

## Gospel Reading: from Saint John 20:19-31

On the first day of the week after Christ's Resurrection, the Disciples were in a room with the doors closed. Jesus came and stood in the middle of them, and said to them, "Peace be with you."

When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the Disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you!" And He then said, "As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, 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 touch the print of the nails with my finger, and touch the wound in His side with my hand, I will not believe it."

And after eight days His Disciples were again inside a room with the doors shut, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came and stood in the middle of the room and said, "Peace to you!"

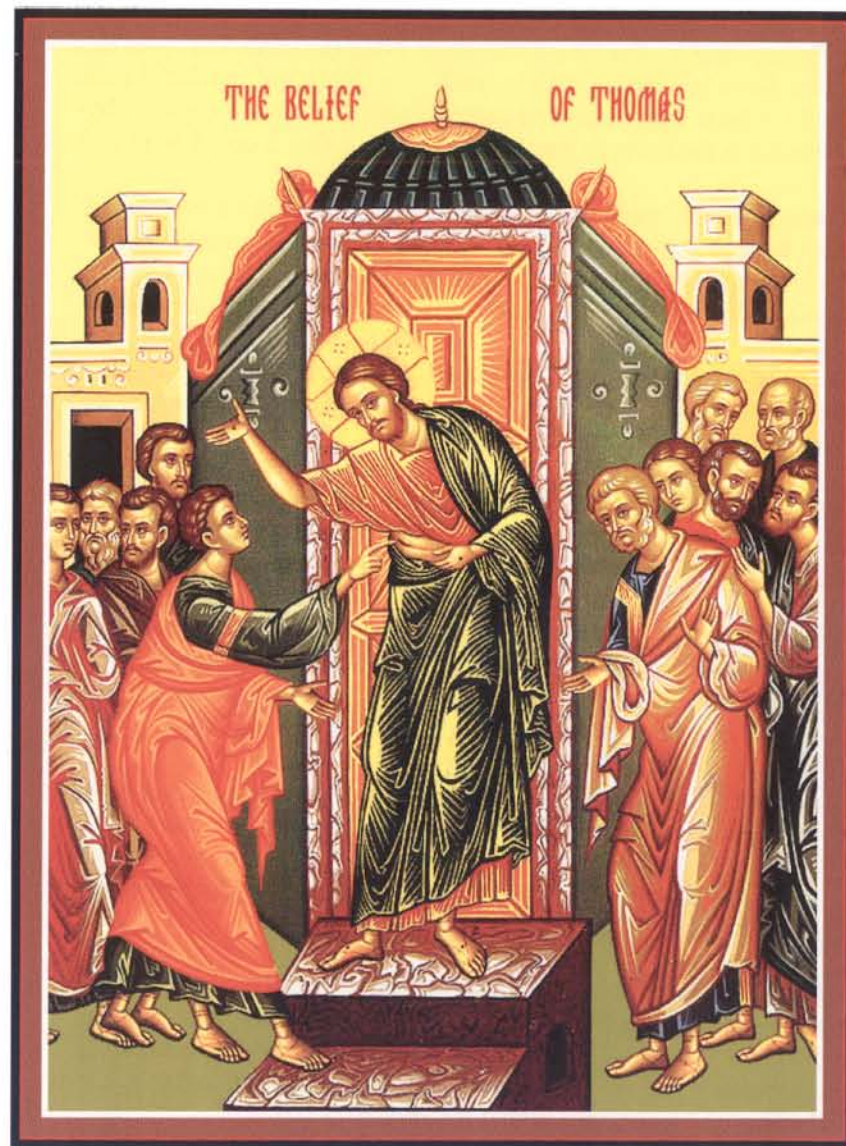
Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and touch the wound on My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His Disciples, which are not written in this book [the Bible]; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

## Saint Thomas Sunday "Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!"



The inscription on this icon is, "**The Belief of Thomas.**"  
When St. Thomas touched the side of Christ, he believed that Christ is indeed (truly) risen and that Jesus Christ is our Lord and God.

## SAINT THOMAS SUNDAY TEACHES US ABOUT FAITH

Saint Thomas knew Jesus. He was one of the twelve Disciples who followed Christ, listened to what He said and saw the miracles He did.

But Thomas had a hard time believing it when the other Disciples told him that Jesus had risen from the tomb. He didn't believe that it could really have been Jesus who had come to them in a closed room. Thomas wasn't in the room to see it, so he doubted that it could be true.

The word “**doubt**” means that someone isn't sure about something or doesn't believe something. Thomas was a person who wanted proof when he was told about something he did not see with his own eyes. Thomas had seen Jesus dead on the cross and then buried in a tomb.

Even when the Risen Christ came a second time to the room and Thomas was there too, he wasn't sure that the person he saw was really the same Jesus who he had known before.

Even though Jesus had told parables about resurrection and eternal life, some persons did not understand it. It didn't make sense to Thomas that Jesus could be standing alive again in front of him.

But when Christ let Thomas touch the nail prints and the wound in His side, Thomas believed that it really was Jesus and that He had risen from death to life. All life comes from God, so Thomas then was very sure in his heart that **Jesus Christ is our Lord and our God.**

When Jesus said, “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed,” He was talking about faith. **Faith** is when we don't have to see something or figure it out or prove it but **we know in our hearts** that it is true. Christ will bless us with Eternal Life in Heaven because we have faith in Him and believe in the Resurrection.

**ANTIPASCHA** -- This day is also known as “Antipascha.” The “anti” part of this word does not mean “against” Pascha. It means “in place of” Pascha. Just like we celebrate Christ's Resurrection on Pascha Sunday, the Orthodox Church dedicates every Sunday, not only the Sunday of Pascha, to Christ's Resurrection.

But even more than only on Sunday, **we Orthodox believers know that we can say on any day and every day:**

**“Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!”**

## QUESTIONS:

1. The twelve persons who followed Christ are described in the New Testament as the Twelve:
  - A. Twins
  - B. Disciples
  - C. Gospels
2. When we say, “Indeed He is Risen!” the word “indeed” means:
  - A. Say it again.
  - B. See it with your own eyes.
  - C. It is true.
3. The word that describes being sure in our hearts about what we believe:
  - A. Eyewitness
  - B. Faith
  - C. Proof
4. Christ said that people who haven't seen but believe in the Resurrection are:
  - A. Blessed
  - B. Educated
  - C. Worried
5. How many Sundays during the year do Orthodox persons celebrate Christ's Resurrection?
  - A. One Sunday -- only on Pascha
  - B. Two Sundays -- Pascha and Saint Thomas Sunday
  - C. Every Sunday
6. When is it a good day to say, “Christ is Risen!”?
  - A. Only on Pascha
  - B. Only on Sundays
  - C. Every day