

Христос Воскрес! Воістину Воскрес!



Christ is Risen ! Indeed, He is Risen!

УСПЕННЯ ПРЕСВЯТОЇ БОГОРОДИЦІ

Dormition of the Mother of God

Sunday, April 12, 2026

“Thomas Sunday”

Reflections for this Weekend

The Gospel of Gospel of John (20:19–31) opens in a room filled with fear. The doors are locked, the disciples are hiding, and hope seems buried with the Cross. Yet into this very space of anxiety and uncertainty, the Risen Christ enters not by force, but by presence and His first words are: “Peace be with you.”

This is not merely a greeting; it is a gift. Christ does not wait for the disciples to overcome their fear before coming to them. He meets them *in* their fear. This is the first deep truth: God enters our closed places our doubts, wounds, regrets and brings a peace the world cannot give. Then He shows them His wounds.

The Resurrection does not erase the Cross; it transforms it. The wounds remain, but they are no longer signs of defeat they are signs of victory and love. In the same way, our wounds, when united with Christ, can become places of grace, not shame. The Risen Lord does not hide His scars, and He does not ask us to hide ours. He invites us to let them be touched by His mercy.

But the Gospel moves further from comfort to mission.

“As the Father has sent Me, so I send you.” With these words, Christ breathes on them and gives them the Holy Spirit. Fearful disciples become sent apostles. The locked room is no longer a refuge it becomes a launching point. This is the second powerful truth: encounter with the Risen Christ always leads to transformation and action.

Faith is not meant to remain hidden behind closed doors.

Then comes Thomas.

Often remembered for his doubt, Thomas actually expresses a deep longing: he refuses to settle for secondhand faith. He wants a real encounter. And Christ does not reject him. Instead, He returns and meets Thomas exactly where he is. “Put your finger here... do not be unbelieving, but believe.”

Thomas responds with one of the most profound confessions in Scripture: “My Lord and my God!”

Here lies a third truth: honest doubt, when brought to Christ, can become a doorway to deeper faith. The danger is not doubt itself, but isolation remaining locked in it without seeking Christ.

Finally, Christ speaks directly to us: “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe.” This is our calling. We are invited into a living, active faith not based on sight, but on trust, encounter, and transformation.

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So the question becomes deeply personal and practical:

Where are the locked doors in my life?

What fears keep me from stepping forward?

What wounds need to be placed in His hands?

This Gospel is not only a story it is a call to action.

Open the door. Receive His peace. Allow Him to touch your wounds.

And then, go.

Go and live as a witness of the Resurrection, with courage, with faith, and with a heart that proclaims not only in words, but in life:

“My Lord and my God!”



From The Pastor’s Desk!!

With a grateful and joyful heart, I extend my deepest thanks to each and every one of you who helped make our Easter celebration so beautiful and meaningful.

Thank you to those who generously donated for the flowers and to all who brought lilies, adding such beauty and reverence to our church.

Thank you to those who lovingly decorated the church and changed the altar linens, preparing everything with such care and devotion.

I am especially grateful to those who helped assemble and disassemble the Tomb, and to our altar servers for their faithful and reverent service. and to our cantors and singers who led us in prayer so beautifully throughout the services. Your dedication lifted our hearts to God.

In a very special way, we also thank the dedicated ladies who took time and love to bake *Paskas*, both at home and in the church, sharing a beautiful tradition that enriched our celebration with faith and sweetness.

A heartfelt thank you as well to those who prepared the room for our Easter community breakfast, it was truly welcoming and beautifully arranged. And to all who brought dishes to share, your generosity and the delicious food made the celebration even more special.

Above all, thank you for your kindness, your spirit of service, and your love for one another. You are a true blessing to this parish.

With deepest gratitude and love in Christ, Thank you to all those whose names are known by God from the bottom of my heart.

Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!

The Courage to Let Go: Embracing the Second Step of the Ladder – Holy Detachment

In the second step of the *Ladder of Divine Ascent*, John Climacus draws us into a deeper and more hidden struggle: the purification of the heart through **holy detachment**.

If the first step calls us to leave behind the world, this second step reveals how deeply the world still lives within us.

Detachment is not the absence of love it is the **healing of love**. It is the slow transformation of the heart from possessiveness to communion, from self-centered desire to God-centered longing. We begin to realize that it is not things themselves that bind us, but the way we cling to them, seeking in them a security, identity, or fulfillment that only God can give.

At its root, attachment is a spiritual illusion. It whispers that we can hold onto life, control outcomes, preserve what is passing. Yet everything in this world is fragile and fleeting. When the soul builds its peace on what changes, it becomes restless, anxious, and divided. Detachment, then, is not loss it is **truth**. It is seeing reality as it is, and placing our trust not in what fades, but in the living God who remains.

