

## 2nd Sunday of Pascha - Sunday of the Myrrhbearers

**O**n the second Sunday after Pascha, our Church celebrates the feast of Myrrhbearing women, alongside with Joseph and Nicodemus, who received and laid Christ's body in the new tomb. Who were Myrrhbearing women? They are those women who followed Christ and remained His faithful servants even when He was crucified on the Cross. They are also the ones who were the first witnesses of the Lord's Resurrection from the dead.

We learn about the Resurrection and Myrrhbearing women from four evangelists: **Saint Matthew** (28:1-10), **Saint Mark** (16:1-8), **Saint Luke** (24:1-11), and **Saint John** (20:1-18). According to them, the Myrrhbearing women (**Mary Magdalene**, **Mary** - the mother of James and Joses, **Salome**, and Joanna) went to Christ's tomb on early Sunday morning to anoint His body. However, they did not find the body of Christ in the tomb. Instead, an angel in white garments (according to Luke 24:4 and John 20:12, there were two angels) appeared to them and announced that Christ has risen. Additionally, according to the evangelist Matthew, when they rushed back to the city and announced to the apostles what happened, they met resurrected Christ Himself, who told them to rejoice and not to be afraid (Matthew 28:9-10).

Now, what do you think, why the Myrrhbearing women were the first ones to receive this joyous news about the Resurrection of our Lord? Why did not the apostles were the first to know about the Resurrection? That happened because of the love, courage, and loyalty which the Myrrhbearing women have shown before the Resurrection. On many beautiful icons we see they stayed with Christ during His Crucifixion when many people, even many apostles, were afraid to be there and be recognized as Christ's followers. Furthermore, on the following Sunday, they came to Christ's tomb to anoint His body. Hence, Christ first appeared to them and told them to announce the good news of His Resurrection. From that moment, our Lord appeared to His disciples for next forty days until the event of His glorious Ascension.

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**Evangelist** - the writer of one of the four Gospels. This word comes from the Greek language and means "good news".

**Apostle** - one sent on a mission. The New Testament mentions 12 apostles, who were Christ's original disciples.

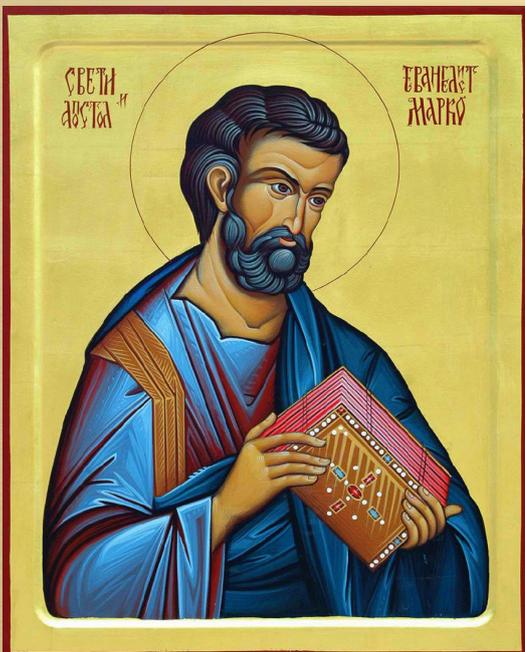
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## The Epistle According to the Acts of the Apostles (6, 1-7)



When the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word. And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith."

## The Gospel According to Mark (15, 43-47 & 16, 1-8)



"Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph saw where he was laid. And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid."

**Proselyte** - *the one who is converted into Christian faith*

# THE ICON OF THE MYRRHBEARERS

How often, when you come to the Church and kiss the icon, you take a second and observe what is happening on the icon? If you look carefully, you will see that every icon depicts events that are represented. In fact, the icon can serve as adequate educational material that reveals important facts about the event or a saint that was presented on it. For example, in this text, we can observe the icon of “The Holy Myrrhbearing women.”

The Sunday of the Myrrhbearing women is the second Sunday after Pascha in the Orthodox Church. We learn from the Gospel of Mark that a group of women, who followed Christ during his earthly life, came on the morning of the third day after His death to the tomb bearing ointments, which they had prepared to embalm His body. There they met an angel, dressed in white, who was pointing to the empty white linen shroud in the tomb and proclaiming the Resurrection of Christ.

Now imagine that we do not have the Holy Bible with us and that we do not know anything about this event. Would the icon below help us to recognize what happened on this day?

**On the icon we can see three important things:**



- Two women who are holding pots in their hands
- An empty tomb with a linen shroud
- A person with wings, dressed in white and holding the staff

The only way to understand that this icon represents the Resurrection of Christ is by using “Mimesis.” Mimesis (representation or imitation of the real world in art and literature) is a term that means that we recognize something on the icon because we already saw it in real life. Let us apply this technique on this icon.

