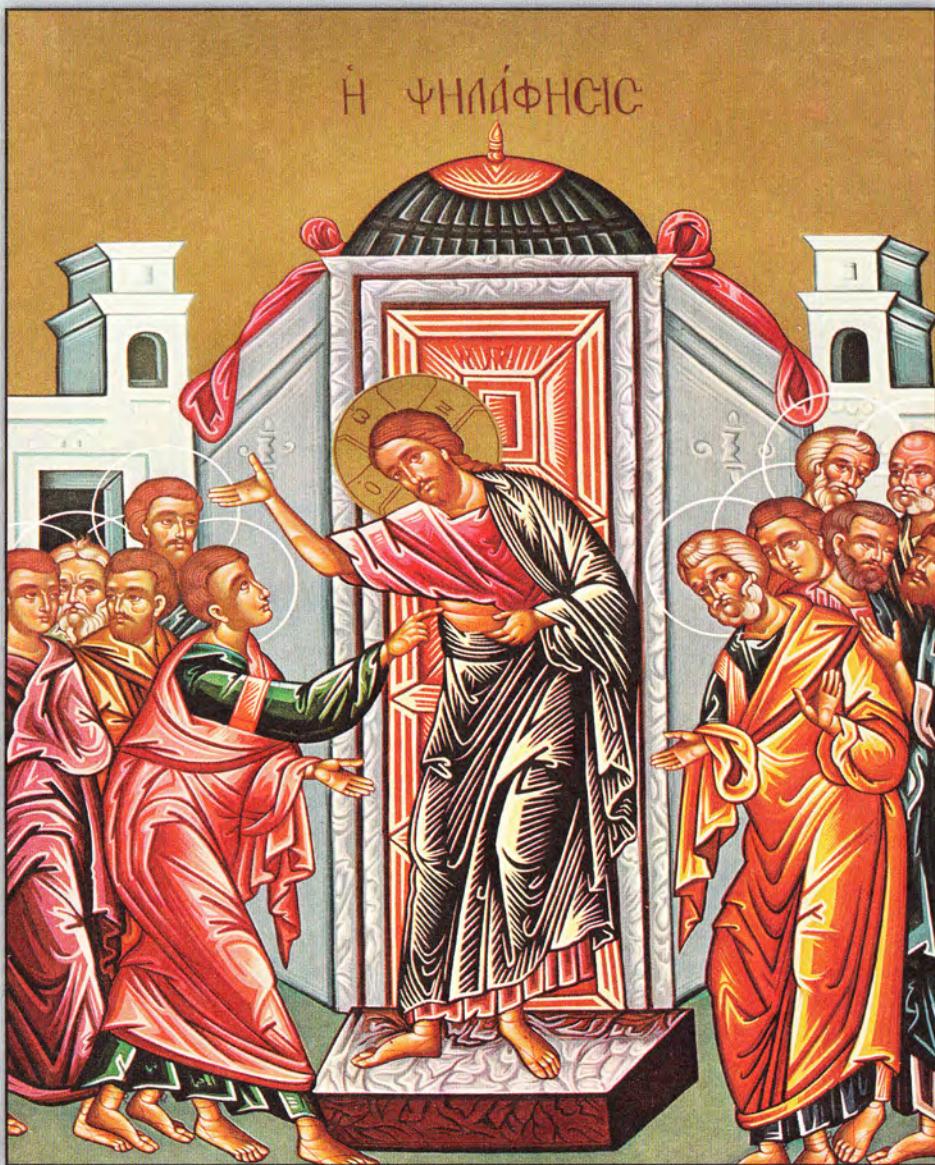


THOMAS SUNDAY



Icon of Saint Thomas and Christ



April 3, 2016

SECOND SUNDAY OF PASCHA – THE SUNDAY OF THOMAS

OUR VENERABLE FATHER AND CONFESSOR NICETAS, HEGUMEN OF THE MEDIKION MONASTERY

ХРИСТОС ВОСКРЕС!

