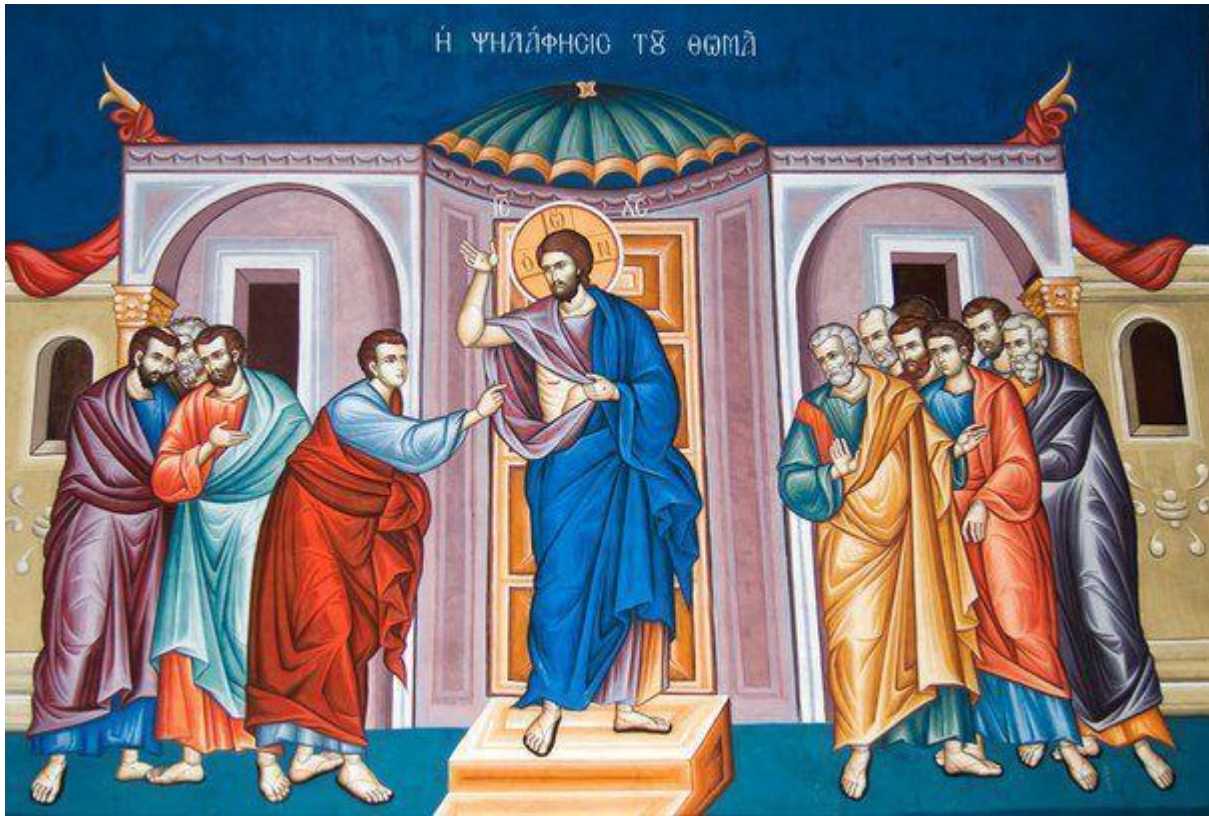


**St Ignatios of Antioch
Melkite Greek Catholic Church
1003 Merry Street
Augusta, Georgia 30904
706 364-6219**



**Thomas Sunday
April 16, 2023**

THOMAS SUNDAY



THE CONFESSION OF THOMAS (JOHN 20:19-31)

The Sunday after Pascha is informally called Thomas Sunday because of the Gospel read on this day, Jn 20:19-31. Many people assume this means that Thomas Sunday is the feast of St Thomas. In fact, St Thomas is remembered in the Byzantine calendar on October 6. What we remember today is rather St Thomas' confession of faith upon seeing the risen Christ, "My Lord and my God!" (v. 28).

