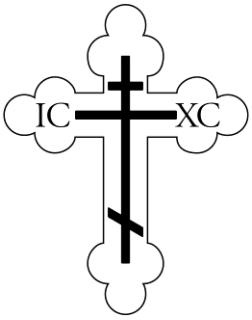


Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church



Diocese of Chicago
and the Midwest
Orthodox Church
in America



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Great Vespers: 6pm Saturdays

Divine Liturgy: 10am Sundays

Confession is available before or
after Vespers or by appointment

Welcome visitors!
Please join us in the
hall after Divine
Liturgy for coffee hour.

April 27, 2025 Thomas Sunday

The Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas was born in the Galilean city of Pansada and was a fisherman. Hearing the good tidings of Jesus Christ, he left all and followed after Him. The Apostle Thomas is included in the number of the holy Twelve Apostles of the Savior.

According to Holy Scripture, the holy Apostle Thomas did not believe the reports of the other disciples about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ: "Unless I 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" (John 20:25).

On the eighth day after the Resurrection, the Lord appeared to the Apostle Thomas and showed him His wounds. "My Lord and my God," the Apostle cried out (John 20:28). "Thomas, being once

weaker in faith than the other apostles,” says St John Chrysostom, “toiled through the grace of God more bravely, more zealously and tirelessly than them all, so that he went preaching over nearly all the earth, not fearing to proclaim the Word of God to savage nations.”

Some icons depicting this event are inscribed “The Doubting Thomas.” This is incorrect. In Greek, the inscription reads, “The Touching of Thomas.” In Slavonic, it says, “The Belief of Thomas.” When St Thomas touched the Life-giving side of the Lord, he no longer had any doubts.

According to Church Tradition, the holy Apostle Thomas founded Christian churches in Palestine, Mesopotamia, Parthia, Ethiopia and India. Preaching the Gospel earned him a martyr’s death. For having converted the wife and son of the prefect of the Indian city of Meliapur [Melipur], the holy apostle was locked up in prison, suffered torture, and finally, pierced with five spears, he departed to the Lord. Part of the relics of the holy Apostle Thomas are in India, in Hungary and on Mt. Athos.

HYMNS OF THE DAY

Tone 7 – Troparion for Thomas Sunday

From the sealed tomb, You shone forth, O Life!
Through closed doors You came to Your Disciples, O Christ God.
Renew in us, through them, an upright spirit,//
by the greatness of Your mercy, O Resurrection of all!

Tone 8 – Kontakion for Thomas Sunday

Thomas touched Your life-giving side with an eager hand, O Christ God,
when You came to Your Apostles through closed doors.//
He cried out with all: “You are my Lord and my God!”

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Tone 3 – Festal Prokeimenon (Psalm 146)

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

Epistle: Acts 5.12-20

In those days, many signs and wonders were done among the people through the hands of the apostles. 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: John 20.19-31

On 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.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

N.Dep. Larry Tinch

James Hammang

John Hiatt

Ev.Mem. John Krochta (1918)

Nicholas Chobotar (1932)

John Shakula (1956)

Nicholas Sofranoff (1961)

Nichola Goyda (1967)

Mary Barney (1995)

Health & Salv.

Olga

John

Archpr. Peter

Janie

Cindy

Mat. Cynthia

Sharon

Ron

Hierom. John

Tanya

Matthew

Archpr. Jonathan

Renee

John

Mat. Vera

Ashton

Erin

Pr. Patrick

Michael

Aaron

Pr. Gregory

Chris

Marcietta

Mat. Beverly

Nina

Maria

Mat. Anne

Carissa

Alla

Valer

Carol

Elizabeth

Nun Theodora

Snezana

Samuel

Brendan

Ryan

Joseph

Rollie

Nathan

Dwight

Claudia

Kara

Renee

Mary Ann

Karen

Dominik

Raymond

Alisa

Monica

Edward

Michael

Charles

Charlotte

Moses

Kimberly

Joseph

Helena

Abigail

Janice

James

Charles

Klaudia

Elijah

Rosemary

Maja

Lydia

Nicholas

Raymond

Nina

Natalie

Anne

George

Jovan

Desiree

Linda

Michael

Robb

Kimberly

Abram

Gerald

Steven

Zoë

Janet

Jamie

Brenda

Gerald

Kyleigh

Lisa

Rebecca

Lauren

Mazzy

Christopher

Kyle

Terry

Brianna

Linda

Angie

Logan

Denise

Irina

Elizabeth	Richard	Julie
Vitaliy	Rosie	Dorothy
Maria	Sarah	Ann
Viktorina	Milton	Michael
Rebecca	Andrew	Jack
Pauline	Carol	James
Meagan	Lidia	Jacob
Minnie	Daisy	Robert

To add the name of a loved one recently departed or on the anniversary of their repose, or someone living and in particular need of prayer, please speak to Fr Jacob

Special Petition at the Augmented Litany:

We pray, O Lord our God, for all those who suffer from acts of war, especially the victims in Ukraine, Russia, Israel, and Palestine. We pray for Your peace and Your mercy in the midst of the great suffering of Your people. Vouchsafe to accept the prayers of the Church, so that by Your goodness, peace may return to all peoples; O Lord, hearken and have mercy.

Paschal Theotokion *(Instead of “It is Truly Meet...”)*

The Angel cried to the Lady, full of grace:
 “Rejoice, 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, rejoice O you people!
 Shine, shine, shine O new Jerusalem!
 The glory of the Lord has shone on you.
 Exult now, exult and be glad, O Zion!
 Be radiant, O pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection of your Son!

