



***“He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; said Jesus Christ [John 14:12]. And in truth, the deeds of an Elias, a Moses, the works of a Peter, a Paul, and the wonders of a Panteleimon, a Nicholas, are not a strange thing in the Holy Orthodox Church. The like is repeated again and again in the Church, whether you see it or not.”***

- St. Sebastian Dabovich

### A Prayer for the Week

O Lord of Life and Resurrection, when I dare to embrace Your Resurrected life, I sense the warmth of a vibrant faith touch every part of my life. Your living Way is the only way to truly live. And disconnected from that warm Resurrected life, my own life resembles the dying warmth of a coal removed from the fire. Dear Lord, help me stay close to the warmth of a vibrant and zealous faith in You! Amen. CHRIST IS RISEN!

### The power and influence of good deeds

“For it is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men (1 Peter 2:15). Bishop Nikolai Velimirovic tells us in The Prologue from Ochrid that we are better off if we do not engage others in lengthy debates and fruitless discussions, but that we can better change their hearts by our love and good deeds. Arguing with others, even over matters of faith, is usually a fruitless venture, rarely leading the other to ponder the truth of your words. Better to demonstrate truth by holiness of life, patience, and kindness in our response. Entering into heated words most often leads to a standoff, where only the demons win in the end.

“It is difficult, my brethren, to dispute with an atheist; it is difficult to converse with a stupid man; it is difficult to change an embittered man. It is only with the greatest difficulty that you will convince an atheist, a stupid man, or an embittered man, with words.”

“If you argue with an atheist on his own diabolical terms, you simply strengthen the demon of atheism. If you converse with a stupid man in a spirit of derision, the darkness of stupidity will be made the greater. If you think to change a bitter man by anger, you will merely add more fuel to the fire of bitterness.”

Responding to the embittered man, the angry man, or the stupid man, while hoping to win him over, does nothing for him, and eventually gives power to the demon who would devour the man's soul, and consume your own. Thinking you have to prove the correctness of your point of view does nothing for truth, but only gives power to the demons of pride, anger, and stupidity. The power and influence of good deeds always wins out in the end.

With love in Christ,  
Abbot Tryphon

### May

09 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
1:00pm *Blessing of the Graves (Oakland)*  
12 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet  
16 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
1:00pm *Blessing of the Graves (Lawnview)*  
19 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet  
23 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
1:00pm *Blessing of the Graves (Magnolia)*  
26 – 7:15pm Bible Study with GoogleMeet  
30 – 10:00am Divine Liturgy  
1:00pm *Blessing of the Graves (Forrest Hills)*  
31 – 11:00am *Blessing of the Graves (Fernwood)*

Beginning with St. Thomas Sunday, it is traditional to bless the graves of our loved ones during the Paschal Season. The following is the current schedule of cemetery blessings:

05/09 – Oakland  
05/16 – Lawnview  
05/23 – Magnolia  
05/30 – Forrest Hills  
05/31 – Fernwood  
*Other cemeteries will be visited by request*

This schedule may be revised due to weather.

## Children's Word

### **Acts 5:12-20 (Epistle)**

And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed. Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, and laid their hands on 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, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."

### **John 20:19-31 (Gospel)**

Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, 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. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also 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 them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His 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.

### **The Resurrection is Life!**

Have you ever seen a t-shirt that says something like, "Soccer is life" or "Basketball is life" or maybe "Dancing is life"? Maybe you even have one yourself? Usually, the person wearing it doesn't really believe basketball or soccer is the most important thing in the world, but still, it means a whole lot to him or her!

After our Lord rose from the dead, He showed this Good News to many people. Today, in the Gospel, we hear about how He showed Himself to most of His disciples, and later to Thomas too. The Gospel tells us, "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples...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." The Gospel tells us, that's why Jesus came here! That's why He died and rose from the dead. So that we may have life in His name!

The Resurrection is life! Jesus came to earth to give us life! Nothing else can give us life like our Lord Jesus Christ has given us! Soccer, basketball, dancing, money, houses, fun, parties... those things can't give us life. Jesus gives us life. He opened heaven for us, so that when we die, we can really live forever with Him. The Resurrection is life because Christ is risen!

### **SAINT THOMAS A MAN OF REAL FAITH**

Did you hear the Gospel today? Today, we hear the story about Jesus's disciple and friend, Thomas. We hear how he missed out on seeing the Lord, after He had risen from the dead. We hear how Thomas just couldn't believe this news. Then, we hear how Jesus gave Thomas a second chance, and He invited Thomas to touch Him and believe that He had really risen from the dead! Then Thomas believed. "My Lord and my God!" he cried.

Sometimes people blame St. Thomas for not having enough faith. But isn't St. Thomas really like us sometimes? Sometimes we forget all the wonderful things that God has done for us, and we forget to thank Him! Sometimes we forget all the miracles God has done, and we forget to pray to Him! Sometimes our faith starts out like St. Thomas's faith.

