

From the Divine Office for Thomas Sunday

When all the doors were closed and disciples gathered, the Savior appeared in the place where they were assembled. Standing before them in their midst, He called Thomas and said to him, "Come, touch my wounds and see the nail-prints. Do not persist in unbelief, but forever proclaim with faith My Resurrection from the dead!" (Vespers)

Why did the hand of the apostle not melt away when he approached the burning side of the Lord? Who gave him the boldness to touch Him? Surely it was the One who was touched! If He had not given the power to that frail hand, how would it have been able to touch the wounds which made Heaven and earth tremble? Thomas received the grace of touching Christ and crying out, "You are my Lord and my God!" (Orthros)



THOMAS SUNDAY
APRIL 16, 2022



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Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM

After “Blessed is the Kingdom...

Christ is Risen from the dead and by His death He has trampled upon Death and has given life to those who were in the tombs (3 times)

Antiphon (Feast)

1: Shout joyfully to God, all you on earth.

O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia

2: Sing praise to the glory of His name; proclaim His glorious praise.

**Khallisna Ya-Bnallah, Ya Man qama min baynil-amwaat, nahnu muranneemeena Laka.
Haleloueya.**

3: Say to God how tremendous are Your deeds! For Your great strength, Your enemies fawn upon You.

O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia

Entrance Hymn

Priest: In Your assemblies bless the Lord our God, from the wellsprings of Israel.

People: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia!,

Troparion of St. Thomas (Tone 7) 3x

While the tomb was sealed You shone forth from it, O Christ our Life, and while the doors remained closed, You stood among Your Disciples, O Resurrection of all, and through them You restored a new spirit in us according to Your great Mercy.

Kondakion of Pascha (Tone 2)

Though You went down in the tomb, O immortal One, You overthrew the power of Hades and rose victorious, O Christ God, You greeted the ointment bearing women, saying: Rejoice! You gave peace to Your apostles, and to those who had fallen, resurrection.

Trisagion

All of you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia!

We find similar statements in St Paul who describes the genealogy of Christ in this way: “...*from them [the Israelites], according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God. Amen*” (Rom. 9:5). From the time of the apostles and evangelists, Christians recognized Jesus as the unique and divine Son of God. John expressed this belief more firmly and unequivocally than other Scriptural authors.

St Jerome (c. 347-420) taught that John wrote when those who denied the unique person of the Lord were gaining a hearing in the Church. “Gospels” were being written, purporting to contain the “secret” wisdom of Jesus, which resembled Egyptian philosophy rather than the Word of God. John’s work is a clear rejection of these other “Gospels.”

The Witness of Secular Society

Jesus’ contemporaries in the wider society did not write about Him. They gradually began writing about His followers and thereby showed us what the first Christians believed about Him.

From AD 111-113 Pliny the Younger (Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus) was the Roman governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor. He wrote to Emperor Trajan for advice on how to deal with Christians, whose gatherings he described in part like this: “They recited a hymn antiphonally to Christus as to a god...” (*Epistles* book 10, letter 96). As a pagan, Pliny was used to the many gods and goddesses venerated in Roman religion as so he described the Christians as reverencing Christ as “a god.” The Christians would never have said it quite like that, but Pliny is nonetheless witnessing that Christians considered Christ as divine.

A similar witness from the pagan world is Lucian of Samosata (c. AD 115-c. 200), a popular satirist in the Greek world of Asia Minor, who frequently lampooned the gods and public figures of his world as well as those who revere them. In his *Passing of Peregrinus*, 11 he notes that “The Christians, you know, worship a man to this day – the distinguished personage who introduced their novel rites, and was crucified on that account. ...it was impressed on them by their original lawgiver that they are all brothers, from the moment that they are converted, deny the gods of Greece and worship the crucified sage and live after his laws.”

While Lucian does not call Jesus a god, he testifies that the Christians worship Him instead of the gods of Greece. For them He is clearly divine.