The meaning of this event is spelled out for us by the Lord in the following verse: "*Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed'*" (v.29). And if we did not see the implications of that statement for ourselves, the Gospel concludes this passage by saying, "*And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His 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*" (vv. 30, 31).

Thomas' Confession

In our culture the exclamation "My Lord and my God!" sounds like a rather banal exclamation of surprise. We are used to hearing "Oh, God!" or "Jesus Christ!" used that way. In first-century Judea – and among many Orthodox Jews today – saying the name of God even in prayer would be considered presumptuous. Since the third century BC Jews have refrained from using the name of God even when reading the Torah. Only the high priest was permitted to read the name

of God as written in the Torah, and only on Yom Kippur. Many Jews today simply say HaShem (the Name) when reading such passages or referring to God.

Claiming to be the Son of God was blasphemy in the eyes of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish council of elders in Jerusalem. The Gospel indicates that Jesus was condemned to death precisely for making this claim. *“And the high priest answered and said to Him, ‘I put You under oath by the living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘It is as you said... Then the high priest tore his clothes, saying, ‘He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Look, now you have heard His blasphemy! What do you think?’ They answered and said, ‘He is deserving of death’”* (Mt 26:63-65).

Claiming to see Christ in glory caused the death of the first martyr, St Stephen, as well. Brought before the Sanhedrin he spoke of God’s mercy toward Israel, and the elders listened. But then he said, *“Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’ Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him”* (Acts 7:56-58).

Clearly Thomas’ exclamation is presented in the Gospel as an act of faith in Jesus as Lord.

The Apostles’ Teaching

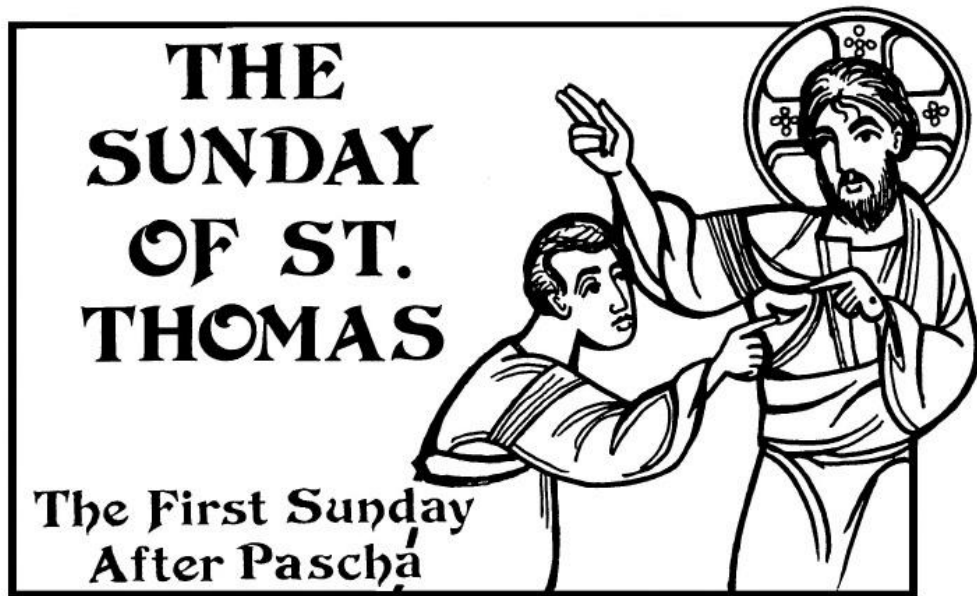
From the beginning the Apostles taught that Jesus, risen from the dead, was Messiah and Lord. Believers were taught to make this their act of Christian faith: *“... if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved”* (Rom 10:9). They ascribed to Christ the title Lord (*Kyrios* in Greek) which was used in the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament, as the equivalent of God’s un-pronounceable name. To call Jesus *Lord* meant that you were calling Him *God*: precisely the confession of Thomas.

