



# St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church

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“An Orthodox Presence in Northeastern Summit County”  
[www.sainthermanchurch.org](http://www.sainthermanchurch.org)



**Important This Week—Bright Week!!!**  
BACK TO REGULAR FASTING THIS WEEK!  
Saturday, 03May, 6PM Vespers  
Sunday, 04May, 10AM Divine Liturgy

20Apr25

Saint Thomas Sunday

“Unless...”

The words uttered by St. Thomas in today’s Gospel form a substantial absolute. His denial is at many levels. The first level is his lack of belief in the testimony of his 10 closest friends, people with whom he is cloistered for fear of both the Jews and the Romans. While depending on these 10 friends for his own safety and peace of mind, he denies what they, to a man, explain to him to be their “witness”. “We have seen Him. You weren’t here.” St. Thomas could have responded to their testimony by changing the tone of his response. “If I were to see then I would believe.” But that’s NOT his perspective. His words are clear. “Unless I see I will NOT believe!”

One of the elements of this account over which I personally ponder is, “Why does the Lord wait for a full week to return and show Himself—yes, to Thomas, but also to His other Apostles? What is accomplished by this passage of time?”

You see, St. Thomas’ rejection of the testimony of his friends is a perspective based on senses. “Unless I see...” “Unless I touch...” “Unless I thrust...” St. Thomas is basing his *faith* on his physical nature! This week of “fasting” from spiritual revelation permits the saint to

ponder his connection to the physical, and to come to a realization that he could be wrong in his stubborn perspective.

Our Lord’s waiting for eight more days gives the saint the opportunity to take his intellect from “Unless...” to “Maybe...”

We must take careful note of what transpires when that eighth day comes. As our Lord once again enters the room, the doors being closed, and He blesses the eleven with the words, *Peace be with you!*, His first action is to invite (He NEVER coerces!) 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.* In response, St. John doesn’t record that Thomas goes and physically completes the touch or the thrust. Instead, St. John records only the words uttered by St. Thomas: *My Lord and my God!* Faith has finally come to the blessed saint as he no doubt (no pun intended) looks back on his obstinance in repentance. This is in a way Thomas’ restoration to his apostleship no less than Peter’s triple, *You know I love You, Lord* was for him.

But the Lord wasn’t through. He leaves the conversation with another

blessing, not for His Apostles—they now finally fully believe. No, the Lord’s blessing is for countless others, hopefully you and me are numbered in that group, as He offers the words, *Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.*

Clearly we who live 2000 years after the fact have not “seen” what those eleven men were blessed to see between our Lord’s Resurrection and His Ascension.

But I submit to all, our eyes have not seen, but surely our hearts have. Our minds have not seen, but surely our spirits have. If we do not categorize ourselves with those “who have seen” then why do we come to church? Why do we seek the Holy Eucharist? Where is our hope for eternal life?

No, my brothers and sisters in Christ. Thomas’ “Unless...” has taken from us any need to disbelieve. It is present in the hymnology of the Church for this festal day, *O, how beautiful the unbelief of Thomas!* His lack of belief gives to us the firm footing on knowing the certainty of our Lord’s Resurrection. And so we can say with full hearts and all conviction: **I BELIEVE! CHRIST IS RISEN!**

**This Week's Prayer Requests**

**For Health—St. Herman's:** Met. Joseph, Pat, Sandra, Richard, Sam, Judy, Mitchell, Joe, Christian, Al, Sam, Fr.Dn.Basil, Nikandra, Don, Nora & Bob, Fr. Owen  
**For the Departed:** Patriarchs Maxim and Neofit, Metropolitans Theodosius

and Maximos, Archpriest Stephan, Popadia Marika, Matushka Illaria, Nun Theophania, Matushka Theodora, Stephen, Reader Charles, Betty Lou, Lainey Kay, Katherine, Jeanne, Margaret, Lenni

**Weekly Statistics**

Sunday Agape Vespers 20Apr 31 faithful 27 views

**In the News**

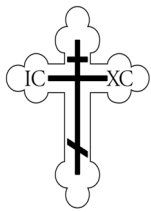
Videos of services can be found at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfAOKlCLMmH\\_-FIDe8SoWOW](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfAOKlCLMmH_-FIDe8SoWOW)

*We have scheduled our flooring contractor to refinish the floors in the social hall area. This will begin on Monday, 19May. We will ask for help from all to move things out of the hall after coffee hour on Sunday, 18May. The work will require 5 days in the building. We'll report more as we learn more.*

**The Joke Returns!**

**Some men say, "I wish women came with instructions."**

**A futile notion. When was the last time you saw any man reading instructions?**



Endure every sorrow with joy. The sorrows inflicted on us by others are sweeter than all the syrups offered to us by people who love us.