First, we can understand that this event took place in history because in the background of the icon are drawn mountains, trees, and the walls of the city. Secondly, whenever we spoke about the angels at our Christian education classes, our teachers would usually describe an angel with wings and white clothes. The Gospel narrative tells us they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed. This person on the left is actually the angel who appears to two women before the grave. By their gestures, we can see their central point of the discussion is the object that is on the far left, which is recognized as the tomb. However, in the tomb are only white garments. Hence, that symbolizes that something exceptional happened on that early Sunday morning. With our knowledge of the Resurrection of the Christ, through the event of Pascha, and our joyful greeting on that day, “Christ is Risen”, we finally conclude that this icon describes the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

# LITURGICAL HYMNS

## Let's Pray While Singing

We may agree over the fact that great measure of Church's teaching is revealed through music. Music had great impact in spreading the Gospel news about the event of Christ's Resurrection! **Do you like to sing? Would you be willing to honor God with your voice? Be aware that we can do anything if we have faith!** Saint Apostle Paul wrote in one of his epistles we should teach and admonish one another through psalms, hymns and songs. Above all, he stressed we should sing to God with gratitude in our hearts. Join me in singing these two beautiful hymns that glorify Christ's Resurrection. We can do this together!

If you would like to hear the hymns, you can listen the melodies by clicking the following links!





## Resurrectional Troparion -Tone 2

When You did descent to death, O Life immortal,  
 You did destroy Hades with the splendor of Your  
 Godhead! And when from the depths You did raise  
 the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out: O Giver  
 of Life, Christ our God, glory to You!



<https://youtu.be/8dwOqCLJuFI>

When Thou didst des - cend to death, O Life im - mor - tal,  
 Thou didst slay hell with the splen - dor of Thy God - head!  
 And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,  
 all the powers of heav - en cried out: O Giv - er  
 of Life, Christ our God, glo - ry to Thee!



## Kontakion -Tone 2

The angel came to the myrrh bearing women at the  
 tomb and said: "Myrrh is meet for the dead, but Christ  
 has shown Himself a stranger to corruption."



[https://youtu.be/LYKfv\\_dWlCw](https://youtu.be/LYKfv_dWlCw)

The an - gel came to the myrrh - bear - ing wo - men at the  
 tomb and said: "Myrrh is meet for the dead,  
 but Christ has shown Him - self a stran - ger to cor - rup - tion."

# WHAT IS THE HOLY SHROUD?

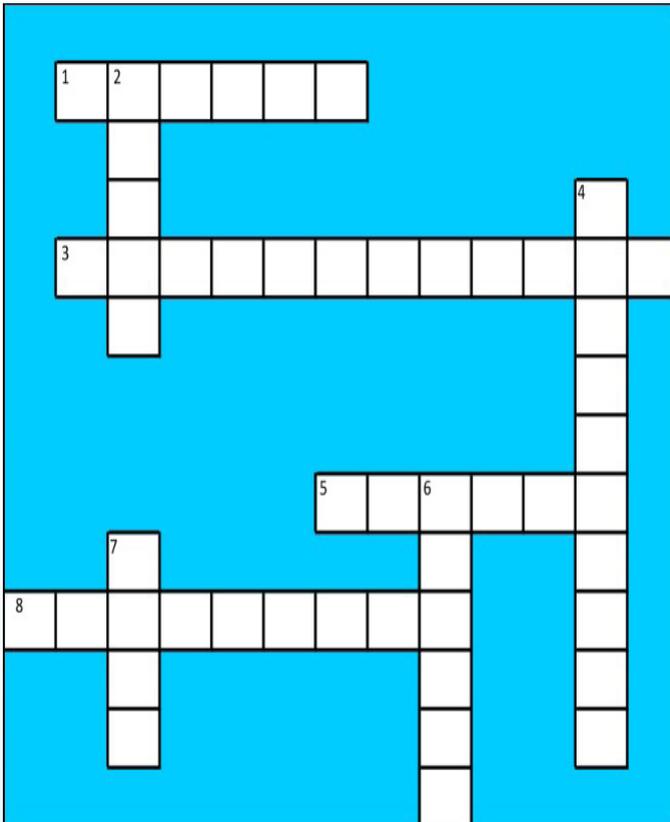


If you ever attended the church services during the Holy Week, you probably noticed that there are many new items inside the Church that we do not use during the rest of the year. For example, on Great and Holy Friday, we can notice that there is a table in the center of the Church, which represents the Tomb of Christ. But, if we come closer, what else can we see here? We can notice that there is a beautiful cloth with the image of our Savior, who has taken from the Cross. Around Him are His Mother (The Most Holy Theotokos) and His disciples. Also, on the edges of this liturgical cloth, we read the following words: “The Noble Joseph, taking down Your most pure Body from the Tree, did wrap it in clean linen with sweet spices, and he laid it in a new tomb.” This cloth is called the Holy Shroud.

