



St. Mary Magdalene Byzantine Catholic Church

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Fr. Jan Cizmar, administrator 440-732-8182

Father Deacon Daniel Surniak

APRIL 11, 2021

THOMAS SUNDAY

Sat. April 10 5:00 pm For the Christian Family of St. Mary Magdalene

Sun. April 11 9:00 am For the Christian Family of St. Mary Magdalene

APRIL 18, 2021

MYRRH-BEARERS WOMEN SUNDAY

Sat. April 17 5:00 pm For the Christian Family of St. Mary Magdalene

Sun. April 18 9:00 am For the Christian Family of St. Mary Magdalene

ATTENDANCE AND OFFERING FROM THE LAST WEEKEND:

Saturday adults, 0 child; Sunday adults, children. Offering \$

An Update on the Byzan-Teen Youth Rally 2021: Due to Covid-19 concerns and restrictions on out-of-state travel the Byzan-Teen Youth Rally has been forced to reschedule to June 30th through July 3rd 2022. The location of the Rally will remain the same – Mt. St. Mary University in Emmitsburg, MD.

The exciting news is that a virtual Rally will be held on Saturday, July 3rd, of this year. A brand new website for the Rally is presently under construction and should soon be finished. The next update will include the link to the new Rally site with more information on the virtual Rally. The Intereparcial Youth Commission appreciates your patience and understanding during these difficult times, but we are very excited about the programs and events being planned that will allow all our teens throughout our Metropolia to participate without the worry and concerns of travel this year. *Intereparcial Youth Commission*

From The Deacon: Fr John wanted me to let those who donated for the Icon from Fr John, that we have bought incense with those donations. When you smell the sweet fragrance the gift came from you. Thank You!

Stewardship Update from the Eparchy: Thank you for the support of the 2020-2021 Stewardship Appeal. We have had a very successful six months. Currently, we are at 88% of

our goal of \$220,000 with \$193,896 raised and an additional \$4948 pledged. We have had 729 very generous contributors. St. Mary Magdalene had 26 contributors and raised \$3830 of \$7000 pledged which is 55% of the goal.

THE STUBBORN APOSTLE

Thomas the unbeliever... It's just a little anecdote, but who is this "unbelieving" apostle? The Lord Jesus Christ chose for Himself twelve men to be His closest disciples. By His commission the apostles founded the first Christian communities and led the Church. One of these twelve was Thomas.

The touch of Divine might does not break the human personality. After turning to Christ the same character and temperament which were given to him at birth remain with a man, but in the meantime all his personal qualities simply blossom by contact with the Lord's life. Thomas, apparently, was by nature skeptical and stubborn, and these qualities especially manifested themselves in his ministry. For example, during the earthly life of the Savior, when all the apostles feared to go to Jerusalem, where Christ was threatened with punishment, Thomas simply said: *Let us also go, that we may die with Him* (Jn. 11:16). And now the obstinacy of a Christian often turns into steadfastness and is connected with a peculiar bravery.

When the Lord appeared to His disciples for the first time after His Resurrection, for some reason Thomas was not with them. When the other apostles told him of the Resurrection of Christ, the "unbelieving" apostle said: *Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe* (Jn. 20:25). It turned out to be quite difficult to accept the news about the victory over death even for those who saw Christ face to face and learned from Him. But Thomas was honest in his doubts and didn't feign to believe. Surely his brethren tried to convince him, but he remained firm—he needed to personally make sure that Christ was risen.

A week later all the apostles gathered together, and Christ again appeared to them. Seeing the risen Teacher, Thomas "the unbeliever" froze on spot in amazement, but the Lord said to him: *Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God* (Jn. 20:27-28)—thus he is the first of all the disciples of Christ to call Him God.

Paradoxically Thomas' disbelief only emphasizes the faith of the apostle and helps us to believe. This disbelief only confirms for us the fact of Christ's victory over death. Now we know that we die not forever, that we do not need to fear the grave. Its predatory mouth will release all its prisoners, for God has promised us eternal life in the flesh. And it's not simply a promise, for Christ, the Firstborn of the dead, is already risen, to carry out from the grave with Him all of mankind.



CHRIST IS RISEN!