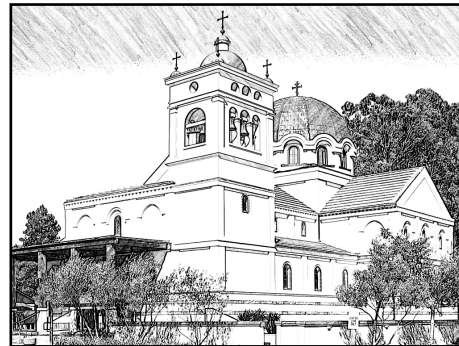


# ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, April 27, 2025

Thomas Sunday - Renewal Sunday



- TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION, Tone Five:  
Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.
- TROPARION OF THOMAS SUNDAY, Tone Seven:  
Whilst the tomb was sealed, Thou, O Life, didst shine forth from the grave, O Christ God; and whilst the doors were shut, Thou didst come unto Thy disciples, O Resurrection of all, renewing through them an upright Spirit in us according to Thy great mercy.
- KONTAKION OF THOMAS SUNDAY, Tone Eight:  
With his searching right hand, Thomas did probe Thy life-bestowing side, O Christ God; for when Thou didst enter whilst the doors were shut, he cried out unto Thee with the rest of the Apostles: Thou art my Lord and my God.

## ACTIVITIES & EVENTS THIS WEEK

- Sat., April 26: 11 AM, Baptism of Woldu child  
5 PM, Great Vespers / Confessions
- Sunday, April 27: 8 AM, Divine Liturgy in the Protection Church  
10 AM, Divine Liturgy, breaking and distribution of the *Artos*  
11:30 AM, Church School  
Noon, Coffee Hour on the patio  
3:30 PM, *Baptism/Fr. Romanos using Protection Church*
- Monday, April 28: 6 PM, Panikhda for Matushka Eleanor, in St Seraphim
- Tuesday, April 29: 11 AM, Funeral for Matushka Eleanor, Burial in Healdsburg and blessing of graves for Radonitsa  
Memorial Meal, Parish Hall
- Wed., April 30: 4 PM, Diaper Bank Distribution  
6 PM, Vespers  
6:30 PM, Parish Council Meeting
- Thurs., May 1: Divine Liturgy (Feast of the Prophet Jeremiah & St. Tamara, Queen of Georgia)
- Fri., May 2: *No Confessions today*

**The Sunday after Pascha** is called by three names: St. Thomas Sunday, Anti-Pascha and Renewal Sunday. Accordingly, we hear the Gospel from John 20:19. We hear Jesus say: *“Thomas, because thou hast*

*seen Me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.*” Faith is not discovered by investigation (although it paves the way) or even by seeing. Keep in mind that the Apostles, the Pharisees and Judas all saw the incredible miracles. Not all believed (St. Matthew records that *“they worshipped Him, but some doubted.”*) Faith is given, revealed, received, learned, lived and then understood. Remember the Lord’s words to Peter: *“flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in Heaven.”* We come to faith because the Father, Who loves us before we love Him, reveals it to us. *Seeing is believing* we say. However, from the beginning the evil one, that liar, along with hypocrites, charlatans, thieves, philosophers, politicians, those guessing and those deceiving, and you name it, have used the approach that *seeing is believing* only to dupe the mind and heart; and this has led to all kinds of falsehoods, fictions and disasters, sorrows, disappointments, heresies and sins. Only God, the Risen Lord, to be exact, can cut through fiction, lies and deception; and He only can gently present Himself to the human heart (and then the mind), and bring a person who is willing to the illumination of faith. We believe, then we understand. And then we will call Jesus, Lord. Only God can get us there, and only if we offer Him a little way in to ourselves. Jesus, says Luke, *“opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,”* particularly that *“the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead.”* And so he does for us as well. This is one aspect of *Renewal Sunday*. **Suggestions for the Paschal Season:** Read scripture in light of how you came to believe in Jesus Christ. Read the Scriptures right after praying, so you will read in a prayerful frame of mind. Secondly, never remove yourself from the Holy Mystery of the Eucharist: it is union with Christ, with the Holy Orthodox Church, and union with one another—we are not individuals, but human beings called together to be one in Christ. This day is also known as “Antipascha.” This does not mean “opposed to Pascha,” but “in place of Pascha.” Beginning with this first Sunday after Pascha, the Church dedicates every Sunday of the year to the Lord’s Resurrection. Sunday is called “Resurrection” in Russian, and “the Lord’s Day” in Greek.