Communion Hymn

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you to all the members of the O-Club for putting on an excellent **Trivia Night on Friday**. We had a record attendance and raised over **\$2,200 for Mommy’s Haven** maternity home.

Bible Study returns tomorrow at 7pm with the **Epistle of James 1-4**.

The Protection of the Virgin Mary Orthodox Church **Jan Hughes Memorial Golf Outing** is scheduled for **Saturday, May 31** at Indian Ridge Country Club in Hobart. This is a major fundraiser for us. The proceeds will be used for the continuation, support, and development of various Church projects, which reach out to the community. Hole sponsors (\$125) or other monetary or prize donations will be greatly appreciated. Those wishing to help in any way (including making desserts or appetizers), or to purchase banquet tickets (\$20 each), please see Rich or Linda Svihra or Lara Richards. Thanks in advance, The Golf Committee.

It is time once again to **reset our parish prayer list**. Please email Fr Jacob with the names of those living who should remain on the list for ongoing needs. Thank you!

Mark your calendars:

Apr 28: Bible Study @ 7pm

Apr 29: Memorial, grave blessings, and picnic at St Mary's Cemetery for Radonitsa @ 11am

May 1: Men's Reading Group @ 6:45pm

May 6: Guys' Nigh Out at Maxim's in Merrillville @ 6pm

May 8: Women's Book Group @ 6pm

May 17: Spring Outdoor Clean-up @ 9am

May 23: Red Cross Blood Drive 12-6pm

May 26: Memorial Day Blessings St Mary's Cemetery @ 9am

May 31: Golf Outing: Golf at Indian Ridge @ 8am, Banquet at parish Hall @ 12pm

Last Week's Gifts to the Lord: \$6,623

ARCHPASTORAL GREETINGS ON THE BRIGHT AND JOYOUS FEAST OF PASCHA from His Eminence, our Archbishop Daniel

Beloved Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful of the God-protected Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest:

✠ CHRIST IS RISEN! ✠

Before the dawn Mary and the women came and found the stone rolled away from the tomb.

They heard the angelic voice: "Why do you seek among the dead as a Man the One Who is everlasting Light?"

Behold the clothes in the grave! Go and proclaim to the world: "The Lord is risen!"

He has slain death, as He is the Son of God, saving the race of men!"
– Paschal Hours

"You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen!" (Mark 16:6). With these words, the heavensent messenger, robed in light, addressed the Holy Myrrhbearing Women who, on that first day of the week, came looking for the tomb of Jesus. In spite of the possibility of great personal harm, their love for the Lord compelled them to come to the tomb to honor His body with a proper Jewish burial. Their deep sorrow was overpowered by their love and care for their Master. On this same "first day of the week," we, too, come seeking the Lord and likewise hear and rejoice in those very words: "He is risen; He is not here."

As Orthodox Christians, we believe that Jesus is not an historic figure from the past, a person whose life and deeds are to be remembered in history books. Yes, He performed wondrous works and healed the sick and suffering and raised the dead. He was betrayed by a friend, brutally beaten and crucified. He died on a cross and was buried in a borrowed tomb. But that is where mere historical facts come to an end. The tomb could not contain Him. He is risen and the tomb is empty! We believe and confess that He lives, is present among us, and walks before us and beside us as one who is alive, as one who calls us to follow Him on the path of eternal life.

Christ is risen! At Pascha we rejoice because Christ did not remain in the tomb, his body did not see corruption (How could the Author of Life be subject to corruption?) Christ belongs to the world of the living, not to the world of the dead; we rejoice because he is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the Source and the Fulfillment of all life. He lives not only yesterday, but is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

Christ is risen! But somehow this great reality and wondrous mystery of Christ's Resurrection is situated so far outside our own human experience that, looking inwardly, we find ourselves discussing the same question asked by the disciples coming down from Mount Tabor: What exactly does this "rising from the dead" mean? What does it mean for us? What does it mean for all human history?

In attempting to answer this line of questioning, we must begin by admitting that Christ's Resurrection is something more, something different. It is a leap into a completely new order which concerns not only ourselves personally, but the whole of human history.

Christ is risen! Because of His love for us, Jesus could allow himself to die upon a cross. We must recognize, however, that by doing so he broke the seeming finality of death, because in Him the eternal finality of life was present. His death on the cross formed a new reality with life, in such a way that life is the definitive reality.

Christ is risen! In the Gospel of John, Jesus says to his disciples "I live, and you will also live (John 14:19). We will live because of our union with the Risen Lord, our Savior. We live and will continue to live through having been united to the One who is life itself. Eternal life and blessed immortality is a gift to us that is ours through our relationship with Christ, the Conqueror of Death. Eternal life comes to us because we have been loved by Him who is Life. He loves us so much that He died on the cross and rose from the dead for us and for our salvation.

Christ is risen! Thus, we can sing full of joy, together with the Church, in the words of the Paschal Troparion: "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death. And upon those in the tombs bestowing life... And unto us He has given eternal life. Let us worship His Resurrection on the third day!"

I extend my joyous best wishes to you all, asking the Risen Lord to bless you, your families, friends, and all your loved ones with His continuing, life-giving presence in your lives.

With love in the Risen Lord,

+DANIEL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

Glory to God for
all things!