While Jesus never said, “I am God.” He did and said things that would lead us to believe and understand that He is God. It would take the next several centuries for all the local Churches to express clearly how the one God could have a Son, how that Son was like the Father and be both God and man.

At the First Council of Nicaea (AD 325), the description of Christ which we find in the Creed became the universal way of describing the Lord Jesus: “the only-begotten Son of God, Light from Light, true God from true God – begotten, not made, of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made.”

Subsequent councils, which discussed how Christ is God and man, did not receive universal acceptance. This resulted in the break between the Greek and Latin Churches on one hand and the other Eastern Churches (Armenians, Copts, etc.) on the other. It is only in the modern era that Agreed Statements on Christology between these Churches have acknowledged a unity of faith in their different expressions.

While Thomas the Apostle may not have been able to articulate the Nicene definition of Christ, the Holy Spirit speaking through him gave us the words to express the Church’s ongoing faith: You are my Lord and my God”

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

Today

+Wendy Halal

People of Ukraine, living and deceased. Requested by Maria Filewicz

Today’s Coffee Hr. is hosted by Maria Filewicz

Next Sunday’s Coffee Hr. is hosted by Eric Ewanco

Please remember in your prayers: George Arraj, Jr., Ron Abraham, Peter Abraham, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, Archie Opatka, Anthony Poti, Katherine Thomas, Charlotte Stockhaus, Ruth Welsh, Richard Abraham, Sr., Frank Boyda, Carol Boyda, Bob Lynch, Michael Mooradian, Michael McNeil, Jeff McNeil, Wyatt William Rahall, Lauren Abraham, Nicholas Haddad, Elaine Foley, David Ahlin, Elio Kanaan, all those affected by the earthquakes in Syria and Turkey, and the people of Ukraine.

If there are people for whom you would like me to pray, please reach out and give me their names. Part of our vocation as Christians is to pray for each other, especially when someone is sick or suffering in any way.

Last Week’s Collection	
Weekly	\$1,764
Candles	\$ 302
Stole	\$ 500
Easter	\$ 500
Memorials	\$ 380
Diocesan	\$ 70
TOTAL	\$3,516
God bless you for your generosity!	

CLEAN-UP DAY

We will have a clean-up day on Saturday, April 22 at 10AM. There are plenty of things to do inside and outside the church. Please let Fr. Bryan know if you can make it, even if it is only for an hour or two. Lunch will be served.

Thanks in advance for your cooperation!

Thanks to all who worked so hard during Great Lent and Holy Week to make our celebrations both beautiful and spiritually fulfilling. Those who sang, those who read, those who baked or cooked/dyed the eggs, those who donated funds for the various items needed for our celebrations (flowers eggs, service books, etc.) Know that your contributions are much appreciated and never taken for granted! Christ is Risen! He is Truly Risen! Fr. Bryan

Below is a list of donations we received for flowers and other items **to date**:

Flowers	
William & Janice Abdelnour	In memory of Abdelnour and Tagman families
Ron Abraham	In memory of Salim & Annie Abraham, Aileen Abraham, Robert Abraham, Gloria Mooradian, Arthur Abraham
Francis & Carol Boyda	In memory of Philip J. Jordan, Thomas J. Boyda, Fran & Mary Boyda, Phil & Isabel Nassif
Steven & Phyllis Callan	In memory of Robert Esper, Isabella Esper Sabacinski, Francis Callan, Catherine Callan, Robert & Lynn Cronin
James & Karen Esper	In memory of James & Catherine Esper, Carol Esper Webster, Robert & Lorraine Nelson
Maria Filewicz	In memory of Amelia Filewicz
Arthur Gazal	In memory of Arthur Shaker Gazal, Shaker & Amelia Gazal, Frank & Antoinette Ricciardi, Selma Wenhö
Lisa Jagielski & Antoinette Arraj	In memory of George Arraj, Sr., Alfred Jagielski, Josephine Gazel
Joe & Lorraine Lian	
Sadie Mirante	H&S Paul Mirante, Carol Stankus. In memory of Joseph S. Mirante, Sr, Joseph S. Mirante, Jr., George Hajjar & Family
Jeanne & Ted Nader	In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Roland Allaire, Mr. & Mrs. David Nader
Nicholas Rahall	In memory of JR Rahall, William & Bertha Rahall
Marilyn & Zenon Tencza	In memory of Joseph, Nejaimey, and Tencza Families
Katherine Thomas	
Other Donations	
Susan Aboody-Kallio	Joan Opatka
Antoinette Arraj & Lisa Jagielski	Jean & Nadia Sakhat & Family
Frank & Carol Boyda	Marilyn & Zenon Tencza
Ryan & Tina Dumont	Mae Yanni
James & Karen Esper	
Joanne Kanaan	
Lauri Moossa & Michael Georges	

