

THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF SAINT ELIZABETH THE NEW-MARTYR

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13 / 26 April 2020

THE SUNDAY OF ANTIPASCHA WHICH IS THE MEMORIAL OF THE TOUCHING OF THE HOLY & GLORIOUS APOSTLE THOMAS

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES THISWEEK

2ND SUNDAY OF PASCHA: Thomas Sunday

Saturday, 25 April (12 April, n.s)

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 26 April (13 April, n.s)

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

3RD SUNDAY OF PASCHA: Myrrh-Bearers

Saturday, 2 May (119 April, n.s)

6:00 PM Vigil Service;
Confessions

Sunday, 3 May (20 April, n.s)

9:10 AM Third and Sixth Hours
9:30 AM Divine Liturgy

At the direction of His Eminence, Metropolitan Hilarion and His Grace, Bishop Nicholas, we are to observe the restrictions of the civil authority which require us to have a gathering of no more than ten (10) persons who are able to space themselves six (6) feet apart. Parishioners are asked to remain home and pray there while the services go on in church or at the rectory.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Week of 26 April

SECOND WEEK OF PASCHA		
<i>Su</i>	Second Sunday of Pascha: Thomas Sunday	
	<i>1st Resurrectional Matins Gospel: Mt §116 [28:16-20]</i>	
	Acts §14 (5:12-20)	John §65 (20:19-31)
<i>M</i>	Acts §9 (3:19-26)	John §6 (2:1-11)
<i>Tu</i>	Acts §10 (4:1-10)	John §10 (3:16-21)
<i>W</i>	Acts §11 (4:13-22)	John §15 (5:17b-24)
<i>Th</i>	Acts §12 (4:23-31)	John §16 (5:24-30)
<i>F</i>	Acts §13 (5:1-11)	John §17 (5:30b-6:2)
<i>Sa</i>	Acts §15 (5:21-33)	John §19 (6:14-27)
THIRD WEEK OF PASCHA		
<i>Su</i>	Third Sunday of Pascha: the Myrrh-bearing Women	
	<i>3rd Resurrectional Matins Gospel: Mark §71 (16:9-20)</i>	
	Acts §16 (6:1-7)	Mark §69 (15:43-16:8)

FASTING DAYS Week of 26 April

Day of Week	Date	Commemoration and Type of Fast
<i>Wednesday</i>	29 April (16 April, o.s.)	VMM Agape, Irene, and Chionia Fast: wine & oil permitted
<i>Friday</i>	1 April (19 Mar, o.s.)	Martyrs Chrysanthus and Daria Fast: wine & oil permitted

THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today we will receive pieces of the 'Artos.' *Artos* is the Greek word for (leavened) bread. It is the symbolic 'Bread of Life' that was blessed at the end of the Holy Liturgy on the night of Pascha. The Artos is then left in the Church before the Iconostasis for all of Bright Week and carried in any procession made during the course of that Week. On Bright Saturday a special prayer is said at the conclusion of the Liturgy, the Artos is broken and then prayerfully distributed to the people. The breaking and distribution of the Artos is often delayed until Thomas Sunday in parishes where the Liturgy is not served on Bright Saturday.

A word about financial support of your Parish: St Elizabeth's keeps going by relying on the stewardship of her parishioners. Many people remember the parish's financial needs when they go to church. But what of a time like this, when our parishioners are not able to come physically to church? Please remember to continue your tithes and offerings by mail, if you are able. Of course, there will be some parishioners who are out of work and not getting paid and so are not able to contribute at this time. That is certainly understandable. But those parishioners who are working, or working from home, and so still have an income, are urged to continue to support their parish by mail. *St Elizabeth's mailing address is not our physical location in Rocky Hill.* Please send all mail to the Rectory, using the following address: St Elizabeth's Orthodox Church, 88 Eastern Avenue, Somerville, New Jersey 08876.

RADONITSA

Tuesday is 'Radonitsa', the 'Day of Rejoicing'. It is the first day since Great & Holy Week began that Memorial Services for the departed are permitted.

Fr David will be serving a General Pannykhida in the Chapel

in the Rectory on *Radonitsa*. If you have names of departed that you would like commemorated, please submit them to him via email before Monday evening. His email address is: FrDavidStraut@protonmail.com

Synaxarion

On this day, the Tuesday of St Thomas week, according to the order instituted by our Holy Fathers, we call to remembrance, in Paschal joy, all those who have died from the beginning of the ages in faith and in the hope of resurrection and life eternal.

