



Христос воскрес! Christ is risen!

We extend a warm welcome to all our parishioners and visitors.
We pray that your participation in our parish will be enriching for you as well.

April 23, 2017 ~ St. Thomas Sunday

and Feast of the Holy and Glorious Great Martyr,
Victory-bearer and Wonderworker George

Epistle: Acts 5:12-20

Gospel: John 20: 19-31

Troparia and special texts on found in the **white Easter Cycle booklet, page 4**

This Week's Liturgical Services



SATURDAY, APRIL 28

5:00 p.m. ~ Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women
Epistle Reader: Linda Douglas

SUNDAY, APRIL 29

10:00 a.m. ~ Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing Women
Epistle Reader: Michael Watral

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone from whom I received Easter cards and the "Gift of Love." Your generosity and support are both greatly appreciated, and suggests that my ministry at Holy Cross is essential and meaningful. Please do not hesitate to call upon me for your pastoral needs. May the Peace and Grace of the Risen Christ descend upon you and remain with you always. Христос воскрес! Christ is risen! ~ Fr. Stepan Didur

Your Return Gift to God

APRIL 16 ~ EASTER SUNDAY



Sunday Offering: \$3,963.⁰⁰
Flowers for the Tomb: \$25.⁰⁰
Initial Offering: \$15.⁰⁰
Special Projects: \$10.⁰⁰

Thank you for your generosity!

Щиро Вам дякуємо!

The Mission Collection for April is designated for the Thunder Bay Chapter of **Children of Chernobyl**. Organized in 1994, its mandate is to assist hospitals and orphanages for those affected by the 1986 disaster. Since its inception, the Thunder Bay Chapter has provided more than \$845,000 worth of assistance to eight hospitals and one orphanage in Western Ukraine.

Have you ever doubted, like Thomas? Have you ever been asked to walk by faith and not by sight? Faith is believing in something or someone that goes against everything that makes sense. As Christians, we believe that Jesus Christ was a human being, through and through, just like you, and that he was God, through and through. And this Jesus, who was God and man, publicly died on a cross and was buried. But then, Jesus physically came to life again. That's faith. And the death and resurrection of Jesus - this is what pays for our sin, this is what gives us the forgiveness of sins - this death and resurrection gives us hope when we see a loved one die, when we think of our own deaths.

Today, we live by faith, and not by sight. "Because you have seen Me, you have believed," he said to Thomas. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." That's us. It's not easy to believe when everything in the world tells you the opposite. It's not easy to believe when you've been hurt by the troubles of this world, when you're in pain and you're afraid of the future and your prayers aren't immediately answered the way you want. But as followers of Jesus, there's something inside of us - it's faith. We believe, even though we don't see. We don't hear. We have no proof. We have nothing - except the Word of God. And that, according to God, is all we need to believe - that's why God gave us the Bible - "These are written, the Apostle John says," that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

- Condensed from a sermon by Don Schultz

HOLY CROSS PARISH NEWS & EVENTS

Please join us for our annual **Easter Dinner (Спільне Свячене)** on **Sunday, April 23** after the 10 a.m. Divine Liturgy. We invite all parishioners to this community family experience. The traditional Easter foods will be served.

We extend our sincerest condolences to the Boyko family on the passing of their beloved †**Antonia** on Friday, April 14. Services took place this past week at the Everest Waverley Funeral Chapel. May our risen Lord accept the soul of his servant †Antonia into His Heavenly kingdom, number her among the just, and may her memory be eternal ~ Христос воскрес! Christ is risen!



The **Children of Chernobyl Memorial Service** will be held at Holy Cross Church on **Sunday, April 30**. The candle-light Panakhyda will commence at 2:00 p.m., followed by a short programme in the church hall. Door prizes and lunch will be provided. Everyone is welcome!

Applications for St. George's Scholarship are now available in the narthex. All potential high school graduates, who are parishioners of Holy Cross, are encouraged to apply. The deadline is **Monday, May 1**. Please submit your completed application to the Parish Office by or before that date. For more information or if you have any questions, please contact Dr. Patrick Opaski at 767-0253.

