

## The Reading from the Acts of the Holy Apostles (5:12–20)

In those days, 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."

## The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John (20:19–31)

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. He said to his disciples, "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.

# Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Church

Meriden, Connecticut

website: [sspeterpaul.org](http://sspeterpaul.org)

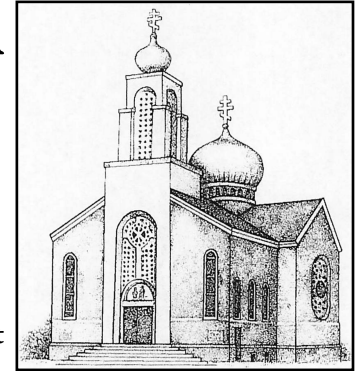
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2nd Sunday of Pascha—Tone 1  
Antipascha—St. Thomas Sunday  
April 23, 2023

**Holy Glorious Great Martyr, Victory-bearer, and Wonderworker George (303).** Martyr Alexandra the Empress, wife of Diocletian (303). Martyrs Anatolius & Protoleon, soldiers converted by witnessing the martyrdom of St. George (303).

## Christ is Risen! Indeed he is risen!

We welcome everyone who has come to this house of the Lord. We especially welcome all guest and newcomers.

Please feel free to follow along with a Divine Liturgy book from the table at the glass doors. For this Sunday and most of the year, we are using the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

Holy Communion is a solemn responsibility: Orthodox Christians who have prepared through Confession, prayer, and fasting may participate. At the end of the Liturgy, everyone is welcome to come forward for a blessing and to share in the blessed bread (called "antidoron," this blessed bread is used in our prayers but is not itself a sacrament).

Afterward, please join us downstairs for fellowship and refreshment. We look forward to greeting you personally, and we are glad that you are here.

## Upcoming Events in Parish Life

We invite anyone to participate in our services online. Visit our website ([sspeterpaul.org](http://sspeterpaul.org)) for details.

Saturday, April 22	Vigil followed by Confession	6 PM
Sunday, April 23 <i>St. Thomas Sunday</i>	Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM
	Blessing of Graves postponed due to rain	
Wednesdays	Morning Worship	8:15 AM
Saturday, April 29	Vigil followed by Confession	6 PM
Sunday, April 30 <i>Holy Myrrhbearers</i>	Divine Liturgy	9:30 AM
	Blessing of Graves rain date	11:30 AM
Tuesday, May 2	Foundation in Orthodox Christianity Online Session 7: The Holy Mysteries	6 PM
Saturday, May 6	Ordination of Dn. Mark Roosien to the Holy Priesthood, Holy Ghost, Bridgeport	10 AM

**Christ is risen! Indeed, he is risen!** The Paschal season continues until the feast of the Ascension of the Lord on the fortieth day. This mirrors the forty days the risen Lord spent instructing his disciples, revealing how all the Scriptures are properly understood in light of the Resurrection, before he ascended from their sight on the Mount of Olives into heaven. We still count Sundays from Pascha even then, until Pentecost—the fiftieth day—when the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in the form of tongues of flame, enabling them to proclaim words of life to all peoples in their own languages.

We also honor the Resurrection (literally, when our Lord “stood up again”) by **standing to pray**—neither kneeling nor making prostrations—until Vespers of Pentecost. In our prayers, **we also do not begin with “O Heavenly King”**—the hymn to the Holy Spirit—until Pentecost. Rather, we celebrate the Resurrection, with the Paschal Troparion three times: **“Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!”**

For Pascha and Bright Week, the lilies on the altar were donated by Dana and Cyprian Kolpakov in loving memory of **Mary Thibeau**. Memory eternal!

**Thank you** to all those who have worked hard for Holy Week and Pascha: the choir, altar servers, cleaning and beautifying the church, recording our services, those who kept vigil at the Tomb, and those who quietly worked behind the scenes. The Lord blessed us through your labors.

**Next Sunday, we plan to bless graves at SS. Peter & Paul Cemetery** on Westfield Road. Our practice is to assemble in the middle of the cemetery for a Paschal memorial service, commemorating all those laid to rest there. While the choir sings hymns of Pascha, the whole cemetery is blessed. There is an opportunity afterward to say prayers at particular graves as well.

**Dn. Mark Roosien will be ordained to the Holy Priesthood** on Saturday, May 6, at Holy Ghost Church, Bridgeport. **Please let Fr. Joshua know if you plan to attend and stay for the luncheon, to RVSP by April 30.**

The cross is lit by Helen and Joe Barone for **John Barone on his birthday**. Many Years!