Having previously celebrated the radiant feast of Christ's glorious Resurrection, the faithful commemorate the dead today with the pious intent to share the great joy of this Pascha feast with those who have departed this life in the hope of their own resurrection. This is the same blessed joy with which the dead heard our Lord announce His victory over death when He descended into Hades, thus leading forth by the hand the righteous souls of the Old Covenant into Paradise. This is the same un hoped-for joy the Holy Myrrh-bearing Women experienced when discovering the empty tomb and the undisturbed grave clothes. In addition, this is the same bright joy the Holy Apostles encountered in the Upper Room where Christ appeared though the doors were closed. In short, this feast is a kindred joy, to celebrate the luminous Resurrection with our Orthodox forefathers who have fallen asleep.

There is evidence of the commemoration of the dead today in the writings of the Church Fathers. St. John Chrysostom mentions the commemoration of the dead performed on Tuesday of St. Thomas week in his 'Homily on the Cemetery and the Cross.'

Today, the faithful departed are remembered in Divine Liturgies, 'koliva' is prepared and blessed in the churches in memory of those who have fallen asleep, and the Orthodox graves in cemeteries are blessed by the priests and visited by the faithful. On this day alms are given to the poor. Furthermore, it should be noted that due to the great spiritual joy this jubilant commemoration bears, it is called in the Slavonic tongue, 'Radonitsa,' or Day of Rejoicing.

COVID-19 and PARISH LIFE

Parishioners who would like to go to Confession may do so over the telephone, and so should contact Father David by email or text in order to set up at a mutually acceptable time. At the appointed time, dress as though going to church, stand or kneel in an icon corner that provides the necessary privacy, and call Father on the telephone. He will listen to the Confession, give counsel, and absolve you.

Parishioners desiring to receive Holy Communion should contact Father David who will arrange a time and place to make this possible.

Parishioners who are ill should contact Fr David. A Moleben for the Sick can be served in the rectory. The Mystery of Confession can be received over the telephone, as described above. The reception of Unction and Holy Communion can be arranged in a manner in keeping with the safety restrictions of the civil and medical authorities.

We are unable to 'live stream' the services at St Elizabeth's during the state of emergency because there is no internet

service in our church building. But there are some very good Orthodox Service 'live streams' that follow the Church (Julian) Calendar. We urge you to consult the list of live-stream services available from parishes and monasteries in our Diocese:

https://eadiocese.org/news_200404_1

For those who would like to do Reader's Services at home rather than watch the services on livestream, Archpriest John Whiteford has prepared Reader's Services for Thomas Sunday and Radonitsa on his Blog that you can download, print out, and use. You can find them at:

<https://fatherjohn.blogspot.com/2020/04/reader-services-st-thomas-sunday-and.html>

Orthopraxis During the Paschal Season

The introductory prayers *Glory to Thee, our God. Glory to Thee!* and *O heavenly King...* are not said either in the liturgical services or in prayers at home from Holy Pascha until the Feast of Pentecost, according to the tradition of the Church, but are replaced by the triple repetition of the paschal troparion. In services during the Paschal Season that do not begin with *O heavenly King...* and the Trisagion Prayers, but instead with the *O come, let us worship and fall down before God our King...*, the paschal troparion is repeated three times instead of *O come, let us worship....*

We do not kneel or make prostrations either in services at church or during prayer at home during the Fifty Days between Pascha and Pentecost (as well as all the Sundays of the year). Following a tradition that comes down from the holy Apostles, Orthodox Christians have ever held that kneeling is incompatible with the joy of the Resurrection we experience during the Fifty Days and on all Sundays. Whenever we would ordinarily kneel or make a prostration during prayer on these days, we make a bow from the waist (*metania*) instead.

The paschal greeting, *Christ is risen!* and the response, *Truly, He is risen!*, are exchanged many times during the services of the Church from the Sunday of Pascha until the Leave-taking of the Feast, thirty nine days later. But this paschal greeting is not a mere liturgical formula. It is a greeting to be exchanged daily during the entire Paschal season between all believing Christians as a proclamation of our faith in the risen Lord!

We sing the words of the paschal troparion '*Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and on those in the tombs bestowing life!*' many times in the liturgical services for forty days from the Sunday of Pascha. Like the paschal greeting, the paschal troparion proclaims our faith in the triumph of Christ over death. Because of this, we should not only sing it in church, but also at home. Appropriate times to sing *Christ is risen...* are before meals throughout the Paschal Season and at the beginning of our morning and evening prayers from Thomas Sunday until the Leave-taking of Pascha.

On Wednesdays and Fridays from Thomas Sunday until Pentecost, the fast is mitigated due to the celebration of Pascha, wine and olive oil being permitted on these days.