**During Holy Week and Bright Week**, other than funerals, the Church forbids us to sing memorial hymns and *Panikhidas*. Why? Because Christ has destroyed the power of the devil and death by His death and resurrection, and the faithful are alive in Him. Memorial services are simply not necessary—all those in Christ are already commemorated (of course, exceptions are made for Funerals, and there is a special Paschal funeral for those days). Pascha is the perfect and all-encompassing memorial; what more could be desired. This year, due to the Funeral for Matushka Eleanor on Tuesday, we will bless the graves in Healdsburg, only after the burial.

**Christ is risen.** We all give thanks for the tremendous blessings of Holy Week and Pascha, especially giving thanks for those who organized all the various ingredients that make for a successful and bright feast. There are countless things to do to prepare for Holy Week and Pascha, to manage during Pascha and to arrange after Pascha. Please, extend a personal word of thanks to those that did so much.

**God’s presence is absolute** and perfect in our trials and tribulations, just at the moment when the sense of abandonment by Him is most intense. It is impossible for God to be absent from our salvation. Ultimately, the world is not the one that we see but another world that exists and that we have to discern. Then we shall glorify God for the rich blessings He gives us: for the possibility not so much of gaining our health (we shall lose that at some point), nor of escaping some threat to our life (that too will come to an end), but above all of enjoying our salvation—the possibility for us too to become partakers and members of the Kingdom of God eternally, and to see our God and Savior “face to face.”

—*Metropolitan Nikolaos, Metropolitan of Mesogaea and Lavreotiki*

## SUNDAYS OF PASCHA TIME

St. Thomas Sunday is the second Sunday of Pascha. Following that is the *Sunday of the Myrrhbearing Women* who cared for the body of the Savior at his death and who were the first witnesses of His Resurrection. A hymn for the day memorializes the Holy Women: *The angel came to the myrrhbearing women at the tomb and said: Myrrh is fitting for the dead, but Christ has shown Himself a stranger to corruption! So proclaim: The Lord is risen, granting the world great mercy.* See the [Gospel of St Mark 15:43–16:8](#).

The fourth Sunday is dedicated to Christ's healing of the paralytic (Jn 5). The man is healed by Christ while waiting to be put down into the pool of water. Through baptism in the church we, too, are healed and saved by Christ for eternal life. Thus, in the church, we are told, together with the paralytic, "to sin no more that nothing worse befall you" ([John 5:1–15](#)).

In the middle of this fourth week, the middle day between Easter and Pentecost is solemnly celebrated. It is called the feast of Mid-Pentecost, at which Christ, "in the middle of the feast" teaches men of his saving mission and offers to all "the waters of immortality" ([John 7:14](#)). Again we are reminded of the Master's presence and his saving promise: "If anyone is thirsty let him come to Me and drink" (Jn 7.37). We think also once again of our death and resurrection with Christ in our baptism, and our reception of the Holy Spirit from him in our chrismation. We "look back to one, and anticipate the other" as one of the hymns of the feast puts it. We know that we belong to that kingdom of the Risen Christ where "the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come!' And let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price" (Rev 22.17; Is 55.1). *In the middle of the feast, O Savior, fill my thirsting soul with the waters of godliness, as Thou didst cry unto all: If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink! O Christ God, Fountain of life, glory to Thee!* (Troparion).

The fifth Sunday after Easter deals with the woman of Samaria with whom Christ spoke at Jacob's Well ([John 4](#)). Again the theme is the "living water" and the recognition of Jesus as God's Messiah (Jn 4.10–11; 25–26). We are reminded of our new life in Him, of our own drinking of the "living water," of our own true worship of God in the Christian messianic age "in Spirit and in Truth" (Jn 4.23–24). We see as well that salvation is offered to all: Jews and Gentiles, men and women, saints and sinners.

