

## ***Parish Prayer List (Living)***

Alexandra	Rachael	Jessilyn	Reader Mark
Andrea	Amanda	Sherry	Thecla
Fr. Michael	Barry	Sean	Susan Mary
James	Nicholas B.	Karin	Andrea & Kirby
Lawrence	Emil	Seraphim	Evdokia
Michael	Helen	Susan K	Bob Wedder
Anna	Brian	Carolyn	Kansas & SJ
Ashley & Ben	Kathy Tanner	Anthony	Pauline
Olga	Marina	Salvatore	Josephine
Nicholas (Nadja's brother)	Nina	Alma	Jason
Tatiana	Clint	Nadja	Travis
Karen	Genevieve	Connie	Sharon

## ***Parish Prayer List (Fallen Asleep)***

Metropolitan Nicholas (+3/13)	Michael Baker (+3/26)
Michael Pilja (+4/7)	Christine Henn (+4/21)

**Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!**  
**Christos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese!**  
**Christos Anesti! Alithos Anesti!**

Therefore in Orthodox Tradition Hades is not simply a particular place, but the dominion of death and the devil. We say that the souls of those people who are in the power of devil and death are in Hades. It is in this sense that we must regard the Church's teaching about the descent of Christ into Hell, that is, that Christ entered the realm of death, accepted to die, whereupon by the power of His death He conquered death, made it completely powerless and weak, and gave every person the possibility, by His power and authority, to escape the dominion, the authority, and power of death and the devil.  
*Metropolitan of Nafpaktos, Hierotheos*

When during psalmody or prayer or reading, a bad thought comes to you, heed it not but pay closer attention to psalmody, prayer, or reading, to gain strength from the words you utter. If the thought persists, exert yourself in invoking the Lord's name and the Lord will help you and will suppress the wiles of the enemies.

*Saints Barsanuphius and John*

The world of evil spirits is looking upon us now. But don't be afraid! The Lord will save you from their evil power. Read the Holy Scriptures - the Gospels and the Epistles - and likewise the Lives of Saints. This reading has great significance. But here is what's sad - the Lives of Saints are printed, and perhaps some people acquire them, but the majority don't read them. Meanwhile, what benefit can be drawn from such readings! In them we will find answers to many of our questions, and they'll teach us how to find our way out of difficult situations and how to stand firm when darkness envelops our souls from all sides, so that it seems that even God has abandoned us. Go to God's temple more often, especially when you're in afflictions. It's good to stand in some dark corner and pray and weep from your heart.

*Elder Barsanuphius of Optina*

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Synaxarion For the Sunday of Saint Thomas

SUNDAY of SAINT THOMAS

On this day, the second Sunday of Pascha, we inaugurate the celebration of the Feast of Christ's Resurrection, which revolves in a weekly cycle, and also the saving confession of the Apostle Thomas when he saw the hands and side of the Risen Lord.

Verses: If the seals of the Virgin's womb and of the grave did not hinder Thee, How could the seals of the doors hinder Thy might, O Lord?

**Synaxarion**

It was an ancient custom among the Hebrews to celebrate the inauguration of a solemn observance. For, since time is cyclical and brings round again the same day on which such and such an event occurred, they would commemorate that event

annually, lest God's mighty deeds should be forgotten. And so it was that the Hebrews first celebrated the Passover in Galgala, inaugurating the celebration of the crossing of the Red Sea; thereafter, they consecrated the Tabernacle of Witness, and at great expense; after that, they began to celebrate the reign of King David, and the other events—not to mention them individually. Now, since the Resurrection of the Lord is by far the greatest event ever to have occurred in the life of mankind and surpasses all comprehension, we celebrate it anew not only every year, but always and every eight days. The first celebration of the Resurrection is the present Sunday, which could, strictly speaking, be called both the eighth and the first day: the eighth, counting from Pascha; and the first, as being the source of the others; and, again, the eighth, because it is regarded as an Icon of that unending day of the age to come, which will always be both the first day and one single day, uninterrupted by night. So much for the inauguration of the celebration of Pascha.

The events involving St. Thomas happened as follows. When Christ appeared to the Disciples in the evening of the day on which He arose, Thomas was absent, not yet having assembled with the others, for fear of the Jews. When he returned after a short while and heard about Christ's appearance, he did not just disbelieve the Disciples, when they said that they had seen Him risen, but he did not believe that He had risen at all, even though he was one of the twelve. In His ingenuity and mighty Providence, God, Who showed such concern for this one individual, in order to give even greater assurance of the Resurrection to future generations, after an interval of eight days, came again to the Disciples, so that St. Thomas' desire might be stimulated to the utmost, especially in view of his unbelief, and so as to bestow on all a more precise belief in the Resurrection. With the doors being closed as before, and Thomas being present, Christ entered and, greeting them, as usual, with "Peace be unto you," He turned towards Thomas and said: "Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side, and be not faithless, but believing. For, since thou didst need to be

convinced not only through sight, but, because of the grossness of the flesh, thou didst also mention thy desire to touch (He showed hereby that when Thomas said these things to the Disciples, He was present to hear them), thrust thy hand into My side.” This indicates that the wound in His side was wide enough for a hand to go inside it. Thomas investigated carefully, and, receiving faith through touch (for he was permitted to see and do those things, even though Christ’s body was incorruptible and completely deified, so that he might be convinced), he cried out: “My Lord and my God.” He said the first with reference to Christ’s flesh, and the second with reference to His Divinity. And Christ said to him: “Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

Thomas was called “Didymos,” either because he had a twin brother, or because he was doubtful about the Resurrection; or because the two fingers of his right hand were naturally joined together, that is, the middle finger and the forefinger; one might perhaps say that he was inclined to doubt and to touch the Lord’s side with these fingers. Others say, with greater accuracy, that the name “Thomas” means Didymos. This was the second appearance of Christ.

The third appearance took place at the Sea of Tiberias, at the catching of the fish, when He partook of food, which was consumed by the fire of His Divinity, as He Himself knew, giving further confirmation of the Resurrection. The fourth appearance was at Emmaus, and the fifth in Galilee.

He is said to have appeared after the Resurrection eleven times, until the Ascension, performing many wondrous miracles before the Disciples (for these events were not made known to most people). The Evangelists did not record all of these miracles, because it was not possible for the majority of people, who were living in the world, to understand them, given that they were so very preternatural.

*By Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos*