

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton
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Bulletin for Thomas Sunday April 27th, 2014
Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!



Schedule of Services for Holy Week

April 27th Thomas Sunday

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
noon Basics of Orthodoxy

April 30th Wednesday

7:00 Reader's Vespers

May 3rd Saturday

5:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

May 4th Sunday of the Holy Myrrhbearers

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy
noon Basics of Orthodoxy

May 5th Monday

6:00 a.m. Matins

May 6th Tuesday

7:30 a.m. Matins, Confession
4:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

May 7th Wednesday

7:30 a.m. Matins, Confession
7:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

May 8th Thursday *St. John the Theologian*

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

May 9th Friday

7:30 a.m. Matins, Confession
7:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

O strange wonder, that grass should touch fire and be safe! For Thomas cast his hand into the fiery side of Jesus Christ our God, and was not burned by touching Him. For with fervor he changed the obstinacy of his soul into fervent faith, and he cried out from the depths of his soul: "Thou art my Master and God, who didst arise from the dead. Glory to Thee." *Vigil for Thomas Sunday*

Announcements for April 27

To Our Visitors: Welcome! Please join us after the service for coffee, food, and conversation. If you would, fill out a visitor's card for us and leave it in the basket on the table by the door. We invite you to go first through the food line and join the priest at the table.

To All: Please be aware that Holy Communion is open only to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves for worthy participation in the Mystery through prayer, fasting, and a recent confession to a priest (within the last month or so). We should be modestly dressed (so as not to distract others) and present to hear "Blessed is the Kingdom" at the beginning of the Liturgy (in *unusual* circumstances no later than the Gospel reading if we are communing), and not leave until the dismissal at the end.

The Special Offering this week will be for our building fund.

Temple wine given for the health and salvation of Carolyn and William.

Many Thanks to all who labored in cleaning, decorating, bringing food, dying eggs, baking prosphora and the artos, organizing the egg hunt, etc. Many of us working together make many wonderful things happen.

Fr. Justin will be at Holy Archangels Monastery this week with his family. Please keep them in your prayers. If you should have an emergency, the phone numbers of the other local priests are available in the back of the parish phonebook (in print and online) or you may call Fr. Justin's cell phone (see front page).

Paschal Notes

The prayer "O Heavenly King" is not said at home or in church during this season until Pentecost, June 8.

During the 50 days from Pascha to the Feast of Pentecost, we do not kneel or make prostrations in church in keeping with the joyful, festal character of the season. We begin to kneel and do prostrations again with the Kneeling Prayers of Pentecost.

For 40 days until the Feast of Ascension (May 29), we greet each other by saying, "Christ is Risen!" "Indeed, He is Risen!"

During the same period, we replace "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal..." with the paschal troparion "Christ is risen" said thrice.

Through the Leavetaking of Pascha (May 28), we use the Paschal Troparion (thrice) before meals and when setting out on a trip.

Classes this Week

Sunday, noon: Basics of Orthodoxy

Calling Those Who Love God's House: Part of loving God's house is taking care of it, and part of taking care of it is cleaning it each week. We have three or four people who demonstrate and abundant love in this way, but we want to make sure everyone gets the regular opportunity to clean the church. Please sign up on the sheet in the hall.

Please Pray: for catechumens Shannon Goodson, Holly Bellan, and Virginia Warwas, for inquirer Rick Hollembeak, the novice Svetlana, and Elizabeth (Chandler) Jones. Pray for Joe Fincher and Olga, for Joanna (Sherri) Hale, for Patricia and James Lydon, and for the newly-departed Irina.

Tithes, Offerings & Attendance: Bringing our tithes and offerings to the temple of God is part of our worship of God, which also supports our efforts to proclaim the fullness of the Gospel of Christ in Denton through the establishment of a permanent Orthodox parish and new missions in Denton County and north Texas. Checks should be made out to St. Maximus Orthodox Church and placed in the basket on the candle table, where there is also a box for alms (those in need) and a box for our building fund.

Last week, we gave \$2119.24 in tithes and offerings; in April we have given \$6053.72; our monthly budget is \$8700 (\$2008 per week). Candles \$363.50; Building Fund box \$135. Attendance: Paschal Vigil/Liturgy 105, Agape Vespers 118.

From Saint Maximus

'No man has ever hated his own flesh', says the Apostle (Eph. 5:29), but he disciplines it and makes it his servant (cf. 1 Cor. 9:27), allowing it nothing but food and clothing (cf. 1 Tim. 6:8), and then only what is necessary for life. In this way a man loves his flesh dispassionately and nourishes it and cares for it as a servant of divine things, supplying it only with what meets its basic needs.

Love, self-restraint, contemplation and prayer accord with God's will, while gluttony, licentiousness and things that increase them pander to the flesh. That is why 'they that are in the flesh cannot conform to God's will' (Rom. 8:8). But 'they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh together with the passions and desires' (Gal. 5:24).

If the intellect inclines to God, it treats the body as its servant and provides it with no more than it needs to sustain life. But if it inclines to the flesh, it becomes the servant of the passions and is always thinking about how to fulfill its desires.

If you wish to master your thoughts, concentrate on the passions and you will easily drive the thoughts arising from them out of your intellect. With regard to unchastity, for instance, fast and keep vigils, labor and avoid meeting people. With regard to anger and resentment, be indifferent to fame, dishonor and material things. With regard to rancor, pray for him who has offended you and you will be delivered.

Do not compare yourself with weaker men but rather apply yourself to fulfilling the commandment of love. For by comparing yourself with the weak you will fall into the pit of conceit, but by applying yourself to the commandment of love you will reach the height of humility.

If you totally fulfill the command to love your neighbor, you will feel no bitterness or resentment against him whatever he does. If this is not the case, then the reason why you fight against your brother is clearly because you seek after transitory things and prefer them to the commandment of love. *400 Chapters on Love, 3.9, 3.11-15*

Elder Paisios of the Holy Mountain

“We must pray for other people with contrition and pain in our soul. We can only achieve this, if, due to our humbleness, we consider ourselves the cause of all the problems in the world.”

—But, Father, how can you accept that you are the cause for the divorce of a married couple in Athens?

—Well, I say to myself: If I were a saint, like the old fathers, I would ask God to make them love each other again, and he would help them, as He has promised to listen to saints. Since I am not a saint, God does not listen to me. Therefore, it is my fault that this family is breaking up, as well as for the evil existing in the world. This way, I never judge anyone, but I only blame myself for everything; then God will help.

Troparia and Kontakia for Sunday, April 27

Thomas Sunday, Troparion, tone 7

From the sealed tomb, Thou didst shine forth, O Life! / Through closed doors Thou didst come to Thy disciples, O Christ God. / Renew in us, through them, an upright spirit, / by the greatness of Thy mercy, O Resurrection of all.

Thomas Sunday, Kontakion, tone 8

Thomas touched Thy life-giving side with an eager hand, / when Thou, O Christ God, didst come to Thine Apostles through closed doors. / He cried out with all: Thou art my Lord and my God!