

## THOMAS SUNDAY

**EPISTLE READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Apostolic Reading is from the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 5, Verses 12-20:** In those days, many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high honor. And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. But the high priest rose up and all who were with him, that is, the party of the Sadducees, and filled with jealousy they arrested 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 and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life."

Ὁ Ἀπόστολος, Πράξεων τῶν Ἀποστόλων τὸ ἀνάγνωσμα, κεφ. 5, ἐδάφ. 12-20.

**GOSPEL READING OF THE DAY: This morning's Gospel Reading is from the Holy Gospel according to Saint John, Chapter 20, Verses 19-31:** On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them 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. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I 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; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him: "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them: "Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe." Eight days later, his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. The doors were shut, but Jesus came and stood among them, and said: "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe. Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the 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.

Ἡ σημερινὴ εὐαγγελικὴ περικοπὴ ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην, κεφ. 20, ἐδάφ. 19-31.

**INTRODUCTION TO ORTHODOXY CLASSES:** These very popular classes are taking place on a weekly basis, remotely, thanks to the dedicated efforts of Alex Kozak. If you are new to the parish or you are considering being received into the Church through baptism and/or chrismation, as an adult, we invite you to speak with Alex about your wishes and the possibility of joining the Introduction to Orthodoxy class. Please contact him at <https://agkozak.com/intro>. Alex will extend an invite to the meetings, currently taking place via zoom.

**TROPARIUM OF PASCHA: CHRIST IS RISEN! ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΣΤΗ!**

Χριστὸς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν, θανάτῳ θάνατον πατήσας, καὶ τοῖς ἐν τοῖς μνήμασι ζῶν χαρισάμενος.  
Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs, granting life.

**MOTHER'S DAY PHILOPTOCHOS EVENT:** We have missed seeing you all this past year, and missed our traditions, one of which is our annual Mother's Day luncheon and fashion show. This year, since we still can't gather together, we have found some fun virtual ideas for you to connect with the special women in your lives. Please see the church's website, [www.annunciation.org](http://www.annunciation.org) for more information on our virtual Mother's Day ideas. An email will also be sent to our members. Want to join this amazing Philanthropic organization? Please contact President, Janis Petrou, [janpetrou@yahoo.com](mailto:janpetrou@yahoo.com). Today is Mother's Day and Father Stephen will read the names of special women that we would like to honor in each of our lives. Thank you for sending in the names of women for Father to read today. May God bless and protect all mothers and all important women in our lives today and always.

**HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA:** Last week we welcomed back many of our faithful to worship and celebrate the services of Holy Week and Pascha in person. After so much time apart it was a blessed joy to have a portion of our community together again. We would like to especially thank our Reopening Task Force, our Technology Team, our Parish Council members, and our Altar Boys for all their hard work and preparation that made it possible for us to welcome our people back for these beautiful services.

As we progress and experience further changes in the current restrictions in place, our Reopening Task Force will continue to meet and discuss best procedures to adapt to the coming guidelines so that we can welcome back more and more parishioners. Please be on the lookout for updated information regarding our in-person worship practices. After more than a year of restrictions it will be a true blessing to welcome more and more of our faithful back safely and accordingly.

**WE HAVE REOPENED OUR CHURCH FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP:** Now that we have officially reopened for in-person worship, we invite those of you that are comfortable doing so, to return to your spiritual home. We are currently allowed limited capacity at 40 congregants, so as to maintain social distancing guidelines. After so much time apart, it has been a joy to see each of you as you return to in-person worship. Please visit <https://www.annunciation.org/liturgyreservation> to RSVP for upcoming services and [https://annunciation.org/images/Reopening/Reopening\\_Guidelines.pdf](https://annunciation.org/images/Reopening/Reopening_Guidelines.pdf) to view our Reopening Guidelines. We look forward to seeing everyone in-person soon!

**LIGHT A VIRTUAL CANDLE:** Thank you for lighting a virtual candle, thus keeping hope alive. Whether you donate \$1 or \$1,000, your gift is one of faith. It helps keep the Cathedral solvent during this universal upheaval. More importantly, it connects us to Him who is the Light of the World (John 8:12) and reminds us of our calling to be the light of the world (Matthew 5:14). To light your virtual candles, please visit our web site, [www.annunciation.org](http://www.annunciation.org), and click on the appropriate link, or enter <https://annunciation.org/candle>. During the past year, Father Stephen has been lighting your candles in real time. Going forward, now that we are open to in person worship, the candles will be lit, instead, by a Parish Council member. Those attending services in person will be able to light their own candles at the *pangari*.

## THE PANDEMIC HAS SLOWED US DOWN BUT NOT STOPPED

**US.** The pandemic has slowed down everything building-related. Nevertheless, things are moving along. Granite along the Valencia Street walls and the stone cap have been installed. The roofing and drainage issues have been addressed. The gates are now virtually complete. The lobby doors are in. Stonecraft is laying the remaining pavers. Meanwhile, our permit for use of the garage has been issued. Recently, the Architects have finalized the drawings, known as the bid set, for phase 2 (completion of the interior), for an estimated cost of \$3.8 million.... As a community, we've been through much, especially when we lost everything to the earthquake, back in 1989. But, we've bounced back. It wasn't easy, but we did it, because we have faith, we have hope, and we have unity. So, too, we will weather this pandemic and return to a so called "new normal," – i.e. a community where we may do things a little differently, but with the same strong faith in God. After all, it is for Him, in Him, and through Him that we continue to exist at all. Praise God for the Gift of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we are given the faith and the vision to rebuild His Church.



*“The Church shall be a home for Orthodox Christians from every ethnic and national background. It shall be a house of prayer for all humankind, in which the Holy Name of our Triune God shall be extolled and all of creation sanctified.”*