

Holy Cross

Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church
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Weekly Bulletin

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Sunday, April 23, 2017

Thomas Sunday

Though the doors were shut at the dwelling where the disciples were gathered for fear of the Jews on the evening of the Sunday after the Passover, our Saviour wondrously entered and stood in their midst, and greeted them with His customary words, "Peace be unto you." Then He showed unto them His hands and feet and side; furthermore, in their presence, He took some fish and a honeycomb and ate before them, and thus assured them of His bodily Resurrection. But Thomas, who was not then present with the others, did not believe their testimony concerning Christ's Resurrection, but said in a decisive manner, "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." Wherefore after eight days, that is, on this day, when the disciples

were again gathered together and Thomas was with them, the Lord Jesus came while the doors were shut, as He did formerly. Standing in their midst, He said, "Peace be unto you"; then He said to Thomas, "Bring hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and bring hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas, beholding and examining carefully the hands and side of the Master, cried out with faith, "My Lord and my God." Thus he clearly proclaimed the two natures - human and divine - of the God-man (Luke 24:36-49; John 20:19-29).

This day is called Antipascha (meaning "in the stead of Pascha," not "in opposition to Pascha") because with this day, the first Sunday after Pascha, the Church consecrates every Sunday of the year to the commemoration of Pascha, that is, the Resurrection.

George the Great Martyr and Triumphant

George, this truly great and glorious Martyr of Christ, was born of a father from Cappadocia and a mother from Palestine. Being a military tribune, or chiliarch (that is, a commander of a thousand troops), he was illustrious in battle and highly honoured for his courage. When he learned that the Emperor Diocletian was preparing a persecution of the Christians, Saint George presented himself publicly before the Emperor and denounced him. When threats and promises could not move him from his steadfast confession, he was put to unheard-of tortures, which he endured with great bravery, overcoming them by his faith and love towards Christ. By the wondrous signs that took place in his contest, he guided many to the knowledge of the truth, including Queen Alexandra, wife of Diocletian, and was finally beheaded in 296 in Nicomedia.

His sacred remains were taken by his servant from Nicomedia to Palestine, to a town called Lydda, the homeland of his mother, and then were finally transferred to the church which was raised up in his name. (The translation of the Saint's holy relics to the church in Lydda is commemorated on November 3; Saint Alexandra the Queen, on April 21.)

Hymns of the Day

Apolytikion of Great and Holy Pascha in the Plagal First Mode

Christ is risen from the dead, by death, trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

Apolytikion for Thomas Sun. in the Grave Mode

Whilst the tomb was sealed, Thou, O Life, didst shine forth from the grave, O Christ God; and whilst the doors were shut, Thou didst come unto Thy disciples, O Resurrection of all, renewing through them an upright Spirit in us according to Thy great mercy.

Apolytikion for Great Martyr George in the Fourth Mode

Liberator of captives, defender of the poor, physician of the sick, and champion of kings, O trophy-bearer, Great Martyr George, intercede with Christ God that our souls be saved.

Seasonal Kontakion in the Plagal Fourth Mode

Though You went down into the tomb, You destroyed Hades' power, and You rose the victor, Christ God, saying to the myrrh-bearing women, "Hail!" and granting peace to Your disciples, You who raise up the fallen.

This Week at Holy Cross

Monday	6:30 Paraklesis/Bible Study
Tuesday	10 am First Steps of Christ 7 pm Sts. Mary & Martha Group 7 pm Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday	4:30 pm Greek School
Saturday	5 pm Vespers

*Altar Flowers are sponsored in loving memory of George Bouzos by the
Zotis Family*

Coffee Hour today is sponsored by the Sokos family.

If you are interested in sponsoring a coffee hour - check the calendar online: www.holycrosspgh.org, click "Events", then "Coffee Hour", then scroll down to calendar, click on date to see if someone has taken it. Then email holycrosspit@mail.goarch.org or call the church office to request date.

Epistle Reading

The reading is from Acts of the Apostles 12:1-11.

ABOUT THAT TIME, Herod the king laid violent hands upon some who belonged to the church. He killed James the brother of John with the sword; and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. So Peter was kept in prison; but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the Church. The very night when Herod was about to bring him out, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries before the door were guarding the prison; and behold, an angel of the Lord appeared, and a light shone in the cell; and he struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, "Get up quickly." And the chains fell off his hands. And the angel said to him, "Wrap your mantle around you and follow me." And he went out and followed him; he did not know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. When they had passed the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened to them of its own accord, and they went out and passed on through one street; and immediately the angel left him. And Peter came to himself, and said, "Now I am sure that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jewish people were expecting."