We would like to welcome and say 'thank you' to another new sponsor for our weekly parish bulletin — **Harbourview Funeral Centre** (Brent Trudell, Managing Director). See their ad on the back cover of this publication.

The Holy and Glorious Great Martyr, Victory-bearer and Wonderworker George



ST. GEORGE WAS BORN IN CAPPADOCIA, at the close of the third century, of Christian parents. In early youth, he chose a soldier's life, and soon obtained the favour of Diocletian, who advanced him to the grade of tribune. However, when the emperor began to persecute the Christians, George rebuked him at once sternly and openly for his cruelty, and threw up his commission. He was, in consequence, subjected to a lengthened series of torments, and finally beheaded.

There was something so inspiring in the defiant cheerfulness of the young soldier, that every Christian felt a personal share in this triumph of Christian fortitude. As years rolled on St. George became a type of successful combat against evil, the slayer of the dragon, the darling theme of camp song and story, until "so thick a shade his very glory round him made" that his real lineage became hard to trace. Even beyond the circle of Christendom, he was held in honour, and invading Saracens taught themselves to except from desecration the image of him they hailed as the "White-horsed Knight." The devotion to St. George is one of the most ancient and widely spread in the Church. In the East, a church of St. George is ascribed to Constantine, and his name is invoked in the most ancient liturgies; while in the West, Malta, Barcelona, Valencia, Aragon, Genoa, and England have chosen him as their patron.

Kontakion of St. George: *You showed yourself a most honourable harvester of godliness, for it was God who cultivated you. You gathered the sheaves of virtues; for, sowing in tears, you reaped in gladness; and in shedding your blood, you received Christ. By your prayers, O holy one, you grant pardon of transgressions to all.*



St. George's Society

Members are reminded to help with clean-up of the hall and the kitchen following the Parish Easter Dinner.

Our next monthly meeting is **Sunday, April 30** at 7:00 p.m. All members are requested to attend.

Our next bingo at Superior Shores is on **Friday, May 16** in the afternoon. Please see Gerry Bullock if you are available to help out on that day. The next bingo training session will take place on **Tuesday, May 23** at 7 p.m. in our parish hall. Those interested in attending, please inform Gerry B.

Holy Cross Golden Agers

Regular activities take place on Thursday afternoons beginning at 1:30 p.m. [doors open at 12:30 p.m.]. New members (55+) are always welcome with open arms — it's just \$10 per year and well worth the membership fee.

We will be making pyrohy on **Tuesday, May 30**. You are welcome to place an order or spread the word to those in our community who might like to order some as well. Contact Ann Kozlowski at 622-3006 or Ann Opaski at 577-2803 at your earliest convenience. The price is still \$5 per dozen for cooked or raw frozen.

Community Calendar

Canada's Story in Song - Lakehead Choral Group will mark Canada's sesquicentennial at its annual spring concert taking place on **Wednesday, April 26** at 7:30 p.m. at St. Agnes Church (Mary & Brown Streets). Enjoy the music of our Indigenous peoples and founding nations, as well as Canadian composers — past and present. Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$18 at the door and are available at Rollason Flowers, Kitchen Nook & Finnish Book Store and Music World Academy, and can also be purchased from all choir members.

Spaghetti Sing-A-Long Supper - presented by the Fort William Male Choir. **April 28** and **29** at the Slovak Legion. Doors open at 6 p.m.; program starts at 6:30 p.m. They serve, they pour, they sing and more. Tickets are \$30 and \$15 and can be purchased by calling 622-0251/356-4633 at www.fwmc.ca. If you like food, music and fun, join them for their unique brand of dinner theatre.

An Evening of Colour and Energy! - Chaban Ukrainian Dance Group presents its annual concert "Kalyna" **Saturday, April 29** at 7:00 p.m. at the Thunder Bay Community Auditorium. Available in person, on line at www.tbca.com, or by calling the TBCA Box Office at 684-4444. Come out and support our talented local dancers!