ВОІСТИНУ ВОСКРЕС!

CHRIST IS RISEN!

TRULY HE IS RISEN!

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR THE WEEK OF APRIL 4 – APRIL 10

SATURDAY, APRIL 9 – *THE HOLY MARTYR EUPSYCHIUS*

6:00 PM – Great Vespers

SUNDAY, APRIL 10 – *THIRD SUNDAY OF PASCHA - SUNDAY OF THE MYRRH BEARING WOMEN; THE HOLY MARTYRS TERENCE, POMPEIUS AND THOSE WITH THEM*

9:30 AM – Divine Liturgy For All Parishioners

*If you are reading the bulletin during the Liturgy (including the homily),
please stop and be attentive – будьмо уважні!*

We have journeyed through the Lenten Fast together, let us now come together and feast. Join us today for our annual Sviachenne meal. Everyone is welcome! Heartfelt thanks to all who made today's meal possible.

Дуже Дякую!

Thank you to all those who brought the Lenten Soup or other delicious Lenten dishes and breads for the Wednesday evening meal and Spiritual Talks/discussions during the Great Fast.

LITURGICAL NOTES ABOUT THE PASCHAL SEASON

This period of great festivity and joy finds its liturgical expression in the following manner:

- ❖ We greet each other with the Paschal salutation, “**Christ is risen!** **Indeed He is risen!**” for 40 days, until Ascension Day.
- ❖ We **do not kneel** or make prostrations either at church services or in our homes until the “Kneeling Prayers” at Pentecost.
- ❖ The Paschal Troparion, “Christ is risen from the dead” is sung or said at the beginning or end of all prayers until the Leave-taking of Pascha on the Eve of Ascension.
- ❖ The prayer, “O Heavenly King” is **omitted** until Pentecost, being replaced with the Troparion of Pascha and then Ascension.

ABOUT THE VICTORY OVER THE LAST ENEMY

From the Prologue of Ochrid / St. Nikolai Velimirovich

"The last enemy to be destroyed is death" (1 Cor 15:26).

Man's first enemy is the devil, the second is sin and the third is death. The Lord Jesus conquered all three of these enemies of the human race. By His humility, He conquered the proud devil. By His death, He conquered sin and by His resurrection, He conquered death. In conquering all of our enemies, He invites us to be partakers in His glorious victory. Not only that we conquer but that we win together with Him. Only His power conquers, only His weapons triumph. Alone we are without power and weapons, and our enemies are fearful. But with Him, we conquer those mightier than ourselves. What is the price that He offers to us for His victory? A meager price, my brethren; for a very paltry price He offers us the most precious victory. To humble ourselves and to submit ourselves to the will of God, that is the price He seeks in order to conquer the devil for us. To die unto ourselves, to die to fleshly desires and passions, that is the price which He seeks in order to conquer for us. To live for Him and not for ourselves, to receive Him into our hearts, that is the price He seeks in order to conquer death for us. He conquered all enemies openly and completely. This is the price for which He offers His victory to each of us. The Apostle Paul speaks: "But thanks be to God Who gives us the victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 15:57).



A Reminder about Standing on all Sundays and everyday from Pascha to Pentecost

This is not an innovation, rather it is the explicit reiteration of a long tradition and teaching of the early church about the nature of the celebration of the Lord's Day (i.e. Sunday.) This proscription of the church dates from the time of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea (325 AD.) There was a divergence in practice in various places and the church identified the need to emphasize the resurrectional character of the Lord's Day. The fact that an Ecumenical Council discussed and eventually issued a Canon (rule) on this subject shows the importance in the eyes of the church fathers. Canon 20 of the Council (which has never been negated) states: Since there are some communities that still bend their knees on the Lord's Day (Sunday) and on the days of Pentecost, this Holy Council decrees that the common prayers (i.e., at Liturgy) are to be rendered to God standing.

To be very clear – This canon of the First Ecumenical Council applies to Every Sunday of the Year! **One should NOT kneel during Divine Services on ANY Sunday** (custom nor the practice of the Latin Church notwithstanding).

