

Adult Religious Education (Bible Study) - Monday, April 16 @ 7:00 p.m. Come join us and learn about the richness of our faith through Scripture. Bring your bibles. We will be using the Orthodox Study Bible. For more information call (773) 334-4515 and speak to Father John.

Looking for volunteers for the Narthex Committee— The Parish Council is looking for individuals who can volunteer their time in the Narthex on Sunday and Major Holidays. If interested please see the president of the Parish Council—Nick Hatzopoulos

St. Andrew's has Graves for Sale @ Elmwood Cemetery, Section 3B. Please call the church for additional information if you are interested (773) 334-4515

Thursday, April 26th: NEA YENIA : New Generation Happy Hour at Greek owned Maplewood Brewery
5:00-9:00: 2717 N Maplewood Ave., Chicago, IL 60647; Ages 21+, No Cover, Free Distillery Tour, Cash Bar and snacks. Contact Alexandra White for additional details: alex@whitemysteryband.com

Thursday, April 26th: Annual IOCC Pan Orthodox Grand Banquet -
Keynote Speaker: His Eminence Metropolitan Nathanael of Chicago
Did you know that IOCC delivered more than 600 million dollars of emergency relief around the world since 1992! IOCC spends 92% of its resources on humanitarian relief, while only 8% is spent on administrative costs and fundraising support. Please join us for this annual event. This year's Banquet will be held on **Thursday evening, April 26th at: Cafe le Cave, 2777 Mannheim Rd., Des Plaines.** Cocktails are at 6:00 pm, and Dinner is at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$125. Please See Kathy Siavelis (gsiavelis@sbcglobal.net) by **Wednesday, April 18, 2018**, to make your reservations and for additional information.



PHILOPTOCHOS

Wishing all of St. Andrew's family Χριστός ανέστη! Many thanks to Metropolitan Nathanael, Father John, Father Athanasios, Father Chris, Chanters, Altar boys and Myrofores young ladies for the beautiful and inspiring services of Holy Week, Anastasi and Agape Sunday.

Many thanks to all you who supported the **Palm Sunday Bake Sale** along with coordinators Patty Harrison and Demetra Christos for their hard work scheduling all our cooks, setting up and selling the delicious pastries made by so many of the ladies of St. Andrews. Many thanks to Angie Alexopoulos, Karen Anderson, Gena Brelas, Eugenia Demos, Georgia Farlekas, Tasia Foutris, Patty Harrison, Kristen Haynes, Seva Johnson, Vonnie Karafotias, Cynthia Melas, Georgia Melidis, Terri Mikuzis, Chrissie Petrov, Neva Revel, Loukia Rodriguez, Aspasia Sarris, Sophia Spiradokos, Canella Stavrou, and Diane White.

Additional thanks to all who participated in The Good Friday Outreach Project along with coordinators: Father Athanasios and Kathy Siavelis who worked together with the Outreach team to ensure we had enough volunteers to complete the packaging of 10,000 meals for those less fortunate in the Chicagoland area. Outreach is an amazing organization that travels all over the country helping to abate the serious issues of hunger that exists nationwide. Thank you for your participation and financial support of this critical outreach organization.

Tuesday, April 23rd: 6:30 General Meeting in President's Room. Please join us as we plan our spring activities and have special guest speakers. Bring a favorite appetizer or dessert to share.

Saturday, April 28th 9:00 Walk-a-thon with St. George's Philoptochos. You can sponsor anyone from Philoptochos or the Parish who will be walking from St. George to St. Andrew to St. George. Funds raised will be go to support a Greek Orthodox Church in Madagascar. Please call Fr. John if you are able to attend: 773-334-4517.

Welcome to Saint Andrew's Greek Orthodox Church
"Proclaiming Orthodoxy Since 1926"
5649 North Sheridan Road • Chicago, IL 60660
(773) 334-4515 • Fax: (773) 334-3468
E-mail: info@standreworthodox.org
Website: StAndrewOrthodox.org

Fr. John N. Kalomas – Proistamenos
Fr. Athanasios Minetos - Associate Priest
Fr. John Kutulas – In Loving Memory

SUNDAY, APRIL 15, 2018 (Sunday of Thomas)

STEWARDSHIP QUOTE – *Seeing Is Believing, But a Good Steward Believes Without Seeing, Which Makes Him A Great Giver To God's House.*

CHRISTOS ANESTI!!!

.....
FOR NON-ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS: *We welcome those Christians not fully united with us. It is a consequence of the sad divisions of Christianity that we cannot extend to you a general invitation to receive Holy Communion. Orthodox Christians believe that the Eucharist is an action of the celebrating community signifying a oneness in faith, life, and worship. Reception of the Eucharist by Christians not fully united with us would imply a oneness which does not yet exist and for which we must all pray. We do however invite you to receive the blessed bread that is given out to all at the end of service. Thank you for coming and worshipping with us.*
.....