Travel the World in 48 hours! - Thunder Bay Multicultural Association's 44th annual "Folklore Festival" on **Saturday, May 6** and **Sunday, May 7** at the FW Gardens and Curling Club. Tantalizing international foods, imported wines and beers, incredible entertainment, 'shop-the-world' booths, an activity-packed Children's Area with all free activities, beautiful exhibits and displays, and local artists on site await you. Adults: \$5; Seniors/Students: \$3; Children (4-12): \$1 and those 4 and under: free. Win a fabulous "stay-cation" for 4 courtesy of Victoria Inn Hotel and Convention Centre. For more information, visit the website at www.folklorefestival.ca.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

St. Andrew's Cemetery has a full-time job opening. As Senior Cemetery Operator, you will provide interment services to St. Andrew's Cemetery; plan all activities involved in the service and maintenance of cemetery grounds, equipment and buildings; provide group leadership to a cemetery operator and to seasonal summer staff. You will also liaise with the cemetery office and funeral directors to co-ordinate funeral services. A full job description is available at the Cemetery Office at 1222 Reaume St. (behind the police station).

NOW ACCEPTING DONATIONS ONLINE - Donations can now be accepted online through the Holy Cross website (www.holycrossbay.com/donate). Parishioners, family and friends can now donate by setting up automatic weekly donations or by one-time donation. One-time donations can be made by any major credit card, while automatic donations require the use of a Paypal account. Donations are eligible for tax receipts. If you have any questions about online donations contact Andrea Warywoda at 629-6818. *Thank you for your generous contributions to our parish community!*



Christ is Risen! Believe it or Not!

There is a very interesting book called "Believe It or Not", and it was written by Robert Ripley. Mr. Ripley enjoyed collecting strange and amazing bits of information which, although they seem unbelievable, were true. He first published his amazing facts as cartoons in the newspaper, but they became so popular that they were published in book form, made into radio and television programs, and there is even a chain of "Believe It Or Not" museums.

On the Sunday that Jesus rose from the grave, He appeared to a group of His disciples. One of the disciples, whose name was Thomas, was not with them. When the disciples told Thomas that they had seen Jesus and that He was alive, Thomas said, "I won't believe it until I see it with my own eyes. I want to put my finger in the nail-prints in His hands — and place my hand where the spear was thrust into His side.

A week later, Thomas saw Jesus. Jesus invited Thomas to touch His hands where the nails had been. He told Thomas to put his hand in the wound in His side. Then Thomas believed! Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

A lot of people today won't believe that Jesus really rose from the grave because they haven't seen him with their own two eyes. Do you know what? It is true whether they believe it or not! You and I have never seen Jesus, we have to accept Him by faith. The question is, will you believe it or not?

Heavenly Father, help us to accept by faith that Jesus has risen from the grave and that he is alive. Help us to believe, because it is true, whether we believe it or not. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Christ is risen!

Source: www.sermons4kids.com



Our Lord said to Thomas, "Do not doubt, but believe." We know that line well. Too well, in fact, since Jesus didn't say anything to Thomas about doubt. In Matthew 14, when Peter tries to walk on water and sinks, Jesus, reaching out his hand saves him and says, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" Whereas in John 20, when Jesus and Thomas meet in the upper room, Jesus tells Thomas to touch His hands, feet and side and then says, "Don't be without belief, rather believe."

Despite what millions of sermons by thousands of preachers have told you, doubting Thomas didn't doubt, but rather he was a-believing because in John's Gospel, belief isn't about an intellectual assent to some list of facts, but instead, belief is about a relationship. When Jesus died on the cross, so too did his relationship with Thomas. Thomas believed Jesus, he gave Him his heart and his hope, and that belief couldn't live beyond the grave. Unless, that is, Jesus lived beyond the grave, and that is so hard to fathom, that Thomas wanted proof before he handed his heart over to be burned again.

We all have doubts from time to time, that's a normal part of living the life of faith, we shouldn't begrudge Thomas for doubting (even if he didn't). What Jesus longs for in this post-resurrection encounter with Thomas is that we all might believe in Him by handing over our hearts and our hopes that He might bring them to the fullness of joy. That's what living an Easter life is all about. That's what Thomas wanted, he just needed to see it, touch it, experience it before he was willing to risk relationship again.

~ Steve Pankey