**Пригадуємо що стоямо під час Служби
Божої кожної Неділі року і кожного дня від
Великодня до Неділі П'ятдесятниці**

Це не є нова вигадка а виразне повторення стародавного звичаю і повчання стародавної Церкви про праведне додержування Господнього Дня (Неділі). Це повчання ще із Собору Нікеї (325р). Були різні звичаї в різних місцевосцях і Церква рішила наголосити Христове Воскресення кожної Неділі. Ця справа була така важлива що Церковні Отці рішили надати закон. Канон 20 (яке ніколи небуло заперечене) каже: Тому що є деякі громади що ще клякають в Неділю і в дні П'ятдесятниці, цей Святий Собор проголошує що в спільній молитві (Служба Божа) молимось Богові стоячи.

Вияснуємо – Цей Канон Нікеї стосується кожної Неділі в році! **Не клякаємо під час неділішної Служби Божої** (не залежно від особистого звичаю ані Римо-Католицької традиції.)



THE DATE OF PASCHA

According to the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, 325, Pascha is to be celebrated on the first Sunday, following the full moon after the vernal equinox. The significance of this day is as follows.

The vernal equinox not only marks the beginning of spring for us in the northern hemisphere, but it is also the time when every place on earth is directly touched by the light of the sun and there are twelve hours of daylight and twelve hours of night. While the sun lightens one half of the earth during the day, the full moon lightens the other half by night. The Sunday following this astronomical phenomenon is the brightest Sunday of the year – the Sunday of Great and Holy Pascha.

This astronomical phenomenon is a cosmic image of how Christ unites both the spiritual and physical worlds in the most resplendent day of His Resurrection. Throughout the hymnology of Pascha, this reality is proclaimed. In the Paschal Canon, we sing:

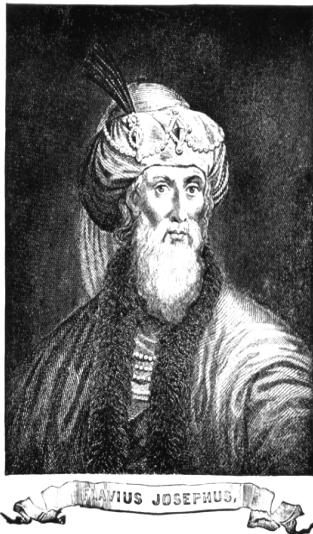
“Now all is filled with light: heaven and earth and the lower regions. Let all creation celebrate the rising of Christ in Whom we are established!”

“This is the bright and saving night, sacred and supremely festal. It heralds the radiant day of the Resurrection on which the timeless light shone forth from the tomb for all!”

In Genesis we read how God on the first day created light and separated the light from the darkness; the light He called day and the darkness He called night. When Christ rose from the dead on Sunday, the first day of the week, He inaugurated a new creation, a new era, in which He would give to the world the never-waning Light of His Resurrection. The Gospel reading for the Pascha Liturgy proclaims this mystery:

“In the beginning was the Word... and the Word was God... All things were made by Him... In Him was life; and the life was the light of men... The light shines in darkness and the darkness overcomes it not.” (John 1:1,3-5)

THE MOST PROMINENT 1ST CENTURY JEWISH HISTORIAN ON JESUS CHRIST



JOSEPHUS FLAVIUS

Through the centuries there has been much shameful slander spread about Christ the Lord. But all of those lies are refuted by the most prominent historian of the Jews, Josephus Flavius, rabbi and scholar who lived toward the end of the first century after Christ. Josephus writes: "Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ. And when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him; for He appeared to them alive again the third day; as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning Him. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day." [Antiquities of the Jews, Volume 2, Page 45 1845 Edition]. Thus wrote a man not believing in Christ but a scholar free of prejudice and malice.

WHAT IS A FIRST-PORTION GIVER?

A First-Portion Giver is a believer who offers a first-portion of his time, talent, and financial resources out of grateful recognition of the fact that all he has, he holds in trust from God.



