



Orthodox Parish of St. Silouan of Mt Athos Southampton, Diocese of Sourozh, Moscow Patriarchate



Православной Приход Св. Силуана Афонского
Саутхемптон, Сурожская Епархия Московского Патриархата

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH HALL, MILLBROOK ROAD, SOUTHAMPTON SO15 0JZ TEL. 02380 428538
RECTOR: FR JOSEPH SKINNER WWW.STSILOUAN-SOTON.ORG WARDEN: DR PAULA NICHOLSON

PARISH NEWSLETTER

CHRIST IS RISEN!

Sunday, 12th May 2013

2nd Sunday of Pascha, Thomas Sunday, Tone 1

John 20:19-31

19 When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' **20** After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. **21** Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' **22** When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. **23** If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.' **24** But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. **25** So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his

hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.' **26** A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' **27** Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' **28** Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' **29** Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.' **30** Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. **31** But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.



Troparion

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tomb He has given life!



THOUGHTS FOR EACH DAY OF THE YEAR
BY ST. THEOPHAN THE RECLUSE

My Lord and my God! (John 20:28) cried 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: "Saviour and

Lord," meaning that He is the Saviour of all; but Thomas says: "my Saviour and Lord." He who says: "my Saviour," feels his own salvation proceeding from Him. The feeling of salvation lies adjacent to the feeling of perishing, out of which the Saviour pulls whomever He saves. The feeling of perishing, for a man who is life-loving by nature and who knows that he cannot save himself, forces him to seek the Saviour. When he finds Him and feels

the power of salvation proceeding from Him, he grasps Him tightly and does not want to be torn from Him, though he be deprived for this of life itself. Such a nature of events in the spiritual life of a Christian are not only imagined in the mind, but are experienced in deed. 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! (cf. Rom. 8:35).

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Twice in the Gospels we read the solemn declaration of a man who has recognised in Christ his Lord and his God. The first time was at the beginning of the Lord's ministry: after His Baptism, when He was entering upon the way of the cross, He met Nathaniel and testified to the others that here was a man pure and without guile. Nathaniel asked how He knew this, and the Saviour answered with the mysterious words, "Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." And Nathaniel reverencing Him said, "My Lord my God." In a life of the holy Apostle Nathaniel we read that at the time of his call he was standing before God in prayer, and that Christ's words about seeing him under the fig tree suddenly lifted a veil from his eyes and he realised that he was standing before the very God to whom he had been praying.

Later this testimony is somehow obscured; the apostles were blinded, as we all are, by the visible, and only very slowly did they begin to perceive the invisible. During a period of just over three years Christ gradually revealed His true nature to them: the fact that He is indeed a true, genuine man, but that at the same time He is God who has taken flesh and come to save the world. This gradually dawning understanding found its expression only on the way to Jerusalem, just before Christ's death, when the apostle Peter testified, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God."

Before His crucifixion Christ gradually revealed Himself to disciples as God; after it He repeatedly and persistently, in a series of appearances, revealed Himself to them as man risen in the flesh. Everything we hear of Christ's Resurrection brings us face to face with this fact; this is not a ghost, this is not a vision; the disciples not only hear His voice, they touch His body, they see Him eating food with them. Later, St. John speaking of their witness rightly says that they spoke of what their eyes had seen, their ears had heard, their hands had felt:

Christ had truly risen in the body, the body sanctified, the body transfigured, the body which had become entirely spirit without ceasing to be flesh. Together with the Apostle Thomas we too worship the risen Christ and believing in Him, knowing Him as our God but also as Jesus of Nazareth risen from the dead, we hail Him, "My Lord and my God!"

On this fact the whole life of the Church depends, the whole Christian outlook, the greatness of man, the boundless humility of God. In Christ the one and the other is revealed to us, and we rejoice not only because God is the God of love and our Saviour, but because in Him we are shown how great Man is. He is so great that God can be contained in him; He is so great that He can pass through the gates of death into eternal life carrying us with Him as a torrent; that having united Himself with us in our humanity in every way except sin, He unites us completely with His Divinity if only we lay ourselves open to His influence. How wonderful that is!

So, during the next forty days Christ constantly appeared to His disciples and revealed to them the mysteries of the Kingdom of God; He showed them the name of God as Love, He unfolded to them the comprehension of the Church as a society of people who are bound by love; He explained to them that this temporal life will inevitably pass away, but that they have been granted eternal life, which is that life of God already planted in them, already working in them and conquering all.

And in the ensuing weeks each Gospel reading will tell us of this triumph of life, of the victory of life, of the victory of love over everything else. Let us be glad and rejoice that the risen Christ has not only conquered death for Himself and in Himself, but that in us and for us He has conquered death, sin, fear — everything, and that we have now become close and intimate with the living God. **Amen.**

PASCHAL MESSAGE BY ARCHBISHOP ELISEY OF SOUROZH



Dearly beloved in the Lord, honourable pastors, God-loving monastics and laypeople, dear brothers and sisters!