After the Resurrection, St. Thomas went on to become an amazing saint in our Church. He traveled outside the Roman Empire, and he told many, many people about Christ—His life, His death, His rising from the dead, and that He will come again someday. He traveled throughout the Middle East, and he even went as far as India. Let us all try to have faith as strong as the faith of St. Thomas! He really knew and believed that CHRIST IS RISEN!

We celebrate the Apostle Thomas today, the Sunday after Easter, and October 6th.

## Bright Friday – No Wonder the Water Is Hot!

May 7, 2021 · Fr. Barnabas Powell

Christ is risen!

“What would Jesus do?” That phrase was popular a few years ago, and I confess to being amused by this fad of “easy religion.” One of the main reasons was that the life of Jesus is not easily categorized as the comfortable “Jesus” we moderns would prefer. You know the “Jesus” I’m talking about: The “meek” Jesus that pats everyone on the head and tells them they are “OK, just like you are.” The Jesus of modern therapy gets us “in touch with our feelings.” The Jesus that has all the little children come and sit on his lap and wouldn’t dare tell anyone that they were wrong. Unless, of course, he was telling those “mean, judgmental” people how wrong they were! That’s OK for “modern Jesus” to scold and condemn “those people!”

We forget all too often that Jesus had times in His ministry where He was very “unJesusLike”. We confront a Lord Who cleansed the Temple of commerce because they were encroaching on a section of the Temple meant to be a place where even Gentiles could learn of the God of the Temple. Isn’t it interesting the Church gives us this passage to read today?

Look at our Gospel Lesson for this Bright Friday in John 2:12-22:

*At that time, Jesus came to Capernaum with his mother and his brothers and his disciples; and there they stayed for a few days.*

*The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers at their business. And making a whip of cords, he drove them all, with the sheep and oxen, out of the temple; and he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. And he told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; you shall not make my Father’s house a house of trade.” His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” The Jews then said to him, “What sign have you to show us for doing this?” Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?” But he spoke of the temple of his body. When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.*

The scene is set. The Lord and His family were in the city to attend the Passover liturgies of the Temple and there Jesus finds these “businesses” operating in the part of the Temple called “the Court of the Gentiles.” This was a section of the Temple grounds reserved for the strangers and non-Jews so even those who weren’t part of the faith could get as close as they could to learn of the faith from the Temple actions. This was the place of hospitality to the “strangers” that was enshrined in the teachings of the Law. And the faith had become so exclusive and ethnic, there was “no room” for the “strangers” there anymore! And Jesus takes great offense to this breach of hospitality!

It is no mistake in our Divine Liturgy that part of the preparation of the Holy Chalice at the Eucharist has the priest pour hot water into the wine and water of the Chalice with these words: “The zeal of faith, full of the Holy Spirit”. It is precisely the “zeal” of the faith; that warm love and devotion to the faith; that enlivens and fills the Church with wise action and faithfulness. The “heat” of our love and devotion makes the Chalice warm and makes our lives consistent. How cold the faith is when it is practiced out of some mere habit or some lingering “nostalgia” of “how it use to be.” No wonder that kind of “cold” faith just doesn’t survive in the hearts of the next generation. A “cold” faith resembles a lifeless corpse, but the Orthodox Faith is “warm” with the Resurrected Life of Christ flowing in us!

Today, where is your “zeal” for the faith? Is your faith “hot” or cold? The only path to keep your faith “hot” is daily focus and attention and all we have to do to rekindle that warmth is to stay close to the “fire” of God’s presence. Why not let the afterglow of Pascha that makes this Bright Week so precious, warm the faith of your heart to the point that your whole life is warmed by a renewed devotion and zeal for the Lord’s House? Before you know it, you’ll be Orthodox on Purpose!

Деяния 5:12-20

Руками же Апостолов совершались в народе многие знамения и чудеса; и все единодушно пребывали в притворе Соломоновом. Из посторонних же никто не смел пристать к ним, а народ прославлял их. Верующих же более и более присоединялось к Господу, множество мужчин и женщин, так что выносили больных на улицы и полагали на постелях и кроватях, дабы хотя тень проходящего Петра осенила кого из них. Сходились также в Иерусалим многие из окрестных городов, неся больных и нечистыми духами одержимых, которые и исцелялись все. Первосвященник же и с ним все, принадлежавшие к ереси саддукейской, исполнились зависти, и наложили руки свои на Апостолов, и заключили их в народную темницу. Но Ангел Господень ночью отворил двери темницы и, выведя их, сказал: идите и, став в храме, говорите народу все сии слова жизни.

