



Српска Православна Црква
ЕПАРХИЈА ЗАПАДНОАМЕРИЧКА



Serbian Orthodox Church
WESTERN AMERICAN DIOCESE



SUNDAY, JULY 20, 2025

**SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST:
VENERABLE THOMAS OF MT. MALEON;
HOLY GREAT-MARTYR KYRIAKI**

RESURRECTIONAL TROPARION - TONE FIVE:

Let us, the faithful, praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and the Spirit; born for our salvation from the Virgin. For He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh, to endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

TROPARION TO VENERABLE THOMAS – TONE FOUR:

O God of our Fathers, always act with kindness towards us; take not Your mercy from us, but guide our lives in peace through the prayers of Saints Thomas and Acacius.

RESURRECTIONAL KONTAKION - TONE FIVE:

You descended into hell, O my Savior, shattering its gates as Almighty; resurrecting the dead as Creator, and destroying the sting of death. You have delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Mankind, and we all cry to You: O Lord, save us!

KONTAKION TO VENERABLE THOMAS – TONE FOUR:

Inflamed with divine love, you courageously showed us a great victory: you spurned the mortal king and all earthly beauty. You completed your worldly sojourn on Mount Maleon, from where you went up to Heaven to the King of kings. Unceasingly pray for us all, O Thomas.

HYMN TO THE MOTHER OF GOD - TONE SIX:

Steadfast Protectress of Christians and constant advocate before the Creator, do not despise the cry of us sinners; but in your goodness come speedily to help us who call on you in faith. Hasten to hear our petition and to intercede for us, O Theotokos, for you always protect those who honor you!

EPISTLE READING

THE PROKEIMENON IN TONE FIVE:

Thou, O Lord, shall protect us and preserve us from this generation forever!

ROMANS 12: 6-14

Brethren, having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in

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hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

THE ALLELUIA VERSES:

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation. Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever, and My truth will be prepared in the heavens.

GOSPEL READING

MATTHEW 9: 1-8

At that time, Jesus got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.” And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!” But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins” - then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

FROM THE PROLOGUE:

JULY 7/20, BY SAINT NIKOLAI VELIMIROVIC:

The Holy Great-martyr Dominica (Cyriaca, or Nedelja) of Nicomedia (289)

During the time of the Emperors Diocletian and his son-in-law Maximian, both adversaries of Christ, there lived in Anatolia two pious and elderly souls, Dorotheus and Eusebia. They were devout Christians, wealthy but childless. Through unceasing prayer, they obtained a child from God—the holy Dominica. From her childhood, Dominica consecrated herself to God, abstaining from everything that unruly children do. When she had matured and was beautiful in body and soul, many suitors came to ask for her hand in marriage; but she refused them all, saying that she had betrothed herself to Christ the Lord and desired nothing more than to die as a virgin. One of the rejected suitors denounced Dominica and her parents to Emperor Diocletian as Christians. The emperor ordered that Dominica’s parents be tortured, and after torturing them, banished them to the town of Melitene—where they died, having endured much suffering for Christ. Diocletian sent Dominica herself to Maximian to stand trial. Since Dominica confirmed her faith in Christ before Maximian, he ordered that she be placed on the ground and flogged with bullwhips. After that, the emperor handed her over to the commanders, first to Hilarion and, after his death, to Apollonius. Both of them tortured Dominica in a beastly manner, in all possible ways, but all was in vain. When St. Dominica lay in the prison cell, completely covered with wounds, Christ the Lord appeared to her, healed her, and said: “Dominica, do not be afraid of torture; My grace is with thee.” And indeed the grace of Christ saved this martyr from the fire and from the wild beasts, which the godless judges thought would bring about her certain death...

The Venerable Thomas of Mt. Maleon (10th c.)

Thomas was at first a commander distinguished by his bravery and wealth. He was massive of body and struck fear into his enemies. But when he came to love Christ more

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than the world and everything in the world, he left all and withdrew into the wilderness. There he was tonsured a monk and gave himself over to asceticism. St. Elias the Prophet appeared to him and led him to a mountain called Maleon, near the Holy Mountain. There he lived alone and isolated—alone with God, in prayer day and night. But even though he concealed himself from the world, he could not remain hidden. Upon learning about the sanctity of his life, people began to come to him and bring their sick. And St. Thomas cured people of every infirmity and affliction. Even after he fell asleep in the Lord in the tenth century, his relics continued to help all those who venerated them with faith.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Saint Dominica

St. Dominica, an only child, Whose parents themselves died for the Faith— Her parents, God’s saints. St. Dominica, now an orphan, Gave all she had to the poor: Only her body and garment remained, And that, she sacrificed for Christ! Dominica, pure as the dew, Refused the world’s enticements, Refused the temptations of men, And disdained the terrors of the earthly life. She went to suffering as to a wedding; Enduring tortures and deep wounds, Succored by the sweet name of Jesus! She suffered bitter pains, harsh humiliations, Assured of life eternal in God’s Kingdom! Her whole body ran red with blood, But the joy of Paradise is sweet!...

REFLECTION

The example of St. Dominica, the beautiful virgin, and that of St. Astius, the rich young man—both of whom submitted themselves to torture and death for Christ the Lord—lead us to the thought that there is nothing in history comparable to the power of Christ, by Whose help young men and women conquer themselves—and, through that, conquer everything else. To obtain victory over oneself is the greatest victory. The Church numbers such victors by the thousands, and many thousands. St. Cyprian, in writing about virginity, says: “To conquer pleasure is the greatest pleasure; neither is there a greater victory than the victory over one’s desires. He who conquers one opponent proves himself stronger than another, but he who conquers passion proves himself stronger than himself. Every other evil is easier to conquer than pleasure, for all other evils are repulsive— while the evil of pleasure is attractive. He who frees himself from desires, frees himself from fear, for fear arises from desire.”

HOMILY *on the sincere milk of the word As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious (1 Peter 2: 2–3)*

As newborn babes is how the great apostle regards Christians. Baptism is a new birth, and from baptism a man counts his new life. The spiritually newborn must be fed with mild food, just as the newborn in the flesh. What kind of food does the apostle recommend for Christians? The sincere and pure milk of the word. The physical child is fed with ordinary milk, which is only an image of the sincere milk of the word, by which a spiritual child needs to be fed. What then is this sincere and pure milk with which Christians should be fed? The apostle himself answers this when he says: Ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Thus, it is the Lord Jesus Himself, Living and Life-giving. Christ’s words are the sincere and pure milk. Blessed are you, brethren, if you nourish your souls with the words of Christ, as with sweet milk, for your souls will grow fruitful and be blessed, and you will be prepared for the Kingdom of God. Christ’s miracles are the sincere and pure milk. Blessed are you, brethren, if you nourish your souls with this

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sweet milk, for you will be like unto the angels who sing the praises of the miracles of God day and night. The Body and Blood of Christ are the sincere and pure milk...