This step is deeply interior and often hidden from others. A person may appear calm and composed, yet within be disturbed by the slightest loss, criticism, or unmet expectation. Detachment exposes these inner movements. It invites us to stand honestly before God and see what still governs our heart: the need for approval, the fear of rejection, the desire for control, the attachment to comfort.

But this revelation is not meant to discourage us it is the beginning of freedom.

Holy detachment is born through surrender. It grows each time we release our grip and say, "Lord, not my will, but Yours be done." It is formed in the quiet acceptance of daily crosses: an inconvenience, a disappointment, a misunderstanding. In these moments, we are given a choice to resist and cling, or to trust and let go.

Every small surrender weakens the hold of attachment and strengthens the soul's union with God.

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There is also a profound peace hidden in detachment. When the heart no longer depends on circumstances for its stability, it becomes anchored in something unshakable. Joy is no longer tied to success, nor peace to comfort.

The soul begins to taste an inner stillness a freedom that nothing external can take away.

Christ Himself is the perfect image of this holy detachment. He loved deeply, yet without clinging. He gave everything yet held onto nothing for Himself. Even in suffering and abandonment, His heart remained free, fully surrendered into the hands of the Father. In Him, we see that detachment is not emptiness it is **fullness**, a life entirely given and entirely received.

The second step, then, is an invitation into this freedom. It is a call to live with open hands and an undivided heart. It teaches us that we lose nothing by entrusting everything to God in fact, we gain all.

Today, we are gently invited to look within: What disturbs my peace? What do I still grasp too tightly? What am I afraid to surrender?

If we place even one of these into God's hands, with trust and humility, the heart begins to change. And in that quiet surrender, we discover the beginning of true freedom the freedom to love God above all, and in Him, to love all things rightly.



We are most appreciative for your generosity in donations to the church, and pray that the Lord bless you all with many blessings and good health.

We kindly ask all our parish members to remember in prayer those who are sick or homebound within our community.

If you know of anyone who is ill, elderly, or unable to attend services and would like to receive the Holy Eucharist, please kindly inform the parish office so we may bring Christ's presence to them.

Please be assured that all who are suffering or infirm are lovingly remembered in our prayers and held close in the heart of our parish family.

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Sunday Divine Liturgy:
8:50 a.m. The Third Hour
And
Prayer Service for Peace in
Ukraine.
9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy

Religious Education
September - May

Sacraments Penance:
Sunday before Liturgies
or by appointment

Baptism - Matrimony
In most instances
six-month membership
required

Funerals
Membership of an
immediate family member
required

**Communion to the
Homebound**
If you or your family
members are confined to a
health center or are
homebound, please contact
Fr. Hugo directly so that
arrangements can be made
for his visitation.

Sunday, April 12

"Thomas Sunday"

"Our Venerable Father and Confessor Basil, Bishop of Parios"

Epistle: Acts 5:12-20. Gospel: John 20:19-31.

8:50 a.m. The Third Hour and Prayer Service for Peace in Ukraine

9:30 a.m. Gods blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends
loving memory of +Maria Rydzaj from Soutus family

Monday, April 13

"The Holy Priest-Martyr Artemon and Those with Him"

Epistle: Acts 3:19-26. Gospel: John 2:1-11.

Tuesday, April 14

"Our Holy Father Martin the Confessor, Pope of Rome"

Epistle: Acts 4:1-10. Gospel: John 3:16-21.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Wednesday, April 15

"The Holy Apostles Aristarchus, Pudens and Trophimus"

Epistle: Acts 4:13-22. Gospel: John 5:17-24.

Thursday, April 16

"The Holy Virgins and Martyrs Agapia, Irene and Chionia"

Epistle: Acts 4:23-31. Gospel: John 5:24-30.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Friday, April 17

"Our Venerable Father Simeon of Persia"

Epistle: Acts 5:1-11. Gospel: John 5:30-6:2.

Saturday, April 18

"Our Venerable Father John, Disciple of Gregory the Decapolitan"

Epistle: Acts 5:21-33. Gospel: John 6:14-27.

6:30 p.m. Evening prayers via Zoom

Sunday, April 19

"Third Sunday of Pascha of the Myrrh-Bearing Women"

"Our Venerable Father John the Ancient Hermit"

Epistle: Acts 6:1-7. Gospel: Mark 15:43-16:8.

8:50 a.m. The Third Hour and Prayer Service for Peace in Ukraine

9:30 a.m. Gods blessings and good health for all our parishioners and friends