

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Mission, Denton

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**Bulletin for Sunday April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is risen!**

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**Schedule of Services for Holy Week**

**April 19<sup>th</sup> Thomas Sunday**

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

12:00 p.m. Mission Council

**April 20<sup>th</sup> Monday**

3:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

**April 21<sup>st</sup> Tuesday Radonitsa—Day of Rejoicing**

6:00 a.m. Matins, Confession

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy, Pannikhida at Cemetery

**April 22<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday**

7:00 p.m. Vespers, Confession

**April 23<sup>rd</sup> Thursday Great Martyr George**

7:45 a.m. Matins

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

**April 24<sup>th</sup> Friday**

6:00 a.m. Matins, Confession

7:00 p.m. Vespers, Pannikhida, Confession

**April 25<sup>th</sup> Saturday**

4:30 p.m. Forty-Day Pannikhida for Antoinette

5:00 p.m. Vigil, Confession

**April 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday Holy Myrrh-bearers**

9:00 a.m. Divine Liturgy

‘One has to be sure that one is preaching the same gospel that was delivered and that one is not introducing instead any “strange Gospel” of his own. The Word of God cannot be easily adjusted or accommodated to the fleeting customs and attitudes of any particular age, including our own time. Unfortunately, we are often inclined to measure the Word of God by our own stature, instead of checking our mind by the stature of Christ. The “modern mind” also stands under the judgment of the Word of God.’ *Fr. Georges Florovsky*

## Announcements for April 19

**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 his 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 a hearing aid for Rick Hollembeak to facilitate communication in his upcoming marriage.

**Temple Wine** given in memory of Archbishop Dmitri.

**No Classes this Week:** A new class schedule will be released by the end of April.

**Many Thanks** to all who labored to bring food, clean, decorate, beautify the yard, etc., for Holy Week and Pascha. May the Lord reward you! Your labors help build Christian community.

**The Artos**, a symbol of Christ as risen and invisibly present with us and as the Bread of Life, is appointed to be cut and distributed to the faithful after Liturgy on Bright Saturday. Due to the lack of a Bright Saturday Liturgy here, we do it today. All are welcome to partake with faith and reverence.

**Wedding:** Nancy Rachel Saito and Rick Eugene Hollembeak will be married here Sunday, May 2 at 3:00 p.m. Please keep them in your prayers.

**Symbolism of the Plaschanitsa** The difference between Greek and Russian practice is a difference of symbolism. While the Slavs create a "tomb" in the middle of church; for Arabs/Greeks the bier is just that, the bier not the "tomb" (the Arab word for the structure in the middle of the church is Na'ash, which means bier) — it is not unlike the collapseable wheeled stand we see under caskets. At *'Joseph together with Nikodemos'* the Body is removed from the Cross, then at *'The Noble Joseph'* the Body is brought out for "viewing" for the faithful to see. In this, in both traditions, Vespers is the Panikhida/Parastas. At the end of Matins —the Funeral—Arabs/Greeks remove the Shroud from the bier and place it on the Altar Table (which always symbolizes the tomb, as well as the throne of God) while Slavs put the Shroud in the "tomb" in the middle of the Church so the

faithful can continue to venerate it through Nocturns. Two variations expressing the same thing. *Bishop Basil*

**Why does the Shroud stay on the Altar Until Ascension?** The real Icon of Pascha is 'The Empty Tomb' — Christ standing on the Gates of Brass is 'The Descent into Hades'/Holy Saturday. With the exception of the Icon of Thomas Sunday, none of the Icons for the Paschal Sundays depict Christ on earth after His resurrection, they all depict pre-resurrectional events which express/reveal the glory of the Kingdom; so, to show that Christ is still on earth for those forty days, the Shroud stays on the Altar.

### 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.

**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.

We have not yet tallied last week's offerings; in April we have given \$1730.91 in tithes and offerings; our monthly budget is \$9502 (\$2192 per week). Candles \$166.50; Attendance: Vigil Procession 122, Liturgy (at Communion) 114.

**Please Pray:** the novice Elias, and the novice Svetlana. Pray for Joe Fincher and Olga, for Joanna (Sherri) Hale, for Patricia, Perpetua, and James Lydon. Please pray for former parishioner Natalya Perrin, and for our new diocesan administrator, Fr. Gerasim.

### From Saint Maximus

Friends are many, but in times of prosperity (cf. Prov. 19:4). In times of adversity you will have difficulty in finding even one.

One should love every man from the soul, but one should place one's hope only in God and serve Him with all one's strength. For so long as He protects us against harm, all our friends treat us with respect and all our enemies are powerless to injure us. But once He abandons us, all our friends turn away from us while all our enemies prevail against us.

There are four principal ways in which God abandons us. The first is the way of the divine dispensation, so that through our apparent abandonment others who are abandoned may be saved. Our Lord is an example of this (cf. Matt. 27:46). The second is the way of trial and testing, as in the case of Job and Joseph; for it made Job a pillar of courage and Joseph a pillar of self-restraint (cf. Gen. 39:8). The third is the way of fatherly correction, as in the case of St Paul, so that by being humble he might preserve the superabundance of grace (cf. 2 Cor. 12:7). The fourth is the way of rejection, as in the case of the Jews, so that by being punished they might be brought to repentance. These are all ways of salvation, full of divine blessing and wisdom.

Only those who scrupulously keep the commandments, and are true initiates into divine judgments, do not abandon their friends when God permits these friends to be put to the test. Those who scorn the commandments and who are ignorant about divine judgments rejoice with their friend in the times of his prosperity; but when in times of trial he suffers hardships, they abandon him and sometimes even side with those who attack him.

*400 Chapters on Love, 4.93-96*

### Troparia and Kontakia for Thomas Sunday, April 19

#### 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!