



St. Herman of Alaska Eastern Orthodox Church

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"An Orthodox Presence in Northeastern Summit County"
www.sainthermanchurch.org



Important This Week:

Thursday, 16May, 7PM, Adult Study; Friday, 17May, 7PM, Enquirer's Class
Saturday, 18May, 6PM, Vespers
Sunday, 19May, 10AM, Divine Liturgy

12May24

St. Thomas Sunday, Mother's Day/Tone I

Be Not Unbelieving

We are really very strange people. When something SHOULD be believed, we don't. When something should NOT be believed, we do.

Examples?

When you SHOULD believe: Put a WET PAINT sign on a public bench, then monitor the location with video. Too many people who pass by feel the need to "test the sign" and reach out to touch and see if the paint's truly wet.

When you SHOULDN'T believe: Carl Sagan wrote a book titled *Cosmos* back in 1980. To quantify creation (he would NOT use that word—it's editorializing) he claimed in the book that there are 100 billion galaxies each with 100 billion stars. And—people just believe him. I mean, who counted?

Knowing these things about human nature, it's not surprising therefore to find in the Gospel from Agape Vespers the interplay between the ten Apostles who were in the room when the Lord entered through closed doors and Thomas, who was NOT there. John 20:24-25 says this:

Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my fingers in the

mark of the nails, and place my hand in His side, I will not believe."

The "wet paint" analogy is appropriate here. "I've just got to touch it—I don't believe it's not wet. I want—no, I NEED proof!" And the only 'test' that satisfies the need for proof is that of touching.

We perhaps shouldn't be so hard on poor Thomas. He's apparently not the only one who found himself in this state. In Mat 28:17 we're told, *When they saw Him, they worshipped Him, but some doubted...* So even in the state of SEEING the risen Lord, there remained *some doubt* among those who knew Jesus.

Thomas, for his part, held this position for another full week. By this time, many people must have offered to him their words telling of their own encounters with the risen Lord. But lack of belief remained, until...

After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas was with them.

Jesus waits, even after His Resurrection, for the EXACT right time to accomplish His purpose.

Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

Take careful note—'peace' is the first 'gift' of the Risen Lord to those He loves! He knows that their hearts (and minds) remain in turmoil. His

presence is a gift given to dispel all doubt and worry.

Jesus immediately addresses Thomas, and invites him to "touch". His words remain consoling. *Do not be unbelieving, but believing.*

St. John doesn't record IF St. Thomas actually reached out to complete this touch. There's wonderful iconography which implies that he did. But whether he did or not is irrelevant. What IS relevant is Thomas' response to the invitation: *My Lord and my God!*

Jesus gives a blessing to all who will come after the Apostles who will believe without needing to "touch the paint", but who will believe because His Apostles, His followers, His Saints, His priests would tell others of His Resurrection, and these would believe.

Why?

Because the Holy Spirit continues to move in the Lord's Church. He continues to permit lowly people like us to share the glorious news of His Resurrection with all who the Holy Spirit moves to open their hearts to receive and to embrace the message.

It was a simple message then. It remains a simple message today.

CHRIST IS RISEN!!!

This Week's Prayer Requests

For Health—St. Herman's: Met. Joseph, Pat Blazosky, Sandra, Richard, Sam, Judy, Mitchell
Others: Fr.Dn.Basil, Nikandra, Don, Hannah, Natalje & Scott, Nora & Bob
For the Departed: Patriarch Maxim, Metropolitans Theodosius and Maxi-

mos, Archpriest Stephan, Popadia Marika, Matushka Illaria, Nun Theophania, Matushka Theodora, Stephen, Reader Charles, Betty Lou, Lainey Kay, Katherine, Jeanne

Weekly Statistics

Sunday	Pascal Liturgy	05May	64 faithful	20 views
	Agape Vespers	05May	29 faithful	21 views

In the News

Videos of services can be found at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfAOKICLMmH_FIDe8SoWOWw

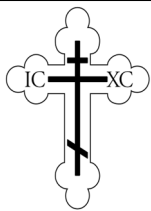
This week we resume our two "classes" - Adult Study on Thursday evenings at 7PM, and Enquirer's Class on Friday evenings at 7PM.

Let us encourage all to begin to use these spiritual resources!

The Truth Hurts—Literally!

I must be getting stronger with age.

I can now lift \$100 worth of groceries with one hand!



