

*From the Divine office for Holy Hieromartyr Hierotheos (Oct. 4)*

*The love of Christ, in its divine intensity, made your soul shine and illumined your spirit with a gentle light, O Hierotheos. Like a fire, it consumed all sensual pleasures and made of you the venerable dwelling of heavenly splendor. (Vespers)*

*We honor you, O Bishop of Athens, for we have learned from you marvelous and ineffable mysteries. You are an inspired author of hymns of divine praise. Intercede therefore that we may be delivered from our sins, O most venerable Hierotheos, for we cry aloud, "Hail, O holy and most wise father!" (Kontakion)*



## SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE HOLY CROSS OCTOBER 4, 2026



SERMON ON THE MOUNT

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Melkite Catholic Church**

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**Divine Liturgy: Sunday 10:00 AM**

**Antiphon (3rd)**

1: Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; let us shout with joy to God our Savior.

***O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia***

2: Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving and let us joyfully sing psalms to Him.

***Khallisna Ya-Bnallah, Ya Man qama min baynil-amwaat, nahnu muranneemeena Laka. Haleloueya.***

3: For God is a great Lord and a great King over all the earth.

***O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You, Alleluia.***

**Entrance Hymn**

***P:*** Come, let us worship and bow down before Christ,

***All: O Son of God, who are risen from the dead, save us who sing to You: Alleluia!***

**Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 2, Pg. 38)**

When You descended to death, O immortal Life, You put Hades to death by the splendor of Your divinity. And when You raised the dead from below the earth, all the heavenly powers cried out to You: “O Giver of Life, Christ our God, glory to You!”

**Troparion of Hierotheos (Tone 4)**

O holy Hieromartyr Hierotheos, master of gentleness, measured in all things, clothed with a straight conscience as befits a priest you drew ineffable truths from the Vessel of Election. You have kept the faith and completed a course equal to his. Intercede with Christ God that he may save our souls.

**Patronal Troparion (Tone 1, Pg. 15)**

In giving birth, you have preserved your virginity, and in falling asleep, you did not forsake the word, O Mother of God. You have passed to life, being the Mother of Life. Through your intercession, savew our souls from death.

**Kontakion (Tone 2, Pg. 16)**

O never failing Protectress of Christians and their ever-present intercessor before the Creator, despise not the petitions of us sinners, but in your goodness extend your help to us who call upon you with confidence. Hasten, O Mother of God, to intercede for us, for you have always protected those who honor you

St Ephrem the Syrian, who wrote several poetic hymns in the apostle’s honor, has Satan bewail the powerful presence of Thomas’ relics in Edessa:

“I stirred up Death to slay the Apostles, that by their death I might escape their blows. But harder still am I now stricken: the Apostle I slew in India has overtaken me in Edessa. ... I went there and he was there. I found him both here and there, to my grief.”

The shrine was destroyed by the Zengids, a Turkish tribe who conquered Edessa in 1144. The relics were taken to Patmos, Greece and Ortono, in the Abruzzo region near Rome, where they still remain.

**St Thomas’ Writings?**

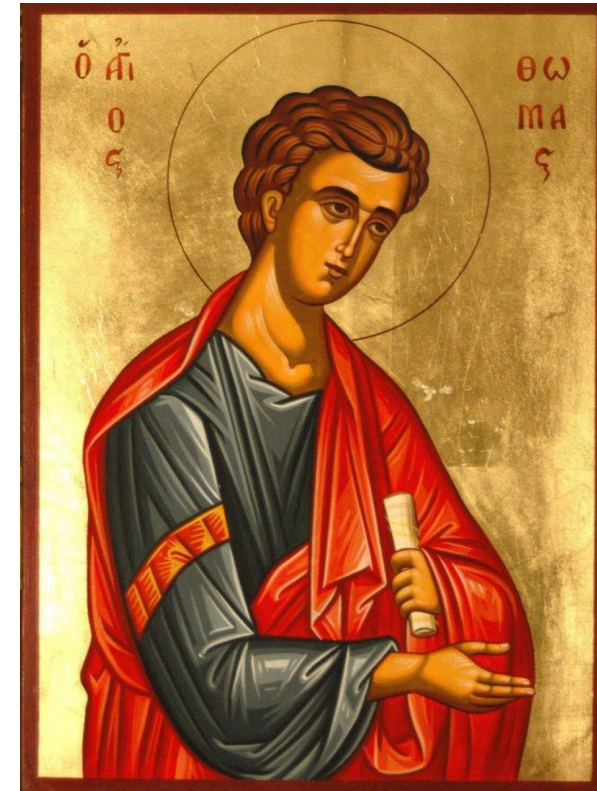
Several early texts are connected with St Thomas:

*The Acts of Thomas* (c. 180-230)– an early third-century Syriac work that tells the story of his missions in India. It is generally accepted as in line with the proven history of the day.

*The Infancy Gospel of Thomas* – written about the same time, this work contains a fanciful rendering of Jesus’ early years focused on prodigies and magic tricks He performs on His teacher and other children.

*The Gospel of Thomas* – the time of its composition unknown, this work was discovered in Greek and Coptic translations in the modern era. It presents “sayings” of Jesus that reflect a kind of Gnostic philosophy which circulated in Egypt in the early Christian era.

While TV commentators speculate wonderingly about these “suppressed” sayings of the Lord, a more reliable evaluation of them comes from the fourth-century Father, St Cyril of Jerusalem: “Let none read The Gospel according to Thomas, for it is the work, not of one of the twelve apostles, but one of Mani’s three wicked disciples” (Catechesis 5).



## DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

**Today**                      **Our friends and families, living and deceased**

**Next Sunday**

**This morning's Coffee Hr. is hosted by Paul & Doreen Samara**

**Next Sunday's Coffee Hr. will be hosted by Anthony & Diana Esper**

Please remember in your prayers: Zenon Tencza, Robert Ghiz, Sadie Mirante, Richard Abraham, Sr., Frank Boyda, Carol Boyda, Bob Lynch, Michael Mooradian, Dennis Desplaines, Thomas Houde, Ken Jordan, Mary Rizk, Michael McNeil, Jeff McNeil, Jeannine McNeil, Joyce Kfoury, Neil Gartner, Linda Gartner, Arthur Hill, Houda Daou, Lauren Abraham, Nicholas Haddad, Elaine Foley, David Ahlin, Elio Kanaan, Susan Bailey, Jacqueline Ventriglia, those affected by the natural disasters throughout the world, the people of Gaza, and for peace in Ukraine & the Middle East. Let us also pray for the repose of the souls of Zakeya Assaf, Genvieve Hatem, Hanna Francis, Saddalh Alkateb. If there are people for whom you would like me to pray, please reach out and give me their names. Part of our vocation as Christians is to pray for each other, especially when someone is sick or suffering in any way.

### Last Week's Collection

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| <b>Weekly</b>     | <b>\$</b> |
| <b>Candles</b>    | <b>\$</b> |
| <b>Coffee Hr.</b> | <b>\$</b> |
| <b>Flowers</b>    | <b>\$</b> |
| <b>Picnic</b>     | <b>\$</b> |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>\$</b> |

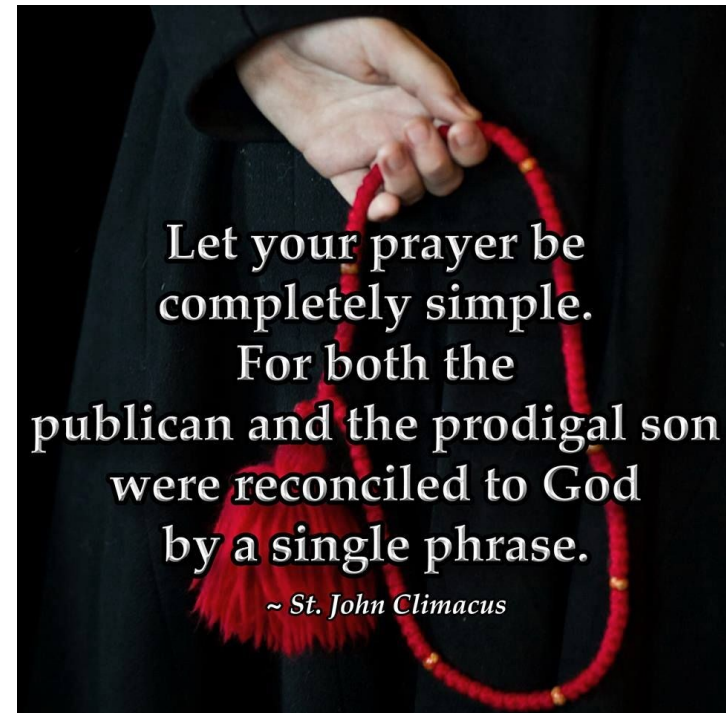
**God bless you for your generosity!**

**As a reminder, we need \$2,000 per week to meet our expenses.**



**Welcome to any visitors we have with us this morning! We are happy to have you worship with us.**

**Please join us downstairs in the church hall for the coffee hour so that we can get to know each other better and answer any questions you may have about the parish or the Melkite Church.**



## ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE (OCT. 6)

THE GOSPELS TELL US LITTLE about Christ’s chosen disciples other than their names. A few of them – Peter, John, and Philip – feature in the early chapters of Acts but there is little said about the others.