Gospel Reading

The Reading is from John 20:19-31

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.

Welcome

We warmly welcome all visitors and seekers in our midst today, trusting that your experience here will be an uplifting and enriching one. The Greek Orthodox Churches are the ancient and native Christian communities of the biblical world, with centers in the Holy Lands, Syria, Egypt and Asia Minor, and by extension in Greece, Cyprus and throughout the world. Like the ancient Christians, we engage the whole person, heart, mind and all senses in Divine Worship. This experience has been so powerful to seekers in the past that it was often said "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. We knew only that there God dwelt among human beings." (Russian Primary Chronicle) That communion experience of heaven on earth and God in our midst forms the heart of all Orthodox worship.

It culminates in the sharing of Holy Communion, which not only unites us with the Divine, but also expresses the deep unity in faith and life between all Orthodox believers. Since Holy Communion expresses that deep unity in belief and practice alike, it is reserved for observant Orthodox Christians. This does not mean, however, that non-Orthodox are 'excluded' - rather, the Orthodox choose not to make an external display of unity when actual unity does not exist.

While working to restore the full communion that did exist in antiquity, today we offer the sign of the blessed bread at the service's conclusion as a symbolic gift of hospitality and growing unity that is offered to all present. If you would like to learn more about the Orthodox way of life, or have any questions about worship or Holy Communion, please approach Fr. Michael or one of the clergy following services.

Thank you for joining us, and again, we welcome you all.

Visiting Ministries: Priestly Sacramental Visits and Circle of Angels visits

Do you have a loved one that cannot regularly attend church services?

Please call the church office to schedule a Sacramental Visit from one of our clergymen. They will also be placed on the Philoptochos Circle of Angels visiting list. Thank you for helping our parish family to stay connected to the Church.

Philoptochos News

Christos Anesti!

Our next Meeting and Elections will be May 2 at 6:30PM Please read the box below.

Our 140 Holy Cross 2017 Philoptochos Members, received an explanation of the May 2 elections! Philoptochos MEETING and BOARD Elections, May 2, 6:30PM. Wine, cheese and crackers served to thank the old board and celebrate the new one!

There will be a short Philoptochos meeting on the carpeted area of the community center at 6:30PM on Tuesday, May 2 followed by a BOARD election from 7:00PM-8:30PM. All candidates must be present at the election. IF you received an election notice in the mail, you are a 2017 paid Philoptochos member and are eligible to vote. This is an actual election of 18 board members. Our Philoptochos is NOT having a prepared slate of new board members and executive officers. You will vote for 18 board members or less. You may NOT vote for more than 18 or your ballot will be invalid. I will be the 19th board member as your outgoing president. I was not granted a waiver to have a third term. Please prayerfully vote for your new board. After ratification from the National Philoptochos and swearing in from Fr. Michael, the new Philoptochos board members will convene and executive officers will be elected. This date is to be determined. The current officers and board continues until the new board is sworn in.

Reservations will be taken today at coffee hour for the Philoptochos May 20 Noon Tea. Please see Pam Lagios 412 272-4614 or Mary Zotis, 412 835-2381 to reserve. Tea sandwiches, fruit, teas, silent auction, door prizes and a fashion show! All for only \$15. ALL ages are welcome!

Thank you to Carol Halkias and Christine Peters(Chairpersons) and ALL who baked and packed the Pascha baskets for the home-bound and those in nursing homes.

Deposit from 4/2	
Pledges - 2017	\$7,266
Candles	\$532
Loose Offerings	\$67
Holy Week Envelopes	\$800
Special Envelopes	\$105
Flowers/Communion Wine	\$20
Pascha Candles	\$3,767
Total	\$12,452

Financial Snapshot based on \$2,239.23 daily operational needs				
Date	Weekly Collection	Weekly Collection Total to Date	Estimated Operational Needs to Sunday	Difference
Total through March	\$137,788	\$137,788	\$190,334.55	-\$52,546.55
4/2	\$10,255	\$148,043	\$206,009.16	-\$57,966.16
4/9	\$13,662	\$161,705	\$221,683.77	-\$59,978.77
4/16	\$12,452	\$174,157	\$237,358.38	-\$63,201.38

****All entries for the Sunday Bulletin should be submitted to Jonathan McClish no later than Wednesday at 11:59 pm prior to the Sunday you wish to have the entry published. Send to mcclish.jonathan@gmail.com *****