От Иоанна 20:19-31

В тот же первый день недели вечером, когда двери [дома], где собирались ученики Его, были заперты из опасения от Иудеев, пришел Иисус, и стал посреди, и говорит им: мир вам! Сказав это, Он показал им руки и ноги и ребра Свои. Ученики обрадовались, увидев Господа. Иисус же сказал им вторично: мир вам! как послал Меня Отец, [так] и Я посылаю вас. Сказав это, дунул, и говорит им: примите Духа Святаго. Кому простите грехи, тому простятся; на ком оставите, на том останутся. Фома же, один из двенадцати, называемый Близнец, не был тут с ними, когда приходил Иисус. Другие ученики сказали ему: мы видели Господа. Но он сказал им: если не увижу на руках Его ран от гвоздей, и не вложу перста моего в раны от гвоздей, и не вложу руки моей в ребра Его, не поверю. После восьми дней опять были в доме ученики Его, и Фома с ними. Пришел Иисус, когда двери были заперты, стал посреди них и сказал: мир вам! Потом говорит Фоме: подай перст твой сюда и посмотри руки Мои; подай руку твою и вложи в ребра Мои; и не будь неверующим, но верующим. Фома сказал Ему в ответ: Господь мой и Бог мой! Иисус говорит ему: ты поверил, потому что увидел Меня; блаженны невидевшие и уверовавшие. Много сотворил Иисус пред учениками Своими и других чудес, о которых не писано в книге сей. Сие же написано, дабы вы уверовали, что Иисус есть Христос, Сын Божий, и, веруя, имели жизнь во имя Его.

## Veprat e Apostujve 5:12-20

Dhe shumë shenja dhe mrekulli bëheshin në mes të popullit nëpërmjet duarve të apostujve. Të gjithë me një mendje të vetme mblidheshin nën portikun e Salomonit. Dhe asnjëri nga të tjerët nuk guxonte të bashkohej me ta; por populli i lartësonte. Kështu Zotit i shtohej një numër gjithnjë e më i madh besimtarësh, turma burrash dhe grash, aq sa i binin të sëmuret në sheshe, i vinin në shtretër e në shtroja, që kur kalonte Pjetri, të paktën hija e tij të mbulonte ndonjë nga ata. Edhe një turmë nga qytetet përreth turrej në Jeruzalem, duke sjellë të sëmuret dhe ata që mundoheshin nga frymëra të ndyra dhe të gjithë shëroheshin. Atëherë u ngritën kryepriifti dhe të gjithë ata që ishin me të, domethënë sekti i saducenjve, plot smirë, dhe vunë dorë mbi apostujt dhe i futën në burgun publik. Por një engjell i Zotit, natën, i hapi dyert e burgut dhe, si i nxori jashtë, tha: “Shkoni, paraqituni në tempull dhe i shpallni popullit të gjitha fjalët e kësaj jete.”

## Gjoni 20:19-31

Pastaj në mbrëmje të po asaj dite, dita e parë e javës, ndërsa dyert e vendit ku qenë mbledhur dishepujt ishin të mbyllura nga frika e Judenjve, erdhi Jezusi dhe u prezantua në mes tyre dhe u tha atyre: “Paqja me ju!” Dhe, si i tha këto, u tregoi atyre duart e veta dhe brinjën. Dishepujt pra, kur e panë Zotin, u gëzuan. Pastaj Jezusi u tha atyre përsëri: “Paqja me ju! Sikurse më ka dërguar mua Ati, ashtu unë po ju dërgoj ju.” Dhe, si tha këto fjalë, hukati mbi ta dhe tha: “Merrni Frymën e Shenjtë! Kujt do t’ia falni mëkatet, do t’i jenë falur, kujt do t’ia mbani, do t’i jenë mbajtur.” Por Thomai, i quajtur Binjaku, një nga të dymbëdhjetët, nuk ishte me ta kur erdhi Jezusi. Dishepujt e tjerë, pra, i thanë: “Kemi parë Zotin.” Por ai u tha atyre: “Po nuk e pashë në duart e tij shenjën e gozhdave, dhe po nuk e vura gishtin tim te shenja e gozhdëve dhe dorën time në brinjën e tij, unë nuk do të besoj.” Dhe tetë ditë më vonë, dishepujt ishin përsëri në shtëpi dhe Thomai ishte me ta. Jezusi erdhi, ndonëse dyert ishin të mbyllura, dhe u prezantua midis tyre dhe tha: “Paqja me ju!” Pastaj i tha Thomait: “Vëre gishtin këtu dhe shiko duart e mia; shtriye edhe dorën dhe vëre në brinjën time; dhe mos ji mosbesues, por besues!” Atëherë Thomai u përgjigj dhe i tha: “Zoti im dhe Perëndia im!” Jezusi i tha: “Sepse më ke parë, Thoma, ti ke besuar; lum ata që nuk kanë parë dhe kanë besuar!” Jezusi bëri edhe shumë shenja të tjera në prezencën e dishepujve të tij, të cilat nuk janë shkruar në këtë libër. Por këto gjëra janë shkruar që ju të besoni se Jezusi është Krishti, Biri i Perëndisë dhe që, duke besuar, ta keni jetën në emër të tij.