In the Roman world of the apostles’ day *Lord* was the title of the Emperor: the one who governed the lives of all his subjects. To call Jesus *Lord* was perceived by many as treason and caused the persecution of many, especially since the Christians often insisted that Jesus alone was Lord. The Roman world had many gods and goddesses; they could easily find room for one more. To claim, as we continue to do in our Liturgy, that only “one is holy, one is Lord: Jesus Christ” was another matter.

For a believer to claim that Jesus was Lord also meant that he or she was committed to Jesus’ way of life. The usual way of doing things in society was now subject to a new criterion for believers: the Gospel of Christ. This was perceived as unpatriotic by many Romans, to use a contemporary term. Christians didn’t give undivided allegiance to Rome – they had another Lord and another way of life.

Today in many societies Christians are perceived as second-class citizens because they do not follow the dominant culture. This was always true in Islam but is increasingly so in the secular west as well. Increasingly there is pressure being asserted on Christians, churches and other religious institutions to alter their teachings or practices in ways that would violate their beliefs.

The consequence for Christians today is that we may be more frequently forced to choose between following the secular values of the state or the godly values of the Gospel. Choose your Lord.



Sunday Collections

Attendance	Date	Collection
25	February 12, 2023	335.00
11	February 19, 2023	530.00
36	February 26, 2023	127.00
25	March 5, 2023	1,600.00
22	March 12, 2023	263.00
26	March 19, 2023	10,000.00
26	March 26, 2023	165.00
33	2 April 2023	1,060.00
40	9 April 2023	580.00

Syrian Earthquake Relief \$ 775.00

Divine Liturgy Intentions: For the Living:

Bishop Francois, Fr. Eugene Mitchell, Fr. James Graham, Fr. John Azar, Daniel Offutt, David Mangelsdorf, Brian Frank, Maria Barklage, Nookid Graham, Ali de la Vega, Dn. Kent & Diana Plowman, A Special Parish Intention, Mandie, Stephanie, Nick Baiad, Medical Personnel and First Responders

For the Dead:

Announcements

We are live-streaming on our Facebook page at the following days & times:

Friday 6:00 PM Weekday Vespers

Saturday – 6:00PM Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00AM Orthros & 10:00AM Divine Liturgy

PRAYER OPPORTUNITIES AROUND TOWN – Most Holy Trinity parish will be hosting a Men's Holy Hour every Friday morning from 6-7am. There will also be a coffee hour and reflection time afterwards – Men from all parishes are invited to attend for whatever portion of the time they are available. For the Ladies – St. Joseph's will be hosting a Women's Holy Hour on the first Monday of each month at 7pm.

**National Association of Melkite Youth
NAMY Conference 2023**

Our Melkite Mission: Becoming Disciples, Making Disciples

Who: Melkite Youth throughout the US, ages 13-18

When: Monday July 10th- Friday July 14th, 2023

Where: St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire

Why: Faith, Fellowship, Fun

For more information:

Please contact Fr. Thomas & Pres. Rebekah Moses at namy@melkite.org



Festal Troparion

(Tone 5)



Christ is ri - sen from the dead and by His death



He has tram-pled u-pon Death, and has gi-ven life to those



who were in the tombs.



Al Ma-see-hu qa-ma min bayn il am-wat wa wa - ti al



maw-ta bil mawt, wa wa-hab al ha-yat li - la-dhee-na fil



qu - boor.



Chris-tos a - nes - ti ek ne - kron tha-na - to



tha - na - ton ba - tee - sas, kai tees



en dees mni-ma - si zo - in kha-ri - sa - me-



- nos.

Troparion of Thomas Sunday

(Tone 1)



While the tomb was sealed You shone forth from it,



O Christ our Life, and while the doors re-



- mained closed, You stood a-mong Your Dis-ci-



- ples, O Re-sur-rec - tion of all, and through them



You re-stored a new spi - rit in us ac-cord-ing to



Your great Mer - cy.