## We Ask Your Prayers

**Many years to all those who have as their heavenly patron the Apostle Thomas (Thomas Sunday), Great Martyr George (4/23), or St. Mark the Evangelist (4/25).**

**Many years to those celebrating birthdays:** John Barone and Yvonne Rutcho on April 23. Cyprian Kolpakov & Charlotte Anne Lombardi on April 27.

### For the Sick & Suffering:

Matushka Deborah (Belonick)—suffered a serious fall  
William (Waas)—family of Sarah Massaro  
Corey (Knap)—nephew of Valentina Knap, recovering from a serious accident  
William (Weidmann)—husband of Adrian, suffering from a chronic immune condition similar to multiple sclerosis

Gregory (Mankevich)	Christopher (Sullivan)	
Anita (Propheter)	Rosemary (Delaney)	Mary Jane (Rodgers)
Irene	Lorraine	Jacob
Katelyn	Crystal	Victoria
Bruce and Stacia	Cyprian and Dana	
Nicole and Naaman	Helen and Helene	

### For Our Shut-Ins:

Yvonne (Rutcho)	Jennie (Padick)	
Margaret (Savchik)	Ann (Kreshik)	Jill (Zadar)

To share news in the bulletin, or to add someone to our prayer list, please contact Fr. Joshua: [priest@sspeterpaul.org](mailto:priest@sspeterpaul.org) or 203-237-4539.

If you would like to commemorate loved ones by lighting the cross in church, please contact Alexia Tassmer: 203-284-0856.

## Beginning of Services during the Paschal Season

*Priest:* Christ is risen from the dead... 2½ x

*People:* And upon those in the tombs bestowing life!

### **Tone 7 Troparion** (from the Pentecostarion)

From the sealed tomb, You shone forth, O Life!  
Through closed doors You came to Your Disciples, O Christ God.  
Renew in us, through them, an upright spirit,//  
by the greatness of Your mercy, O Resurrection of all!

### **Tone 4 Troparion** (St. George)

As a martyr of Christ, thou wast bound for good deeds, O George;  
by faith you conquered the torturer's godlessness.  
You were offered as a sacrifice pleasing to God,  
thus receiving the crown of victory. //  
Through your intercessions, forgiveness of sins is granted to all.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

### **Tone 4 Kontakion** (St. George)

God raised you as His own gardener, O George,  
for you have gathered for yourself the sheaves of virtue.  
Having sown in tears, you now reap with joy;  
you have shed your blood in combat and won Christ as your crown. //  
Through your intercessions, forgiveness of sins is granted to all.

now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### **Tone 8 Kontakion** (from the Pentecostarion)

Thomas touched Your life-giving side with an eager hand, O Christ  
God,  
when You came to Your Apostles through closed doors.  
He cried out with all: "You are my Lord and my God!"

### **Prokeimenon in the Third Tone**

Great is our Lord, and abundant in power! /  
His understanding is beyond measure! (Ps 146/147:5)  
*Verses:* Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God! (Ps 146/147:1)

### **Tone 7 Prokeimenon** (St. George)

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord / and shall hope in Him. (Ps. 63:11a)

## Hymn to the Theotokos

The Angel cried to the Lady, full of grace:  
"Rejoice, O pure Virgin! Again, I say: 'Rejoice,  
your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb!  
With Himself He has raised all the dead.'  
Rejoice, O ye people!

Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem!  
The glory of the Lord has shone on you!  
Exult now, and be glad, O Zion!  
Be radiant, O pure Theotokos,  
in the Resurrection of your Son!

## The Dismissal

*Priest:* Glory to you, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to you!  
*People:* Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death,  
and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (3x)

## Notes on the Week

Christ is risen! This joyful truth is constantly on our lips and in our hearts, just eight days from our Lord's Resurrection. Yet here we come to a strange mystery in the liturgical tradition: Antipascha—"Instead of Pascha." Why would the Church celebrate anything instead of Pascha so close to the very Day of Resurrection? Nonetheless, on St. Thomas Sunday alone in the Paschal Season, we are instructed, "On this holy day of Thomas Sunday, the Resurrection hymns are not chanted, but only those of the Feast" (from the Pentecostarion).

What we need instead is the restored faith of all the Apostles. Thomas had to touch the wounds of the risen Lord to know that this was not some fevered imagination or a ghost. And having been convinced, he knew for sure that Jesus Christ is not merely a man but "my Lord and my God!" So these are the words we need to hear, from Vespers of Thomas Sunday:

Thomas, called Twin, was not with them, O Christ,  
when you entered when the doors were shut;  
therefore he did not believe what was told him  
confirming faith from unbelief.  
But you did not refuse, O Good One, to show him your immaculate side,  
and the wounds in your hands and feet.  
But he, having handled and seen,  
confessed you to be not simply God and not merely man,  
and he cried "My Lord and my God, glory to you."