I greet you most warmly on the great feast of the Bright Resurrection of Christ with the life-affirming, apostolic affirmation of our faith:

Christ is Risen!

Christ our God has made us pass from death to life, from earth to heaven. These words of the Paschal canon wash over our souls as waves of saving grace. Now heaven is open to us, and Christ touches our hearts with His uncreated Light.

In the joy of Pascha we recognise the Risen Christ as Our Saviour and King. He, Our Lord and God, having taken human nature from the Virgin Mary, preached the Kingdom of God to people and revealed Himself as the Way,

the Truth and the Life (Jn 14.6). To those who received Him, He gave power to become children of God (Jn 1:12). Those who reject Him He suffers to condemn Him, to crucify Him and to give Him over to death. Descending, however, into deathly Hades, Christ leads man out of it and resurrects him by His Resurrection. This is our Pascha: a Passover from darkness to light, from death to life and from earth to heaven.

The joyful and radiant paschal celebration is a foretaste of the life of eternity for which the Lord is preparing us by His Divine Providence. Christ leads us to this new life, without compelling us or overriding our will. It depends on us whether we will destroy our natural life by the poison of sin, which drags this world down into the depths of hell, or whether we shall give ourselves over to the saving hands of God that draw us up to the Resurrection. In choosing the bright path of the Resurrection, we are responding to the summons proclaimed during the paschal celebration: Enter ye all into the joy of your Lord (Mt 25:21).

For us true happiness will be to hear the call of the Son of God: Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Mt 25:34).

Life in the Resurrection is participation in the Kingdom of the conquering love of God. The beauty of our earthly world is revealed in the reflected Light of the Resurrection of Christ. May many come to believe in this truth and may people sense that life is eternal, that death is only a passing over into the Resurrection, that love never faileth (1 Cor 13:8) and that its power lies in God.

Congratulating you on the great feast of the Pascha of Christ, I prayerfully wish that you will hear in your hearts the call of Christ to enter into the joy of His Resurrection that fills all with light.

Christ is Risen Indeed!

**+Elisey,
ARCHBISHOP OF SOUROZH,
The Pascha of Christ, 2013, London**



PASCHAL MESSAGE BY PATRIARCH KIRILL OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA TO THE ARCHPASTORS, PASTORS, DEACONS, MONASTICS AND ALL THE FAITHFUL CHILDREN OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:57)

Beloved in the Lord Your Graces the archpastors, all-honourable presbyters and deacons, God-loving monks and nuns, dear brothers and sisters!

On this great and radiant day I congratulate you from the depths of my heart on the Lord's Passover and greet each of you with these ancient and holy words:

CHRIST IS RISEN!

It is in these words, with which people throughout the ages have greeted each other during the bright days of Pascha and by which they have testified to the world of the truth of an event occurring two thousand years ago, that there is to be found a great inner power. They contain the tidings of victory and a call to joy, the desire for peace, and the hope and comfort of every human person.

He who was born of the Most Pure Virgin Mary, he who suffered greatly and without blame, he who was crucified and died on a cross between two thieves, he was the first among people to rise from the dead. *'He has been raised, as he said he would be'* (Mt 28:6). The tomb is empty. There remain in it only the swaddling clothes in which his body was wrapped. The myrrh-bearing women came to the place of the Lord's burial *'very early in the morning ... at the rising of the sun'* (Mk 16:2) and did not find Jesus there, for neither the stone that blocked the entrance into the cave, nor the guard who kept watch by it, nor even death itself could withstand the great power of the Living God. *'Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened*

her mouth without measure' (Is 5:14), exultant Hades had been ready to engulf its most powerful enemy, yet instead froze in fear, for it had been illumined by the light of the Godhead. Christ has vanquished corruption and destroyed death.

Through the first man, who disobeyed the Maker and fell away from the Fount of eternal life, evil came into the world and sin reigned over people. Christ *'the last Adam'* (1 Cor 15:45) has vanquished death of the spirit, death of the soul and death of the body. *'For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive,'* St. Paul tells us (1 Cor 15:22). All that we have lost in the first Adam we have acquired anew in Christ. The Lord's Passover is truly the *'great gift of the divine economy'* (St. Theodore the Studite).

Having overcome the human person's alienation from his Maker, the Saviour has granted to us the possibility of being united with him. As St. John Damascene says, through the Cross of Christ we have been *'granted resurrection ... The gates of paradise have been opened to us, our nature now sits at the right hand of God and we have become the children of God and his heirs'* (An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, Book 4). We are all called upon to be worthy of this gift.

The Son of God, in assuming our nature, has become like us in all things apart from sin. Through his earthly life and sufferings on the Cross he has shown us an example of the greatest humility and obedience to the heavenly Father, an example of struggle against temptations and allurements, and through his resurrection he has destroyed the fetters of sin and granted to us the power and means to vanquish evil. It is in this struggle that one grows spiritually and becomes a morally free person.