A First Portion Giver offers a first portion of his *time*.

"Let us spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing. But let us encourage one another..."

Hebrews 10:24-25



A First Portion Giver offers a first portion of his *talent*.

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men."

1 Corinthians 12:4-6



A First Portion Giver offers a first portion of his *treasure*.

"Concerning the collection for the saints..., on the first day of the week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in proportion to the income God has given you..."

1 Corinthians 16:2



The Testimony That Christ Rose From the Dead

from: johnsanidopoulos.com

It may come as a surprise that one of the most reliable testified events in the ancient world is the resurrection of Christ, recorded in writing within a generation after the event (see 1 Corinthians 15) and fully testified within two generations while the majority of the witnesses were still alive. To understand how rare this is in the ancient world, one need only look at such a historical figure as Alexander the Great, whose earliest biography was not written until about 400 years after his death, after the earliest written testimony for Jesus.

Twelve Resurrection Appearances in the New Testament

There are twelve indisputable resurrection appearances recorded in the New Testament which spanned a time period of forty days following the event of the resurrection. They are to the following people:

- Mary Magdalene (Mk. 16:9-11; Jn. 20:11-18)
- The Myrrh-bearing women (Mt. 28:9-10)
- Two disciples going to Emmaus (Mk. 16:12-13; Lk. 24:13-32)
- Peter (Lk. 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:4)
- Ten disciples (Lk. 24:36-43; Jn. 20:19-25)
- Eleven disciples (Mk. 16:14; Jn. 26-29)
- Seven disciples (Jn. 21: 1-23)
- Eleven disciples on the mountain (Mt. 28:16-20)
- Over five hundred disciples (1 Cor. 15:6)
- James, the brother of our Lord (1 Cor. 15:7)
- Disciples in Bethany at the Ascension (Lk. 24:50-53; Acts. 1:2-12)
- Paul (1 Cor. 15:8)

We should mention that Acts 1:3 records Jesus appeared many times over a forty day period following his resurrection from the dead, so the appearances are not limited to only twelve.

How many saw the resurrected Christ?

Over a period of forty days Christ rarely appeared to only one individual disciple. Usually many were present, and he gave ample evidence that his

resurrection was in his physical body (they touched his wounds and saw him eat). From the testimony in the New Testament, we know that well over five hundred people saw the risen Jesus, usually in groups, and there are no contradictions in the accounts nor recorded disputes about these appearances by those who saw him.

When did they see the resurrected Christ?

Interestingly, all the resurrection appearances occurred either during the day, afternoon or towards evening. Never is a resurrection appearance recorded at night, lest it be confused with a dream.

Where was the risen Christ seen?

The risen Christ appeared in many different areas, both indoors and outdoors. He was seen:

- Near his tomb
- On a well travelled road
- At the seashore
- Inside a home
- On a mountain
- In a city
- Outdoors
- In Judea
- In Galilee

How did they see the risen Jesus?

The appearances of Jesus were not passing visions, but they lasted over many hours to people of different backgrounds and occupations, where he would eat with those he appeared to and have conversations with them. None of them had previously believed that he would rise from dead, so initially the appearances confirmed the event and clarified teachings they may not have understood.

- The Apostle John writes in 1 John 1:1-4 that they heard, they saw, and they touched the risen Christ.
- The Apostle Peter says in Acts 10:41 that they ate and drank with the risen Christ.

ON THE SAVING WORK OF CHRIST

He was wrapped in swaddling clothes, but when he rose from the tomb he laid aside the shroud ... He asks where Lazarus has been laid, for he is man; but he raises him to life, for he is God. He is sold, dirt cheap, for thirty pieces of silver, but he redeems the world, at great cost, with his own blood ... He was weak and wounded, but he cures all infirmity, and all weakness. He was nailed to the wood and lifted up, but he restores us by the tree of life ... He dies, but he brings to life, and by his own death destroys death. He is buried, but he rises again. He descends into hell, but rescues the imprisoned souls.

