



Welcome!

Whether you're searching for a new church home or just visiting, we're glad you're with us today. If you have a prayer request, are looking for more information about the Orthodox Faith, would like to join our parish, or would like to speak with Fr Thomas, we invite you to fill out a visitor's card and drop it in the offering basket as your offering today. Please join us downstairs following the Divine Liturgy. We want to get to know you! God bless you!

This Week

Sunday, May 12

10:00 am Divine Liturgy/Church School

Tuesday, May 14

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to Noon Office Hours

Wednesday, May 15

6:30 pm Daily Vespers

7:00 pm Bible Study

Thursday, May 16

9:00 am Daily Matins

9:30 am to Noon Office Hours

Saturday, May 18

5:00 pm Great Vespers with Cathedral Vigil

Sunday, May 19

10:00 am Divine Liturgy

1:30 pm St Alexander Nevsky Cemetery

3:00 pm Mt Calvary Cemetery

Christ is risen! Indeed, He is risen!

Christos voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese! (Russian)

Christos anesti! Alithos anesti! (Greek)

Archpriest Thomas Soroka, Rector

Deacon Luke Loboda, Attached

Deacon John Skowron, Attached

Rdr James Wargo and Danielle Bartko, Choir Dirs

St Thomas Sunday (Antipascha)

McKees Rocks/Pittsburgh, PA

OrthodoxPittsburgh.org

May 12, 2024

Announcements

Everyone is invited downstairs for our **annual Mother's Day Brunch** sponsored by the men of our parish. We want **all of the women of our parish** to know that we are grateful for what you bring to our community. Your patient endurance, your kindness, and your love for God and others are gifts to all of us. May Christ continue to bless you and keep you through the prayers of His most pure Mother.

➤ **The Blessing of Graves will has been moved to Sunday, May 19**, due to the inclement weather yesterday. 1:30 pm at St Alexander Nevsky Cemetery, 3:00 pm at Mt Calvary Cemetery. Everyone is welcomed to attend.

➤ We invite everyone to consider a donation to our **Dome Restoration Fund**. We must raise at least \$150,000 by November. Please consider helping us!

➤ **Thank you to everyone** who worked so hard Thanks to all those who worked so hard during the Lenten season and during Holy Week to make this Paschal Celebration special for everyone! To Deacon Luke, Deacon John, to the choir and our directors, the parish council, the custodians, the altar servers, to those who decorated the church, and to everyone who worked diligently to make sure everything was prepared. May God grant you many years!

➤ Everyone is invited to attend our **parish Bible Study** held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month at 7:00 pm.

Prayers

➤ **Ill and infirm:** Known to be hospitalized (none); Home: John Mahalchak (son). William Warnak, Nancy Shaytar, Donya Yewisiak. Shut in, Rehabilitation, or Nursing Home: Natalie Popovich, Michael Soroka.

➤ **Vigil Lights** From **Mat. Nancy K. Mell & Gregory Mell** for the departed servant, Dn. Joseph Mell; for the health of family. From **Doris Wasilko** for the departed servant, Eleanor Kovacs. From **Charles A. Wasilko** for the departed servant, Eleanor Kovacs. From **Raisa Burd** for the health of family & friends. From **Lindy Hamilton** for the health of Elizabeth Marie Hamilton. From **the Pravlochaks** for the departed servants, parents; for the health of Marsh on her birthday, Mat. Nancy, brother, David, and family. From **John Mahalchak family** for our departed family & friends; for the health of friends & family. From **Tatyana Sechler** for the departed servants, Gina, Polina, Slava, Bruce, Galina, Luba, Daina, Valentina, Andrei, Rob, Tony, Stephen, and Roma; for the health of Tatyana, Tomas, Veronika, Kristofer, Tatiana, Sergey, Adrianna, Nick's Dad, Beth, and Sam.

Thank You

➤ to our **May donors Mat. Nancy Mell and Gregory Mell** for (Bulletin \$60, Communion Wine \$40, Altar Candles \$50) in memory of Philip and Ella Karavlan. From **Marsha Wasilko** (Holy Bread \$50) on the occasion of her birthday. From **Fr Thomas and Mat. Joni Soroka** (Incense \$10) for the health and salvation of daughter, Jacqueline, on her birthday.

St Nicholas Church will strive to glorify God through Orthodox Christian worship, sincere love and care for one another, and service to those in need around us.