We live at a time when freedom is often taken to mean moral chaos.

Many sincerely believe that only power and riches, health and physical strength, bring liberation and in competing in service to the idols of this world they often fail in that which is most important, in the attainment of the true goal of life. The Saviour, who has risen from the tomb and granted to us freedom, has revealed to us this goal of knowing the Truth (see: Jn 8:32) and of life with God.

In destroying bodily death, Christ has promised eternal life, but not as an infinite continuation of the earthly path but as the transformation of the all human nature when the body will acquire new properties. It is in the Lord's resurrection that the foreshadowing of our future resurrection is mysteriously revealed. In the coming kingdom of heaven, where there will be neither death, nor illness, nor parting, and not even time, *'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes'* (Rev 21:4), and joy will be never-ending and love eternal. The Lord's victory over death gives us steadfast hope that in following him at his second and glorious coming we will rise again to a new life – life in unceasing communion with God.

Let us then share the joy in our risen Saviour with all those who are in need of attention and care: with the sick, the elderly, those who suffer or who are despondent, those who languish in places of confinement, and those people who are without means or a roof over their heads. And, in becoming like the witnesses to the resurrection – the holy apostles – let us with faith and boldness proclaim to those near and far the good news that Christ has truly risen! **Amen.**

+ Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Moscow Pascha, 2013

NEWS

Fr Joseph's promotion

At the Divine Liturgy on Holy Pascha Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh, by the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, elevated Fr Joseph to the rank of Archpriest.

New arrivals

Congratulations to Yulia Carpenter, who gave birth to Olivia Yelena on 3d May. She was baptised here yesterday (God parents are Leon and Yelena) together with a baby boy Vladislav Andreyevich Carata. Congratulations to their families!

A warm welcome to the newly baptized (on Lazarus Saturday) Julja Sipilova and Sergejs Kirijenko!

GOD GRANT THEM
MANY YEARS!

Sunday school

Just a reminder that our Sunday school (after the Liturgy) welcomes all children who come to the services. If you have energy, desire to help, love for children and are full of creative ideas, please come forward with your thoughts. Contributions of

materials are very welcome too. Please contact Evelina.

SUPPORT OUR PARISH

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The work of the Parish is entirely self-financed. We receive no financial help from the Diocese, the State or any other external source. As such, we are in need of the support of our parishioners and friends to enable the Parish to carry out its mission.

To facilitate this kind of regular giving, we invite you to establish a Banker's Standing Order, for direct deposit of regular contributions into the parish's account.

Bank: NatWest

Name of organisation:

Orthodox Parish

Of St Silouan

Account number: 45137943

Branch sort code: 60-20-45

Thank you and God Bless!

Please note that the following Liturgy will be celebrated on **SATURDAY, 8th June** at usual time 10.30am.

May Calendar

May 5th

The Bright Resurrection of Christ, The Pasover (Pascha) of the Lord

May 6 – 12th

The Bright Week (fast free)

May 8th

Holy Apostle and Evangelist Mark (63)

May 13th

Holy Apostle James (44), the brother of St. John the Theologian

May 18th

Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos "Inexhaustible Cup."

May 20th

Righteous Job the Long-suffering

May 21st

Holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian (ca. 101)

May 22nd

Translation of the relics (1087) of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker (ca. 345) from Myra to Bari

May 23d

Holy Apostle Simon the Zealot (1st c.)

May 24th

Holy Equals-to-the-Apostles Cyril (869) and Methodius (885), first teachers of the Slavs

May 29th

Mid-Pentecost

June 3d

Holy Equals-to-the-Apostles Emperor Constantine (337) and Helen, his mother (327)

NEW ICONOSTASIS



Dear Brothers and Sisters

We continue to ask for your support in helping us to raise funds to pay for our new beautiful handpainted iconostasis.

The cost of the new icon screen is £10,000, which we still have to pay. As per end of March we managed to raise £4000.

If you wish to contribute, please, send your donations to:

Bank: NatWest

Organisation: Orthodox Parish of St. Silouan

Acc. No: 45159726

Sort code: 60-20-45

Alternatively, you can send a cheque payable to Orthodox Parish of St Silouan (**Icons a/c**) to the Treasurer, **Elvira Patrasco, 10 Monarch Way, West End, Southampton, SO30 3JQ.**

Holy Father Silouan, pray to God for us!

The Parish Council

Contributors

We invite our parishioners to contribute material to this Newsletter. Your ideas, news, announcements, writings could be interesting to reader. Any requests for prayers are very welcome. Please send your contributions to Evelina benevelina@mac.com

Texts for this edition were taken from www.pravoslavie.ru, <http://silouan.narod.ru/indexe.html>, <http://oca.org/> www.pravmir.com and other sites. When you finish reading the Newsletter, please, pass it on to others.