



Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church
THE WEEKLY CHURCH BULLETIN

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Κυριακή 26η Απριλίου 2020
ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΘΩΜΑ
Αποστ: Πραξ. 5:12-20
Ευαγγ: Ιωαννου 20:19-31

Sunday of St. Thomas
Today's Readings
Epistle: Acts: 5:12-20
Gospel: John: 20: 19-31



Χριστός Ανέστη! Christ is Risen!

IT'S THE SCARS

Today's Gospel lesson presents to us the scars of Christ. When the disciples told Thomas that they had seen the Lord, Thomas responded to them by saying: "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and place my finger in the mark of the nails, and place my hand in his side, I will not believe." Eight days later when the disciples were in the room and Thomas was with them, the doors being shut, our Lord stood in the midst of them and said, "Peace be to you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it into my side; do not be faithless, but believing." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Thomas believed when he saw the scars of Jesus. For him, the scars were the greatest proof that this was the real Jesus, the Jesus who had suffered and died, the Jesus Who had risen from the tomb. Through the Gospel lesson, the Risen Christ appears also to us. He shows us the scars in His hands and side. What do the scars of Christ teach us? What do they tell us about Him?

First, the scars of Jesus teach us that life is a struggle. Whoever got the idea that a good Christian never suffers? St. Augustine said "God had one son without sin, but He has no sons without suffering." God never promised us immunity from suffering — His own Son suffered — but He has promised us victory in our suffering. "In the world you have tribulation but be of good cheer. I have overcome the world," He said. The worst thing that evil can do is to kill God. Having been defeated in that, in its strongest moment, when evil wore its greatest armor, it can never be victorious again.

Secondly, the scars of Jesus speak eloquently of His love, but they also speak to our scars. The hardest part of suffering for Christians is the dark hour when they are tempted to believe that God is not with them in their suffering; when they suppose that Jesus reigns in some far-off splendor, untroubled by their woe. This is simply not true! The first thing Jesus does when He comes to sufferers is to show them His scarred hands. Here is the key! When we are pouring out our passionate pleading to Jesus and asking Him why this should happen to us, look! He is showing us His hands.

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Finally the scars on the body of Jesus were caused by our sin. If we were to choose a symbol for sin, perhaps the best one would be a nail. Each sin is a nail that continues to be driven into the body of Jesus.

The best definition of sin is that it is not only the breaking of God's commandments, but even more so, the breaking of God's heart.

Jesus appeared to the disciples, and to Thomas, showing them the scars in His hands and side — scars that were proof of His love; scars that won for us the final Victory over death; scars that speak a compassionate word of understanding to our wounds; scars which if we have re-opened through our sin, we can hopefully restore through our sincere and honest repentance.

History has not been kind to Thomas. But, we have to realize that he has verbalized much of what is in our own minds. Surrounded by scars we, too, say: "Until I see in His own hands the mark of the nails, and put my finger into the nail marks and my hand into His side, I will never believe." Having seen the scars, we cannot but say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God!"



ΣΗΜΕΡΑ ΚΥΡΙΑΚΗ ΤΟΥ ΘΩΜΑ

Ευαγγέλιο: Ιωάν. κ' 19-31

Ο Απόστολος Θωμάς απουσίαζε όταν ο Χριστός, μετά την Ανάστασή Του, επισκέφθηκε τους Μαθητές Του στο υπερώον όπου ήταν συνηγμένοι. Όταν πληροφορήθηκε τα σχετικά με την επίσκεψη του Χριστού, ζήτησε να Τον δει και να ψηλαφήσει τις πληγές του Σταυρού στα χέρια και την πλευρά Του. Ο Χριστός όταν επισκέφθηκε και πάλι τους Μαθητές Του μετά από οκτώ ημέρες, κάλεσε τον Απόστολο Θωμά να ψηλαφήσει τα σημάδια των πληγών στο Σώμα Του. Τότε ο Απόστολος Θωμάς Τον ανεγνώρισε και Τον ομολόγησε Κύριο και Θεό του. Τον ανεγνώρισε από τις πληγές του Σταυρού, οι οποίες αποτελούν σημάδι της αγάπης Του, αλλά και της δυνάμεώς Του. Την ομολογία του Θωμά οι άγιοι Πατέρες την ονομάζουν σωτήριο. Και πραγματικά οδηγεί στην σωτηρία όλους εκείνους που την απευθύνουν στον Χριστό εκζητώντας ταπεινά το έλεός Του.

Το γεγονός ότι ο Απόστολος Θωμάς αρχικά απουσίαζε κατά την εμφάνιση του Χριστού στους Μαθητές Του, φαίνεται ότι ήταν οικονομία Θεού, για να γίνει πιστευτό το θαύμα της Αναστάσεως και να διαλυθεί κάθε είδους αμφιβολία.

Ο Απόστολος Θωμάς, μετά την Πεντηκοστή, κήρυξε το Ευαγγέλιο στους Πάρθους, τους Πέρσες, τους Μήδους και τους Ινδούς και είχε μαρτυρικό τέλος.