The sixth Sunday commemorates the healing of the man blind from birth ([John 9](#)). We are identified with that man who came to see and to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. The Lord has anointed our eyes with his own divine hands and washed them with the waters of our baptism (John 9.6–11). Jesus used clay of spittle and told the man to wash in the waters of Siloam. He did so because it was the Sabbath day on which spitting, clay-making and washing were strictly forbidden. By breaking these ritual laws of the Jews, Jesus showed that He is indeed the Lord of the Sabbath, and, as such, that He is equal to God the Father Who alone, according to Jewish tradition, works on the Sabbath day in running His world. There is scandal over the healing of the blind man on the Sabbath day. He is separated from the synagogue because of his faith in Christ. The entire Church follows this man in his fate, knowing that it is those who do not see Jesus as the Lord who are really blind and still in their sins (John 9.41). The others have the light of life and can see and know the Son of God, for "you have seen Him, and it is He who speaks to you" (John 9.37). *I come to Thee, O Christ, blind from birth in my spiritual eyes, and call to Thee in repentance: Thou art the most radiant Light of those in darkness!* (Kontakion). —www.oca.org

# PROTECTION OF THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY ORTHODOX CHURCH

# MAY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>April 27 – St. Thomas Sunday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• Noon, Agape Meal</li> </ul>	<b>28</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 PM, Panikhida for Matushka Eleanor, at the Cathedral</li> </ul>	<b>29 – Radonitsa</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 AM, Funeral for Matushka Eleanor, Burial in Healdsburg, Memorial Meal at Church</li> </ul>	<b>30</b> <i>Fr Lawrence at Diocesan Council Mtg in SF</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 PM, Diaper Bank</li> <li>• 6 PM, Vespers</li> <li>• 6:30 PM, Parish Council</li> </ul>	<b>May 1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> </ul>	<b>2</b> <b>No Confessions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 AM, Blessing of Graves: Windsor and Santa Rosa</li> </ul>	<b>3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 PM, Resurrectional Matins/Confessions</li> </ul>
<b>4 – Myrrh-Bearing Women</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li><i>Spiritual Lesson for Teens</i></li> <li>• Noon, Agape Meal</li> </ul>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7 – St. Alexis Toth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 AM, Divine Liturgy (Protection Church)</li> <li>• 6 PM, Vespers</li> <li>• 7 PM, <i>Trisagion for the Repose (funeral home)</i></li> </ul>	<b>8</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11 AM, Funeral for Salwa Koura</li> <li>• 7 PM, Bible Study with Fr. James, online</li> </ul>	<b>9 – St. Nicholas</b> <b>No Confessions</b> <i>Divine Liturgy for the Parish Feast of St. Nicholas, Saratoga</i>	<b>10</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 PM, Resurrectional Matins/Confessions</li> </ul>
<b>11 – Paralytic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• Noon, Agape Meal</li> </ul>	<b>12</b> <i>Fr Lawrence on pilgrimage to Mt Athos, returning May 19</i>	<b>13</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 PM, Vespers for Mid-Pentecost</li> </ul>	<b>14 – Mid-Feast</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li><i>No Vespers Today</i></li> </ul>	<b>15</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 PM, Bible Study with Fr. James, online</li> </ul>	<b>16</b> <b>No Confessions</b>	<b>17</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 PM, Resurrectional Matins/Confessions</li> </ul>
<b>18 – Samaritan Woman</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• Noon, Agape Meal</li> </ul>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5:30 PM, Akathist to Matushka Olga</li> <li>• 6 PM, Vespers</li> </ul>	<b>22</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7 PM, Bible Study with Fr. James, online</li> </ul>	<b>23</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions</li> </ul>	<b>24</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 PM, Resurrectional Matins/Confessions</li> </ul>
<b>25 – Blind Man</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• 10 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• Noon, Agape Meal</li> </ul>	<b>26 – Memorial Day</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noon, Panikhida at Santa Rosa Memorial Cemetery</li> </ul>	<b>27</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 PM, Matins of Pascha for Leave-taking</li> </ul>	<b>28 – Pascha Leavetaking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 PM, Diaper Bank</li> <li>• 6 PM, Vigil for Ascension</li> </ul>	<b>29 – Ascension of Christ</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 AM, Divine Liturgy</li> <li>• 6 PM, Men’s Fellowship Dinner</li> <li>• 7 PM, Bible Study with Fr. James, online</li> </ul>	<b>30</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11:30 AM–1 PM, Confessions</li> </ul>	<b>31</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 PM, Great Vespers/Confessions</li> </ul>