For poverty, as St. John Chrysostom says, leads to piety more easily than wealth.

(Metropolitan Gregory of St. Petersburg)

Thomas Sunday (St. Theophan the Recluse)

My Lord and my God! cries the Holy Apostle Thomas. Do you feel the strength with which he has grasped the Lord, and how tightly he is holding onto Him?

A drowning man grasps the plank on which he hopes to be saved in the same way. We will add that whoever does not have the Lord like this for himself and does not keep himself this way in relation to the Lord does not yet believe in the Lord as he should. We say, "Savior and Lord,"

meaning that He is the Savior of all; but Thomas says, "my Savior and Lord." He who says, "my Savior" feels his own salvation proceeding from Him.

The feeling of salvation is closely related to the feeling of perishing, out of which the Savior pulls whomever He saves. For a man who is life-loving by nature and who knows that he cannot save himself, the feeling that he is perishing forces him to seek the Savior. When he finds Him and feels the power of salvation

proceeding from Him, he grasps Him tightly and does not want to be torn away from Him, though he be deprived of life itself for this. In the spiritual life of a Christian such events are not only imagined in the mind, but experienced in actuality. Then, both his faith and his union with Christ become firm, like life and death.

Only such a person can sincerely cry, "Who shall separate me?" (Rom 8:35)

Homily at Service of Holy Unction—2024 (*Bishop Irenei of London*)

I believe it fair and accurate to say that we are living in an age of tremendous confusion. There are many causes to this, which at another time we might have occasion to enumerate; but it suffices here, in this moment, merely to observe their effects. Ours is a generation - in terms of the saeculum, the social age and world around us - without vision, void of comprehension. It is an age that barely comprehends the troubles that plague it, much less knows how to respond to them. It is a generation so concerned about promoting party lines and fulfilling the whims of its debased and self-serving ideas that it has all but ceased to strive for anything higher, anything better.

A man who does not acknowledge that he is ill will never seek out the healing art of the physician; but modern man does not even understand what illness is, much less admit that he suffers from it, nor look beyond himself for healing and true growth. Instead, this generation stumbles around, senseless and cold-hearted, claiming to act for good and in abhorrence of evil without daring to humble itself enough to learn what is the true nature of either. It is a generation that perhaps senses, in its wiser moments, that it is lost, yet acts ever in the delusion that it has found the answers to its woes - woes which it cannot even agree to define. O, what a strange age! What a poor and pitiable people we have become in these latter days!

Yet our Savior never stands idle in the face of our dread de-humanization of our race. When He sees us lost in the confusion of our minds, He comes with a voice of clarity to return us to wisdom and life in the Truth. A true Christian can never be wholly lost, not if she humbly submits her heart and understanding to the life of the Church; for the Church is the living Body of the true Guide and Shepherd of souls, the Giver of Wisdom and understanding. And today, in this sacred Mystery that now unfolds before us through the grace of the holy Priesthood, the eternal Head of that Body - Jesus Christ Himself - guides us directly in this life.

The world may not know that it is ill, but the child of Christ's Church knows he is ill, and feeble, and broken. The men of this generation may not understand that they are spiritual beings as well as physical, and that the suffering they both cause, and experience, has likewise a spiritual as well as physical dimension; but the pious flock of the Good Shepherd knows that man is a creature of dust and breath, body and soul, and therefore we live and act in the reality of both. And modern man may not know where to go to be healed, or how - but we do. We do, and we know it clearly, because it is revealed to us by the God Who made us. 'Is anyone sick among you? let him call for the elders (Presbyters) of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him' (James 5.14, 15). This commandment is not ambiguous. This instruction does not lack clarity. It requires only faith.

God will heal you, my dear ones, today, in this very Sacrament. He does not make promises that He does not intend to keep. But as you have heard me say to you many times before, as we have together bowed down in wonder before this very Mystery, the healing God grants may take a different form than the healing we anticipate or desire. For we too often understand 'healing' the same way we understand so many things: with reference only to this life, to our immediate circumstances and the present, fleeting moment. But the Great Physician is the God of our eternity, and grants such healing as mends within us that which prevents us from eternal life. This may, indeed, be a physical healing of certain ailments; or those of mental anguish and suffering. We are the children of the God of miracles: miraculous healings are things we have seen many times. But the healing of the eternal man is not always best aided by the healing of our momentary infirmities. It is sometimes by suffering through them, being maintained in them, that a deeper healing and transformation takes place.

