



Holy Apostle Thomas

TROPARION OF ST. THOMAS

Thou wast a disciple of Christ and a member of the divine choir of Apostles, by thine unbelief thou didst make known Christ's Resurrection, and by touch thou wast assured of His holy Passion, O all-glorious Thomas, and now pray that we be granted peace and great mercy.

MEGALYNARION OF ST. THOMAS

Doubting, thou did come forth to touch His side; yet the resurrection was confirmed by thine unbelief. Henceforth, all have been taught by thee to serve Christ, O Thomas, who did end thy course well by holy martyrdom.

**ST. THOMAS
ANTIOCHIAN
ORTHODOX CHURCH**

1201 N. Llano Street
Fredericksburg, Texas

**AFTER-FEAST OF
& SUNDAY AFTER
THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST**

Sunday, December 28, 2025

*Antiochian Diocese of
Wichita and Mid-America*

Primate

His Beatitude, the Patriarch of
Antioch, JOHN X

Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of All North America
His Eminence, Metropolitan Saba

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December 28, 2025; After-Feast and Sunday After The Nativity of Jesus Christ

Joseph the Betrothed, David the Prophet and King, and James the brother of God

THE SEVENTH EOTHINON GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint John (20:1—10).

On the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. So she ran, and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we do not know where they have laid Him.” Peter then came out with the other disciple, and they went toward the tomb. They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first; and stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; he saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not know the Scripture, that Jesus must rise from the dead. Then the disciples went back to their homes.

THE SYNAXARION

On December 28 in the Holy Orthodox Church, we commemorate the twenty thousand martyrs burned in Nicomedia (St. Thomas’ antimimension contains a relic of these martyrs); and Venerable Simon the myrrh-streaming, founder of Simonopetra monastery on Athos.

On the Sunday after the Nativity of Christ, we commemorate the holy and just Ancestors of God: Joseph the Betrothed of the Holy Virgin, our Lady the Theotokos; James the Brother of God and the First Bishop of Jerusalem; and David the Prophet and King. David committed adultery and murder, yet God forgave him and glorified him above all the kings of Israel. He gave him the great grace to compose the most beautiful penitential prayers (the Psalms) and to prophesy the coming of Christ. Thus, God was not ashamed to take upon Himself flesh from David’s seed. God designated Joseph to protect the Most-holy Virgin, and imparted to him great honor in the plan of the salvation of mankind. Although Joseph was of the royal lineage of David, he was a humble carpenter in Nazareth. At the age of 80, Joseph took the Most-holy Virgin from the Temple in Jerusalem and into his home. He entered into rest at the age of 110. The Apostle James is called the “Brother of the Lord” because he was the son of the righteous Joseph the Betrothed. James greatly loved Jesus and, according to tradition, he traveled to Egypt with the Most-holy Virgin and Joseph, when Herod sought to slay the newborn King.

Verses

I honor Joseph, the Betrothed of the Virgin, who to be her protector was alone chosen.

Thou art a carpenter’s son, but also the brother of the Lord that built all with a word, O blest James.

What shall I say, seeing that the Lord testifieth, as a man after Mine own heart, I have found David.

THE EXAPOSTELARION OF THE SUNDAY AFTER NATIVITY IN TONE TWO

Now with God’s Brother, lauded James, let us all sing the praises of David, God’s own ancestor; and with them, godly Joseph, the chaste Betrothed of God’s Mother; for in a godly fashion they ministered to that divine Birth of Christ in the city of Bethlehem, when with Angels, Magi, and watching shepherds, they sang the hymn of praise to Him as to their God and Master.

THE EXAPOSTELARION OF THE NATIVITY IN TONE THREE

From the heights our Savior, Christ, the Dayspring of the East, is come to visit us; and we, who once were in the shadow and the dark, behold, now we have found the truth; for from a holy Virgin, the Lord hath been born today.

Christ is born!
Glorify Him!

THE EPISTLE

The Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians (1:11—19)

Brethren, I would have you know that the Gospel, which was preached by me, is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the Church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people; so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when He who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son to me, in order that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother.

THE GOSPEL

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew (2:13—23)

When the wise men had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the Child, to destroy Him." And he rose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region, who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the Child's life are dead." And he rose and took the Child and His mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

RESURRECTIONAL APOLYTIKION IN TONE FOUR

Having learned the joyful message of the Resurrection from the angel the women disciples of the Lord cast from them their parental condemnation. And proudly broke the news to the Disciples, saying: Death hath been spoiled; Christ God is risen, granting the world Great Mercy.

APOLYTIKION OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST IN TONE FOUR

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God, hath given rise to the light of knowledge in the world; for they that worshipped the stars did learn therefrom to worship Thee, O Sun of Justice, and to know that from the east of the Highest Thou didst come. O Lord, glory to Thee.

APOLYTIKION OF SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY IN TONE TWO

Proclaim, O Joseph, to David, the grandparent of God, the amazing wonders; for thou hast seen a Virgin great with child; for with the shepherds thou didst give glory, with the Magi thou didst worship, and by the angel it was revealed to thee. Wherefore, plead thou with Christ God to save our souls.

WELCOME TO VISITORS

If you are visiting with us today, we are glad you joined with us in prayer today. Please leave your email address with Fr. Methodios if you would like to receive this bulletin and the services. If you are interested in studying the Orthodox faith systematically, please come to the catechumen classes, and speak to Fr. Methodios at 512-632-8188, or contact him at methodios102@yahoo.com.

REGULAR SERVICES

WEDNESDAY (7:00 p.m.) — Paraklesis
SATURDAY (6:00 p.m.) — Great Vespers
SUNDAY (9:00 a.m.) — Orthros
(10:00 a.m.)— Divine Liturgy

THEOPHANY SERVICES

Theophany, January 6, falls on Tuesday. The Outdoor Blessing of the Water will take place at Lady Bird Park, Sunday, January 4, at 12 Noon.

Monday, January 5, 9:00 a.m., Royal Hours

6:00 p.m., Festal Orthros

7:00 p.m., Divine Liturgy with Great Blessing of the Waters

FASTING

No fasting from Christmas Day until January 5, when we observe a one day strict fast to prepare for Theophany.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

No Sunday School on December 28, the Sunday after Christmas. Normally, Sunday School classes will be on the 2nd and 4th Sundays during social hour.

CATECHUMEN CLASS & BOOK STUDY

Catechism class meets the 1st and 3rd Sundays following the Liturgy. No class on January 4.

The book study will next meet Wednesday, January 7. The current book is Journey to Reality by Zachary Porcu. Zoom Meeting ID 303 479 4823; Passcode 878497. No book study Dec. 31.

HOUSE BLESSINGS

House blessings start January 6 and end February 28. Fr. Methodios will be out from January 18 to February 6; and possibly on January 8 to 10. A sign-up sheet to schedule your house blessing will be available in the social hall.

SUFFERING AND TEMPTATION

In temptations and sufferings, it is not we who make the plans, we do not choose our cross, but we accept the cross that the all-wise Providence of God allows in our life. God knows how big or small a cross we need. He will give us just that cross which is absolutely right and necessary for us to be disentangled from our attachments in this transitory life, and to run after Christ with a free heart. Consequently, it is not we who choose; divine providence set the plan for our life. Of course, we pray to be spared from suffering and to have a peaceful and painless end, because we do not know if we will be able to bear suffering or whether we will become faint-hearted. As with temptations, we pray to be spared from afflictions, but if they come, then, in the strength of God's Spirit, we will bear them. Many people arrogantly choose their cross, and they become fainthearted and fall. We remember how the Great and Holy Apostle Peter learned his lesson. If we are faithful in that which is little and we bear it, strength will be added to us to help us bear that which is much and be even more faithful to God."

The Hidden Man of the Heart, Archimandrite Zacharias, 2008, p. 88, Chapter 6 "Prayer as Infinite Creation"