Kondakion of Pascha

(Tone 2)



Though You went down in the tomb, O im-mor - tal



One, You o-ver-threw the po-wer of Ha - des and



rose vic - to - ri - ous, O Christ God, You



gree - ted the oint - ment bear - ing wo - men, say -



- ing: Re-joice! You gave peace to Your a-pos - tles, and to



those who had fal-len, re-sur-rec - tion.

Hirmos of Thomas Sunday

(Tone 5)

O shi-ning light, O Mo - ther of God,
ho - no-ra - ble with - out com - pare, you are
high - er in dig - ni - ty than a-ny o - ther crea-
- ture. We mag - ni - fy you with
hymns.

Prokimenon

Reader: Great is our Lord, and great is His power!

All: Great is our Lord, and great is His power!

Reader: Praise the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever.

All: Great is our Lord, and great is His power!

Reader: Great is our Lord,

All: And great is His power!

Readings for the Week:

Monday: Acts 3:19-25

John 2:1-11

Tuesday: Acts 4:1-10

John 3:16-21

Wed: Acts 4:13-22

John 5:17-24

Thursday: Acts 4:23-31

John 5:24-30

Friday: Acts 5:1-11

John 5:30-47

Saturday: Acts 5:21-33

John 6:14-27

Saints of the Week:

April 16: Holy Women Martyrs Agapia, Irene and Chionia
April 17: Holy Hieromartyr Simeon the Persian and his companions; Holy Father Acacios, Bishop of Melitene
April 18: Holy Father John, Disciple of Gregory the Decapolitan
April 19: Holy Hieromartyr Paphnutius; Holy Father John the Hermit
April 20: Holy Father Theodore Trichinas
April 21: Holy Hieromartyr Januarius and his companions; Holy Hieromartyr Theodore of Pergia
April 22: Holy Father Theodore Sykeotes, Bishop of Anastasiopolis
April 23: Holy Great Martyr George

Word Search

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Believing
Breathed
Closed
Disciples
Doors
Fear
Forgive
Hands
Jesus

Late
Life
Name
Peace
Receive
Rejoiced
Send
Side
Signs

Sins
Stood
Thomas
Twelve
Twin
Unbelieving
Unless

Parish Information:

Rt. Rev. Michael Skrocki, JCD
Pastor

abounamike@aol.com

Knights of Columbus **JFK Council**

1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm.

Odd-numbered months at St. Ignatios

Even-numbered months here at Most Holy Trinity

4th Degree Assembly

2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm

Odd-numbered months at Most Holy Trinity

Even-numbered months here at St. Ignatios

Publicans Prayer Group

Postponed until Further Notice

New Parishioners:

Please register with Fr. Michael.

Mystery of Holy Confession

Please contact Fr. Michael to set up a convenient time.

Mystery of Christian Initiation

Expectant parents should notify Fr. Michael prior to the birth of the child. Adult converts should contact Fr. Michael so arrangements may be made for any necessary instruction and sacraments.

Mystery of Holy Crowning

Those planning to marry should notify the Fr. Michael
at least six months prior to the desired Wedding date.

Mystery of Holy Anointing

Please notify Fr. Michael when you or a family member is in need of anointing.

To report sexual abuse by clergy, parish personnel or volunteers of the Eparchy of Newton, please call the **Victim Assistance Coordinator** at 1-800-479-5910.

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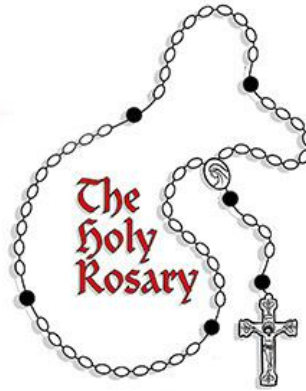
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