We must ask ourselves: what are we really seeking when we come to God today, now? Are we simply begging to be relieved of our physical pain, or our fleshly ailment, or our mental sorrows or anxieties? Is this truly all that we desire, my dear ones? Or are we here because we know that our true sickness is much more profound than this: it is the sickness of sinful mortality that would divide us from God forever; and we seek not the healing merely of our mortal nature, but of our whole nature. We seek the healing that equates to eternal life with our loving Maker. And so we may expect that this healing might come via relief - the cool waters of refreshment and a washing away of some ailment and suffering; or it might come via the placing of a Cross upon our shoulders - a Cross of suffering and struggles that continue. This is a difficult path; but this is the way of Christ. This is the path of eternity. Whatever comes to us, we know one thing with certainty: if it comes from God the Healer, it will heal us in truth, true unto Life.

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 \$32,787
 March Total Expenses \$ 4,050
 Year Net Income (Loss) \$28,737

Web Tracker

StHerman Google Bus Site 535 interacts/28 days
 Blog Site Views 42850 Total Views
 Web Site Views 14307 Total Views
 Facebook Followers 5539 Total

**St. Herman of Alaska
 Eastern Orthodox Church
 VRevFrBasil Rusen, Pastor**

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**CURRENT WEEK
 HIGHLIGHTED**

May 2024																				
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday									
Entry of Lord 28 Divine Liturgy T2 BridegrmMatins 10AM Phil 4:4-9 John 12:1-18 PASCHA! 5 Agape Vespers 130AM Acts 1:1-8 John 1:1-17	Grt&HolyMon 29 Presanctified Lit 430P Bridegroom Mat 6PM Ex 1:1-20, Job 1:1-12 Matt 24:3-35 Bright Monday 6 Acts 1:12-17,21-26 John 1:18-28	Grt&HolyTue 30 Presanctified Lit 430P Bridegroom Mat 6PM Ex 2:5-10, Job 1:13-22 Matt 24:36-26:2 Bright Tuesday 7 Acts 2:14-21 Luke 24:12-35	Grt&HolyWed 1 Presanctified Lit 430P Holy Unction 6PM Ex 2:11-22; Job 2:1-10 Mat 26:6-16 Bright Wednesday 8 Acts 2:22-36 John 1:35-51	Grt&HolyThur 2 StBasil's Liturgy 10AM 12 PassionGspis 6PM 1Cor 11:23-32 Mat 26:2-27:2 Bright Thursday 9 Acts 2:38-43 John 3:1-15	Grt&HolyFri 3 RoyalHours 9AM Vesp/Entombm 3PM Matins/Lament 6PM 1Cor1:18-2:2/Mat27:1-4 Theotokos of the Lifegiving Font Phil 2:5-11; Luke 10:38-42 Bright Friday 10 Acts 5:1-11 John 5:30-6:2	Grt&HolySat 4 StBasil'sLitrgy 10AM Nocturnes 11:30PM ResurMtms/Lit 12AM Rom6:3-11/Mat28 12AM Bright Saturday 11 Saturday Vespers Acts 3:11-16 John 3:22-33	STThomasSunday 12 Divine Liturgy 10AM Acts 5:12-20 John 20:19-31	Joy Day 13 Acts 3:19-26 John 2:1-11	14 Acts 4:1-10 John 3:16-21	15 Leave of Pacha 22 VespLiturgy 6PM Acts 18:22-28 John 12:36-47	16 Feast of Ascension 23 Acts 1:1-12 Luke 24:36-53	17 24 Vespers 6PM Acts 5:21-33 John 6:14-27	18 25 Vespers 6PM Acts 20:7-12 John 14:10-21	19 Blind Man 19 StsConst/Helen T5 Divine Liturgy 10AM Acts 26:1-5, 12-20 John 10:1-9	20 27 MyrrhBearing 26 Women T6 Divine Liturgy 10AM Acts 6:1-7 Mark 15:43-16:8	21 28 Mid Pentecost 29 Acts 10:21-33 John 7:1-13	22 30 Acts 14:6-18 John 7:14-30	23 31 Acts 10:34-43 John 8:12-20	24 31 Acts 10:44-11:10 John 8:21-30	25 1 Vespers 6PM Acts 12:1-11 John 8:31-42