20/04/2026

The Sunday of Thomas at the Patriarchate



On Sunday, the 6th/19th of April 2026, the Patriarchate celebrated the Sunday of Thomas.

On this feast, the Church commemorates the appearance of the risen Lord Jesus Christ unto His disciples, both on the first day after the Resurrection and again on the eighth day, when Thomas was with them and, “having seen, he believed” (cf. John 20:11–31).

This feast was observed by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, beginning from the evening with Vespers, and on Sunday morning with the Divine Liturgy, presided over by the Patriarchal Commissioner, His Eminence Metropolitan Hesychios of Capitolias. Concelebrating with him were His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of Lydda and Hieromonks of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre, among whom the first was the Elder Kamarasis, Archimandrite Nektarios. Also present was the Consul of Greece, Mrs Anna Mantika, while the faithful of the Church of Jerusalem joined in prayer; pilgrims had not yet arrived owing to rumours of war.

After the Divine Liturgy at the Patriarchate Hall, His Eminence delivered an address concerning the feast of the touching of Thomas, as follows:

“The Sunday of Thomas is also called the Sunday of Antipascha (Pascha clausum in Latin), for it is the feast of the leave-taking of Pascha.

In ecclesiastical language, the “Apodosis” (leave-taking) signifies the completion of a great feast which began eight days earlier. This is a custom received by Christians from the Jews. In earlier times, it was also called the Sunday in white (Dominica in albis in Latin), because the newly baptised would remove the white garments they had worn on Great Saturday and thus be fully received into the Body of the Church.

On the first Sunday after Pascha, the Church commemorates the appearance of Jesus Christ before the Apostle Thomas, who had harboured doubts concerning His Resurrection. Yet he was convinced when he touched the wounds from the nails used at the Crucifixion and exclaimed, “My Lord and my God” (John 20:25–29).

Who was the Apostle Thomas

He was among the fervent and devoted disciples, willing and faithful in service. He loved the Lord deeply, and when the Jews sought to put Him to death, Thomas said to the other disciples: “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.” Thus implying, it is better to be crucified with the Master than to live without Him.

In the Gospel according to John, we observe that when the Lord spoke of His departure, the disciples did not understand where He was going nor the way thereto. Then Thomas asked plainly: “Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?” (cf. John 14:5).

When Jesus rose from the tomb, He appeared to His disciples, who were gathered in the upper room, the doors being shut for fear of the Jews. Thomas was not with them at that time, and when the other disciples told him that they had seen the risen Lord, he refused to believe.

But eight days later, the Lord appeared again in the presence of the disciples and exhorted Thomas to touch the wounds of the nails and His side, which had been pierced by the spear. Filled with awe, Thomas worshipped Him and cried out: “My Lord and my God.” Then said the Lord unto him: “Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed” (John 20:26–29).

That is to say, the Lord declared unto Thomas: thou hast believed because thou hast seen Me; more blessed are they who, though they have not seen Me, yet

believe.

Thomas was also present with the other Apostles on the day of Pentecost. According to the story confirmed by tradition, at the Dormition of the Theotokos, by divine providence, Thomas was once again absent from the gathering of the Apostles. He arrived three days later and besought them to accompany him to the tomb, that he might venerate the holy body of the Mother of God. And so it came to pass; yet when they opened the tomb, great astonishment and wonder seized them all: the body was not there, and only the winding-sheet in which it had been wrapped remained. The All-Holy Theotokos had been raised bodily and taken up from earth into the heavens, bestowing wondrous strength upon the Apostles for the difficult and great work which they had already begun.

May the risen Lord God, through the intercessions of the holy Apostle Thomas, grant unto His Beatitude our Father and Patriarch of Jerusalem, Theophilos III, health and longevity, and likewise unto all the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre; and may He bring the longed-for peace to all the world, and especially to the Holy Land. Amen.”

From the Chief Secretariat







































en.jerusalem-patriarchate.info