**(St. Paisios of Mt. Athos)**

**Christ is Risen**



**Rejoice!**

**A Homily on the Joy of the Resurrection**

**Metropolitan Vladimir (Sabodan)**

On these holy days, the Church calls all the faithful to rejoice and exult: "This is the day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!"

## A Parable on Happiness *(St. Dmitri of Rostov)*

Once a famous teacher prayed long and zealously to God, asking that He would show him some person from whom he could learn the true path to the Kingdom of Heaven. Thus, one day, in front of the church doors, he met a poor and elderly man all covered with scabs and pus oozing wounds. For clothing he had nothing but rags. The teacher, passing by, greeted him accordingly and said, "Good day, old man!"

The elderly man replied, "I do not remember that any day has ever been bad for me." The teacher on hearing this answer stopped, and as if to recollect, said, "May the Lord give you happiness!" The old man replied, "I've never been unhappy." The teacher was shocked and thought the elderly fellow did not hear him correctly, and so he rephrased his greeting and said, "What's this you're saying old man? Regardless, I wish you to rich blessings." The old man said, "I've never received anything bad."

The teacher said again, so as to test the elderly man, "Old man, may you receive whatever you desire." The old man replied, "I do not experience need in anything because whatever happens to me I'm content with, and I do not seek passing fortunes." "May God save you for this! But tell me," the teacher said, "surely you are not the only one among the poor to have never undergone misfortune? I do not understand - how have you escaped evil circumstances?"

The old man replied, "Kind sir, it is as I replied to your first greeting. I have never known any misfortune or evil circumstance. Whatever situation God has given to me, for it I give thanks; in this is my blessing. I pay no regard to happiness and never pray about it to our Heavenly Father. I do not experience misfortune because misfortune happens when a person seeks his own desires. Even if I waste away because of hunger, yet even for this, I bless God as my Father, for He knows what I really need. If I suffer from frost, or am soaked to the bone from rain or any other such thing I may endure from the elements - for all this I also bless God. When people slander me, I praise God, knowing that He is working all this and it is impossible that He would work evil. And so, everything that comes from God - the pleasant or the unpleasant, the sweet or the bitter, I receive it all in the same manner, as from the hand of the Good Father. I desire but one thing, whatever God desires. In this way, everything that happens is according to my desire. I am sorry for those who seek happiness in this world, for true happiness in life is to reckon everything according to God's will. The will of God is always perfect, good and true. I always strive to conform my will to the will of God, and by doing so, I count myself always happy."

The teacher responded, "Tell me, I ask you, what would you think if God somehow sent you to hell?" "How is it possible that He would? He knows that I firmly hold to Him with profound faith, and I love Him without hypocrisy. With these two bonds, I am so tightly bound to the Lord that wherever He would send me, there I would bring Him with me; it is more desirable for me to be with God outside of heaven than to be in heaven without God." The teacher was amazed by the elder's answer and thought, surely this is the straight way to God when people accord their will to His holy will. Wanting to test the wisdom of the impoverished elder, one more time, he asked, "Elder, where did you come from?" "I came from God." "And where did you find God?" "There, where I refused every material thing; in pure thoughts and a good conscience." "Who are you?" "Who you see before you. I'm content with my situation and would not trade it for all the riches of earthly kingdoms. A true king is anyone who can rule himself and command his thoughts." "And where is your kingdom?" The poor elder gestured with his hand to Heaven, "There is my kingdom."

"Elder, who taught you all this, and who gave you this wisdom?" "I will tell you, dear sir, I always abide in silence, whether praying or giving myself to devout thoughts; but more than anything I take care for this, that I would be in union with God and accord with His will."

The teacher left the old man and went on his way, praising God, Who revealed the wisdom of the meek elder. In the same manner as this humble elder, every Christian soul enduring tribulation must firmly know that nothing happens without the will of the Lord. Do not think that you are simply enduring things from evil people and circumstances; but rather you are experiencing that which the Lord has allowed. He reproves, but those who patiently bear with thankfulness His reproofs, He kisses, comforts, and gives them His mercy. Embrace the good and perfect will of the Lord, for it shall arrange for you only the good; trust God's will and wait expectantly for His mercy. Say with the righteous Job, "The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away. As it seemed good to the Lord, so also it came to pass. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Remember this: all of Job's misfortune was allowed by the Lord's will, and He transformed misfortune into great blessings.

We welcome you to our humble church, and we pray that your experience here will be spiritually rewarding, calling you back to pray with us at our next scheduled service.

St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church is established with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan JOSEPH of New York, and is one of approximately 30 parishes or missions that are all part of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Diocese of the USA, Canada and Australia, Bulgarian Patriarchate.

Our worship is exclusively in English, and we use “contemporary” English translations of liturgical texts wherever possible. Singing is congregational. The Divine Liturgy is literally “the work of the people”, and as such your presence and participation in the service are essential parts of our worship. The worship of others here present is diminished when you are absent or unable to participate.

Participation in the Eucharist is important to us, and as such we ask you to recognize that it is limited to Orthodox Christians who have prepared for receiving the very Body and Blood of our Lord. Preparation includes fasting from the previous evening and recent confession. If you are not known to our priest, please let him know as you approach that you are Orthodox and prepared to receive! Please do not be offended if the priest so questions your approach—this is important, truly “our Life”!

**Troparion for the Feast:** (Tone 7) *From the sealed tomb you have 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!*

**Glory to the Father....**

**Patronal Troparion:** *O blessed Father Herman of Alaska, north-star of Christ’s holy Church, the light of your holy life and great deeds guides those who follow the Orthodox way. Together we lift high the Holy Cross you planted firmly in America. Let all behold and glorify Jesus Christ, singing His Holy Resurrection.*

**Now and ever....**

**Kontakion for the Feast:** (Tone 8): *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!’*

**Epistle:** Acts 5:12-20

**Gospel:** John 20:19-31

**Monthly Financial Tracker**

March Total Income	\$5880
March Total Expenses	\$4143
March Net Income (Loss)	\$1737

**Web Tracker**

StHerman Google Bus Site	549	interacts/28 days
Blog Site Views	55511	Total Views
Web Site Views	18106	Total Views
Facebook Followers	5408	Total

**St. Herman of Alaska  
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**CURRENT WEEK  
HIGHLIGHTED**

April 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
St. John Climacus 30 St. George 5P T7 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 6:13-20 Mark 9:17-31	31 ←-MARCH APRIL--> Isa 37:33-38:6; Gen 12:18; Prov 14:27-15:4	1 Isa 40:18-31; Gen 15:15; Prov 15:7-19	2 Presanctified Lit 6PM Isa 41:4-14; Gen 17:1-9; Prov 15:20-16:9	3 Isa 42:5-16; Gen 18:20-33; Prov 16:17-17:17	4 Presanctified Lit 6PM Isa 45:11-17; Gen 22:18; Prov 17:17-18:5	5 Vespers/Conf 6PM Heb 9:24-28 Mark 8:27-31
St. Mary of Egypt 6 St. Nicholas 5P T8 Divine Liturgy 10AM Heb 9:11-14 Mark 10:32-45	7 Isa 48:17-49:4; Gn 27:1-41; Prov 19:16-25	8 Isa 49:6-10; Gen 31:3-16; Prov 21:3-21	9 Presanctified Lit 6PM Isa 58:1-11; Gen 43:26-31; Prov 21:23-22:4	10 Grt&HolyThur 17 Isa 65:8-17; Gen 46:1-33-50:26; Prov 31:8-31	11 Presanctified Lit 6PM Isa 66:10-24; Gen 49:33-50:26; Prov 31:8-31	12 Soul Saturday Divine Liturgy 10AM Vespers/Conf 6PM Heb 12:28-13:8 John 11:1-45
Entry of Lord 13 Divine Liturgy 10AM BridegrmMatins 6PM Phil 4:4-9 John 12:1-18	Grt&HolyMon 14 Presanctified Lit 430P Bridegroom Mat 6PM Ex 1:1-20, Job 1:1-12 Matt 24:3-35	Grt&HolyTue 15 Presanctified Lit 430P Bridegroom Mat 6PM Ex 2:5-10, Job 1:13-22 Matt 24:36-26:2	Grt&HolyWed 16 Presanctified Lit 430P Holy Unction 6PM Ex 2:11-22; Job 2:1-10 Mat 26:6-16	Grt&HolyThur 17 StBasil'sLiturgy 10AM 12 Passion Gspis 6PM 1Cor 11:23-32 Mat 26:2-27:2	Grt&HolyFriday 18 Royal Hours 10AM VespersEntmb 3PM Lamentations 6PM Mat 29:1-20	Grt&HolySatrdy 19 StBasil'sLiturgy 10AM Midnight Office 1130 Rom 6:3-11 John 29:1-20
PASCHA! 20	Bright Monday 21	Bright Tuesday 22	BrightWednesday 23	Bright Thursday 24	Bright Friday 25	Bright Saturday 26
Agape Vespers 1130A Acts 1:18 John 1:1-17	Acts 1:12-17,21-26 John 1:18-28	Acts 2:14-21 Luke 24:12-35	Acts 12:1-11 John 15:17-18:2	Acts 2:38-43 John 3:1-15	Phil 2:5-11; Lk10:38-42, 11:27-28	Vespers 6PM Acts 3:11-16 John 3:22-33
Thomas Sunday 27 Divine Liturgy T2 BridegrmMatins 10AM Phil 4:4-9 John 12:1-18	28 Acts 3:19-26 John 2:1-11	29 Acts 4:1-10 John 3:16-21	30 Acts 4:13-22 John 5:17-24	1 Acts 4:23-31 John 5:24-30	2 Acts 19:1-8 John 5:30-6:2	Vespers 6PM Acts 5:21-33 John 6:14-27