

Thomas 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, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when He had so said, He shewed unto them His hands and His side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the LORD. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the LORD. But he said unto them, Except I shall 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. And after eight days again His disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My LORD and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.. (KJV)

Hristos Voskrese! Vaistinu Voskrese!

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Hristos a inviat! Adevarat a inviat!

God's Holy Church seeks an unbroken remembrance and certainty of the Lord's Jesus Christ's Resurrection. The Resurrection is of central importance to the Orthodox Christian faith.

Thomas Sunday is the Sunday immediately following Pascha. The Holy Gospel reading verifies that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. The Gospel describes Apostle Thomas' convincing experience with the Risen Christ.

Holy Apostle Thomas' doubt was resolved and put to rest when he saw the Risen Christ. Thomas was invited by the Risen Lord to reach out with his finger and hands to touch the Risen Christ.

Holy Apostle Thomas' experience is recorded in St. John's Gospel. The Church proclaims this certainty every year on the Sunday immediately following Pascha,

Apostle Thomas' encounter with the Risen Lord serves to renew believers' faith in the Resurrection. Doubts are removed and belief in the Resurrection is strengthened when this Gospel is proclaimed on Thomas Sunday.

The Church reinforces the certainty of Christ's Resurrection with the celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Sundays throughout the year. The hunger of the soul is addressed in each Divine Liturgy.

Believers are transformed when partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ. Jesus Christ is alive and enlivens communing believers. The Risen Christ told Thomas to not be faithless but to be believing.

The Church provides every generation with the opportunity to learn of Apostle Thomas' experience with the Risen Christ. Believers hearing the Gospel can say with Apostle Thomas "My Lord and my God."

In these days of uncertainty and anxiety, the certainty of Jesus' Resurrection offers hope, light and joy. The Risen Jesus reassured and comforted the Holy Apostles including Thomas with His message of peace.

Peace, love and joy exist in the Risen Christ. Jesus Christ's triumph over death once and for all established and verified His durability and the durability of His message.

God's Holy Church is where believers learn more about the Risen Christ and the way of life desired for His followers. The Divine services of the Church are instructional and educational in addition to enriching the soul.

Attentive believers benefit from the content of the Church's Divine services. The more attentive and open the believer, the greater the benefit. Change and growth in Christ occurs through the Church's Divine services.

The Divine services of the Church proceed in an orderly way throughout the year. Pascha is the Feast of Feasts and captures the attention of believers. Paschal joy radiates throughout the Church, the world and the centuries.

Jesus Christ is timeless. The life in Christ intends eternal life. The Risen Christ broke the barrier of death. Jesus convinced Thomas of death being destroyed.

Believers have the Resurrection verified with each celebration of the Divine Liturgy. The Church stands through the centuries until Christ's Second Coming in witness of His triumph over death.

Each believer witnesses to Christ's Resurrection with the Paschal greeting: "Hristos Voskrese! Christ is Risen! Vaistinu Voskrese! Indeed He is Risen!" Each believer has a part in verifying the certainty in life of Christ's Resurrection.

Each believer adds to the joy of the Resurrection when expressing and proclaiming "Christ is Risen!" Faithful believers join with the Risen Christ in repelling darkness in the world.

The Apostle Thomas' resounding profession of faith, his words, "My Lord and my God" have penetrated the centuries. Each believer makes a beneficial difference when saying: "Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!"

Thomas Sunday. Holy Hieromartyr Basil of Amasea. April 26/May 9, 2021.
Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic