



Simply Orthodox



Sayings from the Fathers:

The Untouched is felt; the Master is held by a servant, And He reveals His wounds to one of His inner circle.

Seeing these wounds, the whole Creation was shaken at the time. Thomas, when he was considered worthy of such gifts, Lifted up a prayer to the One Who deemed him worthy, Saying, "Bear my rashness with patience, Have pity on my unworthiness and lighten the burden Of my lack of faith, so that I may sing and cry, 'Thou art our Lord and God.'

Kontakia of Romanos, On Doubting Thomas

www.balamandmonastery.org.lb

Church Schedule

**Vesper Service
Saturday 7pm**

**Divine Liturgy
Sunday 10am**

**Church Address:
6 Oxford Street
Collingwood VIC
(Melway 44 B6)**

DON'T OVERLOOK THE GOOD IN OTHERS

by **REV. ANDREW DEMOTSES***

A wise man once showed me a blank sheet of paper, and asked me what I saw. "A sheet of paper," I replied. He then made a tiny dot on the sheet and held it up again. "Now what do you see?" he asked. I answered that I saw the tiny dot he had carefully made. He then asked me, "Why have you stopped looking at the rest of paper?"

It was then that I realized how much of our lives we spend looking at tiny dots rather than whole sheets of paper. We oftentimes focus on the single fault of another, and overlook the many worthwhile qualities of this person. We seldom count the many blessings we already have because we are too preoccupied with the many things we still want. After a choir has sung a whole concert of beautiful songs, why do we always remember the song which contained a single sour note?

Because we live in a fallen and imperfect world, no one of us is a perfect and unblemished piece of paper. We all have at least one dot, and most of us have many. But when we stop and think about it, even the sheet of paper with many dots on it has far larger areas that are clean and unmarked.

Of course, it would be dishonest to ignore the dots or to pretend that they are not there. But would it not make life more pleasant if we attempted to see the whole of the picture that others hold up to us? We must stop allowing the tiny dots, the faults of others, to over-shadow the many positive aspects of their personalities. Not only will this make others easier to love, it will help others to see the whole sheet of paper that we hold up as well.

HOW DOES FAITH GROW?

by **REV. ANDREW DEMOTSES***

Several days ago, I read with interest the story of the construction of the suspension bridge that arches so gracefully over Niagara Falls. In order for the task to begin, it was necessary to connect the two land masses upon which the ends of the bridge would rest. This was done by attaching a thread to a kite. When the wind blew, the kite went across. Then on to the thread they attached a string and pulled it across. The string was then used to bring across a rope which finally had the strength to carry over the first length of steel cable.

Who would have thought that the mighty bridge found its start in a single, weak, and unpromising length of thread? And yet, that modest beginning grew into the great bridge that millions have admired.

Faith is also like that bridge. More often than not, faith finds its beginnings in the things that are also as small and unpromising as the thread of which we have spoken. Christ in fact promised that the amount of faith needed in order to begin our journey need only be as large as a tiny single mustard seed. (Matthew 13:31).

But we must act on that faith. We must take the step of trust no matter how small it might be. Our faith might be no stronger than a thin, tiny thread; nonetheless, if it is to become stronger and greater it must soar with the kite. Through action faith grows, gathers strength, and moves us to greater trust and confidence. This is how faith is enlarged. No faith ever started large, but no faith ever grew from its small beginning without our action.

Sermonettes published by the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North America

<http://www.goarch.org/resources/sermons>

The Scripture Readings and Commemorations

Sunday, April 26th, 2009

2nd Sunday of PASCHA: St Thomas Sunday



EPISTLE READING

The Reading is from Acts 5:12-20

¹² And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. ¹³ Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. ¹⁴ And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, ¹⁵ so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed. ¹⁷ Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, ¹⁸ and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. ¹⁹ But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."

GOSPEL READING

The Reading is from John 20:19-31

¹⁹ Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. ²¹ So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." ²² And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."²⁴ Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." ²⁶ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" ²⁷ Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." ²⁸ And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

New King James Version sourced from www.biblegateway.com

The Lives of Saints Commemorated:

Sunday 26th April, 2009

Hieromartyr Basil, bishop of Amasia and Righteous Virgin Glaphyra (322)

Licinius was co-emperor with Constantine the Great. At his accession, he had agreed to tolerate Christianity in his territories, but soon turned to persecuting the Christians, and to a variety of carnal sins. He conceived a passion for Glaphyra, a Christian virgin handmaid of the Empress Constantia. When Glaphyra told Constantia of this, the Empress sent her away to Amasia in the East for her protection. There she was received and protected by Bishop Basil of that city. Licinius learned where Glaphyra was hiding and ordered that both she and the bishop be brought to him as prisoners. The soldiers who came for her found that she had already died, so they returned with only Bishop Basil, who was subjected to cruel tortures, then beheaded. His body was cast into the sea, but, with the help of an angel of God, his people found his body, retrieved it from the sea, and returned it to Amasia. The Prologue adds, "The Emperor Constantine raised an army against Licinius, overcame him, arrested him and sent him into exile in Gaul, where he ended his God-hating days."

St Stephen, Bishop of Perm (1396)

As a young man he entered monastic life at the monastery of St Gregory the Theologian in Rostov. Learning that the land of Perm (on the western slopes of the Ural Mountains) was still immured in paganism, he was filled with a desire to bring the Gospel to its people. He set about learning the language, created an alphabet and translated the service books. With the blessing of the Metropolitan of Moscow he then set out and began his apostolic labours. When, after much difficulty and many sufferings, he had gathered a community of baptised Christians, he was made Bishop of the region. Once, in his old age, he returned to Moscow, where he reposed in 1396.

Assembled by John Brady www.abbamoses.com/months/april.html

Fr Igor will celebrate the Divine Liturgy at **St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church, Ballarat**

fourth Saturday of the month
commencing 10am.

Contact Spiro 53347439 or spiro@iprimus.com.au

Church Address:

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