

Η ΨΗΛΑΦΗΣΙΣ



ABOUT DOUBT AND FAITH

Today is known as ST. THOMAS SUNDAY. Two great but contrasting themes present themselves on this Sunday following our Lord's Resurrection.

The first theme we will explore is DOUBT by this Apostle. Informed that Jesus had risen from the dead and had in fact appeared to the other disciples, Thomas proclaimed: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails . . . and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe." Yes, Thomas doubted. Indeed, it is human to doubt, but this imposes an obligation to search and resolve the doubt. Thomas returned to the company of believers, and in the end falls at the feet of the Risen Savior, proclaiming: "My Lord and my God!"

The other theme is our Lord's COMPASSION and LOVE. He did not forget Thomas and wipe his name off the slate of Apostleship. Eight days after the Resurrection, when the Apostles had again gathered behind locked doors, the Risen Lord appeared and quickly called for Thomas to come . . . "Reach here your finger, and behold my hands, and reach here your hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless but believing."

But there is also an appeal to people today: Jesus said "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." Among those "blessed" we may number ourselves if we proclaim with St. Thomas: "My Lord and my God!"

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SAINT NEKTARIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

5108 Kuykendall Road, Charlotte, NC 28270

(704) 708-4669 · (704) 846-6094 fax · office@stnektarios.org

Please contact our office for general inquiries or to schedule an appointment.

Clergy information is provided for emergencies and confidential communication, when required.

Fr. Andreas G. Houpos, Proistamenos — fr.andreas@stnektarios.org · (980) 333-9563

Fr. Nektarios Karantonis — frkarantonis@stnektarios.org · (980) 829-5215

Fr. Steve Dalber (retired) — frdalber@stnektarios.org · (704) 451-6524

Fr. Paul Tsahakis — frtsahakis@stnektarios.org · (704) 608-1112



Χριστὸς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν, θανάτῳ θάνατον πατήσας, καὶ τοῖς ἐν τοῖς μνήμασι, ζωὴν χαρισάμενος.

The First Antiphon 4

The Second Antiphon 5

Save us, O Son of God, risen from the dead. We sing to You, Alleluia.

The Third Antiphon

Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

The Small Entrance 7

Bless God in the churches, the Lord from the fountains of Israel. Save us, O Son of God, risen from the dead. We sing to You, Alleluia.

Hymns After the Small Entrance.

Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

Apolytikion. Grave Mode

O Life, You rose from the sepulcher, even though the tomb was secured with a seal, O Christ God. Then, although the doors were shut, You came to Your Disciples, O Resurrection of all. Through them You renew a right spirit in us, according to Your great mercy.

Kontakion of Pascha

Though You went down into the tomb, O Immortal One, yet You brought down the dominion of Hades; and You rose as the victor, O Christ our God; and You called out "Rejoice" to the Myrrh-bearing women, and gave peace to Your Apostles, O Lord who to the fallen grant resurrection.

Trisagion Hymn 8

The Readings

Epistle: Acts. 5:12-20.

46

In those days, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy they arrested the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out and said, "Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

Gospel: Jn. 20:19-31.

47

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them: "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called

the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe." Eight days later, His disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to Him: "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

The Great Entrance

12

The Creed

18

Hymn to the Theotokos

Mother of our God, we praise you * as the brightly shining lamp, * the illustrious glory * of all creation, of which you are the highest. *
With sacred hymns we magnify you.

The Lord's Prayer

26

Communion Prayers

29

(Read aloud by the Congregation)

I believe and confess, Lord, that You are truly the Christ, the Son of the living God, Who came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the first. I also believe that this is truly Your pure Body and that this is truly Your precious Blood. Therefore, I pray to You, have mercy upon me, and forgive my transgressions, voluntary and involuntary, in word and deed, known and unknown and make me worthy, without condemnation, to partake of Your pure Mysteries for the forgiveness of sins and for life eternal. Amen. How shall I, who am unworthy,

enter into the splendor of Your saints? If I dare to enter into the bridal chamber, my clothing will accuse me, since it is not a wedding garment; and being bound up, I shall be cast out by the angels. In Your love, Lord, cleanse my soul and save me. Loving Master, Lord Jesus Christ, my God, let not these Holy Gifts be to my condemnation because of my unworthiness, but for the cleansing and sanctification of soul and body and the pledge of future life and Kingdom. It is good for me to cling to God and to place in Him the hope of my salvation. Receive me today, Son of God, as a partaker of Your mystical supper. I will not reveal your mystery to Your adversaries. Nor will I give You a kiss as did Judas. But as the thief, I confess to You: Lord, Remember me in Your Kingdom.

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord from the heavens, praise Him in the highest. Alleluia.

Holy Communion: Orthodox Christians prepared to receive Holy Communion come forward quietly and reverently at the direction of the ushers.

Prayers of Thanksgiving after Holy Communion can be found on pages 40--42.

Hymn after Holy Communion

Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

Homily

The Dismissal

Christ is risen from the dead, by death trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.