According to the historical sources, placing the Holy Shroud on the table in the center of the Church started in the 14th century. However, at that time, the Holy Shroud was not in the same shape as today. Instead, a small napkin with the image of Christ was used, which covered the Gospel Book during a procession on Holy Friday. Later, in the 16th century, the Church started to use a big cloth, known as the Holy Shroud. Today, we can see this cloth firstly on the vespers of Holy Friday. The priest lifts the Holy Shroud from the altar table, and carries it out with the Gospel from the altar and places it on the tomb, in the center of the nave. Then, all of us, one by one, come to the Tomb of Christ and venerate the image of reposed Christ on the Holy Shroud. On the next service (Holy Saturday Matins), the Holy Shroud is carried by the priest in the procession around the Church and then laid on the tomb again. On the following day (Pascha), the Holy Shroud is moved back to the altar and placed on the altar table, where it stays until the Eve of Ascension.



# CROSSWORD



1. What was the name of one of the Myrrhbearing women?
2. Who appeared to them?
3. What did he proclaim?
4. What do we place in the center of the Church on Holy Friday?
5. Who buried Christ?
6. On which day we usually come to Church?
7. After Crucifixion, where the body of Christ was placed?
8. What is the name of the hymn which we sing at the liturgy?



## FILL OUT THE MISSING WORDS OF CHURCH HYMNS

When You did descend to death, O L\_\_\_ Immortal, You did destroy Hades with the splendor of Your Godhead. And when from the depths You did raise the dead, all the powers of heaven cried out, O Giver of life, C\_\_\_ our God, glory to You!

The Noble J\_\_\_\_\_, / when he had taken down Your most pure Body from the tree, / wrapped it in fine linen and anointed it with spices, / and placed it in a new t\_\_\_\_. / But You rose on the t\_\_\_\_ day, O Lord, / granting the world great mercy.

You commanded the m\_\_\_-bearers to rejoice, O Christ! / By Your R\_\_\_\_\_, You stopped the lamentation of Eve, the first mother! / You commanded them to preach to Your apostles: The Savior is Risen from the tomb!



Solutions: **Crossword:** 1.Martha, 2.Angel, 3.Resurrection, 4. Holy Shroud, 5.Joseph, 6.Sunday, 7.Tomb, 8.Troparion

**Fill out the Missing Words:** Resurrection, Joseph, Tomb, Myrrh, Christ, Third, Lord

# Sophie's Prayer

*Dear God, do you remember me?  
I'm a little girl named Sophie.*

*Last night, before bed, I prayed too.  
And all day I thought about you.*

*So many people are sick we must stay  
home.  
I would like to help them, but I'm little and  
alone.*

*Tonight I'll pray for everyone, that's for  
sure.*

*'Cause my heart is real big n' your love is  
pure.*

*Amen.*

*Sophie Terzic is 4 years old*



## TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

**On which Sunday after Pascha, do we celebrate the feast of Myrrhbearing women?**

- Second Sunday
- Third Sunday
- Fifth Sunday

**Who were two people who took Christ's body and placed it in the new tomb?**

1. Apostles Peter and John
2. Joseph and Nicodemus
3. Pilate and soldiers

**According to the Gospel of Mark, how many angels appeared to Myrrhbearing women?**

- One
- Two
- Four

**What is Mimesis?**

- A term that means that we recognize something on the icon because we already saw it in real life
- A technique which we use to paint an icon

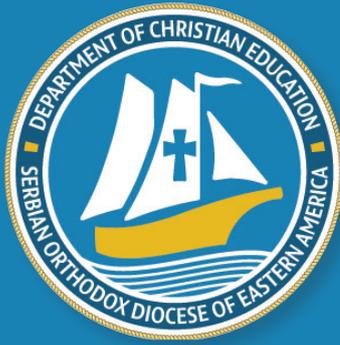
**Whom do we see on the Holy Shroud?**

- A) Noble Joseph
- B) Lady Theotokos
- C) Jesus Christ
- D) All of the above

**On which day in the Holy Week, the Holy Shroud is placed in the center of the Church?**

- Great and Holy Thursday
- Great and Holy Saturday
- Great and Holy Friday

**Lady Theotokos - the Mother of God, Virgin Mary**



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BISHOP OF EASTERN AMERICA  
THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
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