when it will then again begin at 10:00 AM.

MEMORIAL SERVICES IN 2024

Memorial services at the Church cemeteries will be held as follows:

BENSHOF HILL CEMETERY on Saturday, June 8, 2024 – 9:30 AM (Begin at Top)

GRANDVIEW CEMETERY on Saturday, June 8, 2024 – Beginning at 1:00 PM

OLD ST. NICHOLAS CEMETERY on Saturday, June 15, 2024 – 9:30 AM

ST. PETKA CEMETERY Saturday, June 15, 2024 – 10:30 AM – (Begin at Top)

Polka-Fest – Friday May 31st to Sunday, June 2nd

Band of Brothers – July 11-13th and 17 – 20th



SATURDAY, AUGUST 10TH 2024

Johnstown Slavic Festival – September 20-21st