Thomas is more prominent in John than in the other Gospels. The story of Thomas and the risen Christ in John 20 is one of the most compelling tales in the resurrection Gospels. In Byzantine Churches this passage is read in two sections, as it occurred. At vespers on Pascha we read the story of Thomas’ doubts when told that Christ had risen. On the following Sunday – “Thomas Sunday” – we read of his encounter with the risen Christ which evoked his act of faith in Christ as “*My Lord and my God*” (John 20:28).

Non-scriptural tales and writings associated with one or another of the apostles were widely circulated in the first centuries; foremost among them were stories attributed to St. Thomas. The earliest and most widely held concerned Thomas as the Enlightener of India.

### **The Church beyond the Empire**

While the Acts of the Apostles details the spread of the Gospel throughout the Roman Empire, we know that at the same time Christ was being preached to Jews and Gentiles beyond the borders of the empire: specifically, to the East, in Osrhoene (Mesopotamia), Parthia and Persia and as far as India, especially where Jewish colonies could be found.

Traders traveling by caravan or ship were common in the Middle East in the time of Christ. The Greek historian Strabo (64 BC-AD 24) writes of as many as 120 ships sailing through the Red Sea to India every year. St Thomas reportedly sailed to India in ad 52 in one of these ships in the company of a merchant.

Jewish merchants had settled in towns along the Old Silk Road and in the coastal cities of India as far back as the Babylonian captivity in the sixth century bc. After the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in AD 70 even more Jews fled Palestine and settled in the established Jewish colonies. It was among them that St Thomas would have a lasting success.

Jews had a thriving colony on the Malabar (west) coast of India. They settled in Muziris, the center of the Chera dynasty, near Cochin, where an ancient synagogue may still be seen. According to local tradition St Thomas and his companions organized a number of communities along this southwestern coast of India. There are still several churches in modern-day Kerala, home of the ***St. Thomas Christians***, which claim to have been founded by St Thomas.

After several years the apostle undertook a missionary journey to the Coromandel (eastern) Coast where he converted, among others, the wife and son of the prefect of Mylapore, near Madras. The prefect charged Thomas with bewitching them and had Thomas imprisoned. He was tortured and then executed by being pierced with spears in AD 72. The place of his execution outside Mylapore is revered as St Thomas’ Mount to this day.

At first the body of St Thomas was enshrined in Mylapore, where miracles were associated with its presence. In ad 232 the bulk of the relics were brought from India to Edessa, the Syriac Christian center at the edge of the Roman Empire. A shrine was erected to house these relics which attracted the attention of the pilgrim-nun Egeria who visited it in the 380s. She described her visit in a letter she sent to her convent in Spain:

“We arrived at Edessa in the Name of Christ our God, and, on our arrival, we straightway repaired to the church and memorial of Saint Thomas. There, according to custom, prayers were made and the other things that were customary in the holy places were done; we read also some things concerning Saint Thomas himself. The church there is very great, very beautiful and of new construction, well worthy to be the house of God, and as there was much that I desired to see, it was necessary for me to make a three days’ stay there.”

### **Prokimenon**

**Reader:** My strength and my courage is the Lord, and He has been my Savior.

**People:** My strength and my courage is the Lord, and He has been my Savior.

**Reader:** The Lord has chastised me through his teaching, yet He has not delivered me to death.

**People:** My strength and my courage is the Lord, and He has been my Savior.

**Reader:** My strength and my courage is the Lord,

**People:** And He has been my Savior.

**Epistle:** 2 Cor 11:31-33-12:1-10

### **Alleluia**

The Lord shall hear you on the day of distress; the name of the God of Jacob shall defend you.

***Verse:*** O Lord, save your King and listen to us on whatever day we call upon you.

**Gospel:** Lk 6:31-36