St. Thomas Sunday

Christ is risen!
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

All of Bright Week we lived in the Paschal joy in the risen Savior; and our joy, just like that of the holy apostles, was mixed with confusion: not long ago we had remembered the death of Him Who is the Source of life, but now we rejoice, having been raised to life by Him Who had been in the tomb. Just like the holy disciples and apostles during the first days after the resurrection, we vividly remembered the passions of Christ during the reading of the 12 Gospels; the Lord's death and the taking down of His Body from the Cross, which we symbolized by the bringing out of the shroud; the Savior's burial, when we carried the shroud in a procession around the church; and the long hours awaiting the miracle on the Saturday of Great Stillness.

Although from the very early morning on the day of the resurrection the good news of the resurrection was carried throughout creation, and even though angels from heaven (Mark 16:6) and holy myrrhbearers on earth (Luke 24:9) and even the guards at the Sanhedrin (Matthew 28:11) had already told of the miracle, the apostles were still in a state of fear and doubt, hiding behind doors and locks "for the fear of the Jews" (John 20:19). The disciples' doubt is not surprising, for they were witness to the greatest miracle in the history of creation: humans killed God, and then He rose from the dead and saved the dying human race from the claws of hell. The disciples of Christ, after their teacher's arrest, forgot all of His prophesies concerning the things about to take place. They did not believe the miraculous story of the holy myrrhbearers (Mark 16:11, Luke 24:11), and even while talking to the Risen One face to face, they hesitated to trust their own hearts (Luke 24:25) which were burning and trembling in the presence of God (Luke 24:32). This marvelous unbelief (Luke 24:41), human weakness, incapable of encompassing the magnitude of the miracle that took place, is reflected in the famous words of the Apostle Thomas: "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." (John 20:25)

People often refer to Thomas as "doubting," not really considering the depth and the height of the "doubt" of this holy apostle. But let us look more carefully at this man. Was his doubt the same as that of the Judeans who yelled

about the Savior Whom they crucified, "Let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in Him." (Matthew 27:42); or was it similar to that which we hear from our contemporaries: "If there is God, let Him show Himself to all, and we will believe in Him and live happily ever after"?

The ancient scribes and Pharisees knew about all of Christ's miracles and, it appears, guessed Who Jesus of Galilee really was. But every time they were faced with the Divine, they became even more rooted in blasphemy. Having found out that Christ had healed a man born blind, instead of lifting praises they spewed curses: "This man is a sinner (John 9:24), [and] you were steeped in sin at birth" (John 9:34). Having heard that Christ had resurrected a four-day-old already-smelling dead man, and, apparently, not having any more doubts about Christ's divinity, the elders of the nation decided "to kill Lazarus as well" (John 12:10). Finally, after being faced with the fact of Christ's miraculous resurrection, and having heard the eyewitness accounts of the guards (Matthew 28:11) who had fallen on the ground trembling in the presence of a shining angel (Matthew 28:4), the elders bribed the soldiers and deceived the people (Matthew 28:12-14), further deepening their blasphemy. Don't modern Pharisees also only further deepen their blasphemy, having come face to face with the Risen One and not being convinced even by the miracles?

But Saint Thomas is not one of them. We know about his faithfulness and sacrificial love for his Teacher. After following the Savior for three years, Thomas understood very well the danger Christ faced from the scribes and the Pharisees. The other disciples also understood it very well; that is why when the Savior decided to go to Jerusalem, the apostles tried to talk Him out of it, warning Him of the danger (John 11:8). But it was St. Thomas who said, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him" (John 11:16). One does not often hear such words from a doubter! After the Ascension of the Savior, the Apostle Thomas, according to the Church Tradition, went to preach the Gospel in one of the furthest and most difficult to reach places of the ancient world—India, where he was tortured and killed for Christ. But on that day, a week after the Resurrection, when the Savior came to His disciples and Thomas was with them, the holy apostle needed only a push, only a step, in order for this disciple who so selflessly loved his Teacher to realize to Whom he had devoted his life. "My Lord and my God!" exclaimed Thomas, who only a minute earlier had been understandably doubting the accounts of his brethren. "My Lord and my God!" exclaimed Thomas from the bottom of

his loving heart. To such a person as Thomas God comes. This is the kind of person that He allows to touch Himself!

In His desire to save people, Christ suffered everything: mocking and scourging, torture and shameful death, and even others poking at His wounds with their fingers after His glorious resurrection. If He is awaited, Christ will even go through closed doors (John 20:26). But what will He hear having entered our heart? Will He hear from us the words "my Lord and my God" or will He only receive mocking and scourging? Will we worship Him, as did St. Thomas, or will

we crucify Him with our lack of repentance and hurl the rocks of our sins at Him?

Lord, through the prayers of the holy Apostle Thomas, give us faith and help our unbelief (Mark 9:24)!

Amen.

Given By Fr. Sergei Sveshnikov and taken Pravmir Press

EPISTLE READING: Acts 5:12-20

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."

GOSPEL READING: 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.