This Week in Church School

Today's Lesson: Burial

Questions to ask/review:

- Why do we die? How did Christ overcome death?
- Why does God allow death? How did death enter the world?
- How does the world around us explain death? If death is the end of everything, how would you live? -How do other religions view death?
- In what way would say that our entire spiritual life is a preparation for death?
- Do you know anyone who has died? How did it make you feel? Why?
- Are you afraid of dying? Why or why not? Does God care if we die? (Remember, "Jesus wept.")
- How do we know we have victory over death? (Christ's Resurrection)
- What happens after death? What is the meaning of heaven and hell?
- What is the Particular Judgment? The Last Judgment (and Universal Resurrection)?
- Why do we say someone has "fallen asleep" or been "translated"?
- What happens at a burial service? A panikhida/trisagion service?

Suggested Activities at home:

- Make "koliva" – a special memorial food made of boiled wheat.
- Take 1 pound of wheat berries and soak them in water in a large pot. Then drain them and boil for 4 hours in water. Drain again and spread and dry on a large towel.
- Empty the wheat berries into a mixing bowl. Add: ½ cup confectioners sugar 1 tsp cinnamon 2 cups raisins 1 cup chopped walnuts
- Pour onto serving tray and make a small hill. Cover with thick layer of confectioner's sugar and decorate with a candle in the center, crosses of silver candies, and a border of candied almonds. There are other ways to make this and you may have a different family tradition.
- Sing Christ is Risen and then Memory Eternal for departed loved ones.

Prayer: O Lord Remember me when You come in Your Kingdom. Amen.

Hymns and Readings for Sunday, May 12

Troparion of the Sunday Tone 7

From the sealed tomb, Thou didst shine forth O Life!

Through closed doors Thou didst come to Thy disciples, O Christ God!

Renew in us, through them, an upright spirit, by the greatness of Thy mercy, O Resurrection of All.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Kontakion of the Sunday Tone 8

Thomas touched Thy life-giving side with an eager hand, O Christ God,

When Thou didst come to Thy apostles through closed doors.

He cried out with all: Thou art my Lord and my God.

Prokeimenon (Psalm 147) Tone 3

Great is our Lord and abundant in power! His understanding is beyond measure!

Epistle of the Sunday (Acts 5:12-20)

And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the

Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on 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, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."

Gospel of the Sunday (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, Jesus came and stood in the midst, 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.

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also 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 them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord."

So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

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.

Hymn to the Theotokos of the Feast

The Angel cried to the Lady, full of grace: "Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again, I say: 'Rejoice, your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb! With Himself He has raised all the dead.'" Rejoice, O ye people!

Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem! The glory of the Lord has shone on you. Exult now, and be glad, O Zion! Be radiant, O pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection of your Son!

Communion Hymn of the Sunday

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion.

The Apostle Thomas' Unbelief

Why was it so hard for Saint Thomas to believe – more difficult than for the other disciples? To understand this, you need to think about how people generally relate to rumors, to everything new and unexpected. People who are gullible, without reasoning and criticism, perceive every rumor and easily believe everything. Serious and thoughtful people investigate everything, consider and accept as truth only that which withstands criticism. There are also those who do not believe at all, who do not want to believe if something is not to their liking, who willingly accept only what corresponds to their own

desires, thoughts, moods, and stubbornly do not accept what is inconsonant with their ideas, contrary to their spiritual properties. Evil people do not want to believe anything good. Many did not believe in Christ and His Resurrection precisely for this reason: they did not need this Resurrection, it prevented them from living with their mind, their self-love. And therefore they rejected faith in Christ and the whole holy gospel. And the third category of incredulous people are skeptics who doubt everything.

To which of these three types of people did Saint Thomas belong? Of course, not to the last two, not to those who do not accept anything sacred. He belonged to the number of profound and unbelieving people who wanted to make sure of everything completely and accurately. Is this a negative quality of the soul? Not at all. And the Lord Jesus Christ did not blame Saint Thomas, but only, taking into account the fact that it was difficult for him to believe because his mind was critical, gave him the opportunity to verify His Resurrection through touch.

Who are those who have not seen and believed (John 20:29), whom the Lord blesses? This is that innumerable multitude of Christians who lived and now live by the power of the Resurrection of Christ, who believed in the Lord Jesus with all their hearts without seeing Him. Is it easy for us, not having seen the Lord Jesus Christ, to believe in Him? Much easier than it was for the apostles, because from the time of the Resurrection, His message of the holy gospel conquered the whole world, quenched the evil fire of paganism and enlightened the pagan darkness. The light of Christ has shone over the world. And we know by faith that the Lord lives and abides with His Father, and dwells in every pure heart that loves Him, and now He is among us, in the temple, and heeds our prayers.

-St Luke the Surgeon of Simferopol