—St. Gregory the Theologian

“What is most peculiar about Easter is that although the followers of Jesus had heard Him say He would break the bonds of death, when He actually did, no one believed it...The followers were not expecting a Resurrection and, therefore, did not imagine they saw something of which they were ardently hoping. Even Mary Magdalene, who within that very week had been told about the Resurrection when she saw her own brother raised to life from a grave, did not believe it. She came on Sunday morning to the tomb with spices to anoint a body – not to greet a Risen Savior. On the way, the question of the women was who will roll back the stone? Their problem was how they could get in; not whether the Savior would get out.”

— Venerable Fulton Sheen
(Way to Inner Peace)

PARISHIONERS THAT ARE HOME BOUND



If you or a loved one cannot make it to Church, Fr. James would be more than pleased visit at your home, in the hospital, at a nursing home, or any other place. It is no inconvenience at all.

Please be sure to schedule a visit.

Sunday offering for March 27

Amount	Number
\$5.00	1
\$10.00	1
\$20.00	3
\$25.00	3
\$30.00	1
\$40.00	1
\$50.00	8
\$70.00	1
\$85.00	1
\$100.00	5
\$111.00	1 (loose)
\$200.00	1
\$250.00	1
\$300.00	1
<hr/>	
\$2136.00	

Parishioner Total: \$1631.00

Guest Total: \$505.00

Average / parish household (42): \$20.91

Weekly Stewardship Goal: \$2200.00

Deficit: (\$559.00)

Year-to-date deficit: (\$13,909.00)

Pastor:

Fr. James Bankston: (619) 905-5278

Pastoral Council:

Vladimir Bachynsky: (619) 865-1279

Mark Hartman: (619) 446-6357

Luke Miller: (858) 354-2008

Social Committee Chair:

Megan Hartman (619) 540-4291

Finance Committee:

Bohdan Knianicky: (619) 303-9698

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**Українська Греко-Католицька Церква
Святого Йоана Хрестителя
St. John the Baptizer
Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church**

4400 Palm Avenue
La Mesa, CA 91941
Parish Office: (619) 697-5085

Website: stjohnthebaptizer.org

Pastor: Fr. James Bankston

frjames@mac.com

Fr. James' cell phone: (619) 905-5278

Jesus the Lamb of God

In Egypt the Passover lamb was slain, in Sion the True Lamb slaughtered. My brothers, let us consider the two lambs, let us see where they bear resemblance and where they differ. Let us weigh and compare their achievements - of the lamb that was the symbol, and of the Lamb that is the Truth. Let us look upon the symbol as a shadow, let us look upon the Truth as the fulfillment. Listen to the simple symbols that concern that Passover, and to the double achievements of this our Passover. With the Passover lamb there took place for the Jewish people an exodus from Egypt, and not an entry. So with the True Lamb there took place for the Gentiles an Exodus from error, and not an entry.

With the Living Lamb there was a further Exodus, too, for the dead from Sheol, as from Egypt. For in Egypt two symbols are depicted, since it reflects both Sheol and Error. With the Passover lamb, Egypt's greed learned to give back, against its wont; With the Living Lamb, Sheol's hunger

gave back the dead, against its nature. With the True Lamb, greedy Error rejected and cast up the Gentiles who were saved; With that Passover lamb, Pharaoh returned the Jewish people whom, like Death, he had held back.

With the Living Lamb, Death has returned the just, who left their graves. With the True Lamb, Satan gave up the Gentiles whom, like Pharaoh, he had held back. In Pharaoh two types were depicted; he was a pointer to both Death and Satan. With the Passover lamb, Egypt was breached and a path stretched out before the Hebrews. With the True Lamb, Satan, having fenced off all paths left free the path that leads to Truth. The True Lamb had trodden out, with that cry which he uttered, the path from the grave for those who lie buried. Praise to the Son, the Lord of symbols who fulfilled every symbol at His Resurrection.

St. Ephrem the Syrian

For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit
www.ecpubs.com