“My Lord and My God”

WHY WOULD THE APOSTLE THOMAS, who moments before had refused to accept the other apostles’ witness to Christ’s resurrection, suddenly proclaim that Jesus is “My Lord and my God” (Jn 20:28)? This question has been discussed since the Gospel of John was written.

A Multiple Choice question on the words of St Thomas when he saw the risen Christ might look something like this:

What St Thomas meant was:

A – A simple exclamation (like OMG)

B – That Jesus was God (the Father)

C – That Jesus was the Son of the Father

D – That Jesus was a god

Each of these answers has been offered by serious authors to explain the meaning of Thomas’ words. By themselves, this phrase could mean any of these things; in the context of John’s Gospel and the Church of its day, however, the answer becomes clearer.

St John’s Gospel, the only one to contain this narrative, is the last of the canonical Gospels to be written. In its final form it dates to the end of the first century AD, and manuscript fragments dating to c. AD 125 still exist. The author’s purpose in writing this Gospel is clearly stated in Jn 20:30, 31: *“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 aim of John’s Gospel, then, is to demonstrate that Jesus is the Messiah/Christ, the Son of God. In line with this aim, Thomas’ words here are not presented as an ordinary exclamation, but as an act of faith in Jesus as the Messiah. This rules out Answer A, above.

We are left, however, with another question: What might John have meant by calling Jesus “the Son of God”? This was not an unusual title for the Messiah – or for other important figures. It did not necessarily mean, however, what we mean by it. It was often a way of saying that the Messiah (or King or High Priest) was especially beloved or set apart by God.

When we look at the beginning of John’s Gospel, however, we see that John has a higher vision of Christ as Son of God. The Gospel begins with this famous passage: *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth ... No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him”* (Jn 1:11-4, 14, 18). John describes the eternal Word of God, His only-begotten Son, as having become flesh and dwelt among us. He is clearly depicting the Lord Jesus as divine, eternally existing, and uniquely in the bosom of His Father.

St Jerome (c. 347-420) taught that John wrote when those who denied the unique person of the Lord were gaining a hearing in the Church. “Gospels” were being written, purporting to contain the “secret” wisdom of Jesus, which resembled Egyptian philosophy rather than the Word of God.

Prokimenon

Reader: Great is our Lord, and great is His power, and to His wisdom there is no limit.

People: Great is our Lord, and great is His power, and to His wisdom there is no limit.

Reader: Praise the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever.

People: Great is our Lord, and great is His power, and to His wisdom there is no limit.

Reader: Great is our Lord, and great is His power,

People: And to His wisdom there is no limit.

Epistle: Acts 5:12-20

Alleluia Verses

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord, let us sing gladly to God our Savior!

Verse: For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

Gospel: Jn 20:19-31, Sunday of St. Thomas

Hirmos (Tone 7)

O shining Light, O Mother of God, honorable without compare, you are higher in dignity than any other creature. We magnify you with hymns.

Kinonikon (Tone 8)

Exalt the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, Zion! Alleluia!

After Communion—Christ is risen... (Once)

Instead of “Blessed by the name of the Lord...” Christ is risen (three times)

At the end of the Divine Liturgy

Priest: Christ is Risen!

People: He is truly Risen! (three times)

Priest: Glory to His Resurrection on the third day!

People: We adore His holy Resurrection on the third day!