

SOBORNOST

St. Thomas the Apostle Orthodox Church

(301) 638-5035 Church

4419 Leonardtown Road

Waldorf, MD 20601

**Very Rev. Father Joseph Edgington,
Pastor**

(703) 532-8017

fredgington@gmail.com

www.apostlethomas.org

American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese

*ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE
OF CONSTANTINOPLE*

SERVICES

Wednesday: Reader Vespers 6:30 PM

Saturday: Vespers 5 PM

Sunday: Matins 8:45 AM

Sunday School 9:30 AM

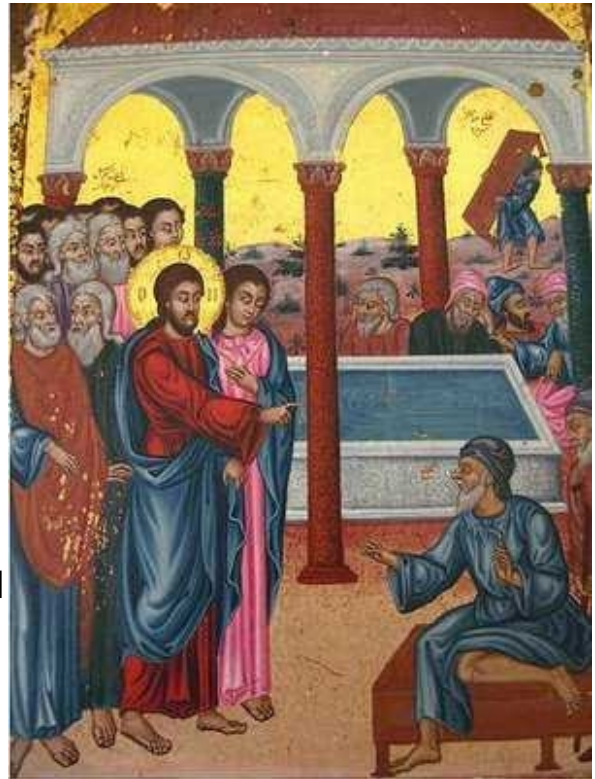
Divine Liturgy 10 AM

**May 26, 2024 – Fourth Sunday of Pascha | Sunday of
the Paralytic**

By St. Luke the Surgeon, Bishop of Simferopol

Our Lord Jesus Christ came to Jerusalem for the feast. At the Sheep Gate of this city stood a pool, called in Hebrew *Bethesda*, which means "the House of Mercy". This pool was surrounded by five covered passages, in which lay a huge number of sick, blind, lame, withered, waiting for the movement of water, which from time to time was made by an angel descending into the pool. And then every sick person, who was first to descend into the water, was miraculously healed of their illness, whatever it was. Who, if not the Eternal Son of the God of mercy and the Father of bounties, should enter the House of Mercy?

Among the huge number of those sick lay for 38 years one who was already paralyzed, never being on time to be the first to enter the water upon its disturbance. The Omniscient Son of God approached him and asked if he wanted to be healthy. Quietly and meekly answered the unfortunate sufferer: "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me" (John 5:7).



The Lord Jesus Christ, the Knower of the Heart and the Omniscient One, knew how great and immeasurable was the patience of this sufferer, knew how unshakable his hope in God's mercy was. We are also amazed by it, hearing the conversation of the unfortunate paralytic with the Lord Jesus. Who else in his place would have been lying at the pool for 38 years and would not have returned home, having lost his patience?! Who would not be convinced of the futility of his hope for a miracle of God? Who hasn't even murmured against God?! And he endured, he continued to hope, for his heart was meek and humble. And this granite pillar of faith, patience and hope still stands before the entire Christian world as an example to the faint-hearted.

And from the Lord Jesus Christ he received a reward for the meekness of his heart, a reward that was possible only for the Son of God, for he heard an order from Him, which only our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ could give: "Get up, take up your bed and walk" (John 5:8).

Let us recall what is written in the fourth chapter of the Evangelist Matthew: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every infirmity among the people. And the news about him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all the weak, afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, and lunatics, and paralyzed, and He healed them" (Matt. 4:23-24).

Why does the Evangelist Matthew speak so briefly about all this multitude of miracles of Christ? Why did the Apostle and Evangelist John the Theologian write in such detail about the healing of the paralytic at the pool near the Sheep Gate, and why is the fourth week of the Holy Pentecostarion dedicated to this miracle? We think that in the Divine light of the Resurrection of Christ, His last miracles, especially such bright ones as the healing of the paralytic, we perceive much more deeply than the earlier miracles of Christ, in which He also revealed Himself to the world as the greatest Wonderworker; so that the image of a sufferer is imprinted with special force in our hearts - a paralyzed man who managed to keep all the strength of hope in God's mercy for 38 years.

Bethesda - the House of Mercy - appears to us not as a place of miraculous healings of the sick in the body, but as a sinful world that requires spiritual healing, which was the goal of the incarnation of the Son of God, His preaching and the immeasurable saving power of His Golgotha Cross.

Let us give our whole hearts from the power of sin to our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, and with His all-powerful help let us go on a long path leading to the Kingdom of eternal glory, peace and joy, even though this narrow and stony path is difficult. Amen. (*from johnsanidopoulos.com*)

Today's Epistle Lesson – The Acts of the Apostles 9:32-42 EOB

In those days, as Peter was traveling through all those regions, he also came down to [visit] the saints who lived in Lydda. There, he found a certain man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and who had been bedridden for eight years. Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you! Get up and make your bed!" And immediately, he arose. All who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

Now, there lived in Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, (which, when translated means Gazelle). This woman was full of good works and acts of mercy. But it happened that at this time, she became ill and died. She was washed and placed in an upper room. As Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, imploring him, "Do not to delay in coming to help us!" So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, the disciples led him into the upper room. All the widows stood by him weeping, showing [to Peter] the coats and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them. But having put everyone out [of the room], Peter knelt down and began to pray. Turning towards the body, he said, "Tabitha, get up!" She opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. Then Peter gave her his hand and raised her up. Calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord.

Today's Gospel Lesson – Saint John 5:1-15 EOB

At that time, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now in Jerusalem, by the sheep gate, there is a pool with five porches called in Hebrew "Bethesda." Under these laid a great multitude of people who were sick, blind, lame, or paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at certain times into the pool, and stirred up the water. Then whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was made whole of whatever disease he had. A certain man was there, who had been sick for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and perceived that the man had been sick for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to be made well?" The sick man replied, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, someone else steps down before me!" Jesus said to him, "Arise, take up your mat, and walk!" Immediately, the man was made well; he took up his mat and began to walk. Now, it was the Sabbath on that day. And so, the Jews said to the man who had been cured, "It is the Sabbath! It is not lawful for you to carry the mat!" The man answered them, "He who made me well, that one said to me, 'Take up your mat, and walk.'" Then they asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your mat, and walk?'" But the man who had been healed did not know who it

was, for Jesus had withdrawn in the crowd that was there. Later, Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “Behold, you have become well. Sin no more, so that nothing worse may happen to you!” The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

A Word From the Holy Fathers

Proimion – Let those of us united with Christ through baptism and risen with Him sing praises and cry out, “Where, O Death is your victory, and Hades, where is your sting? For the Lord is risen, the Life and Resurrection.”

As we hear the parable of Christ which Luke narrates in his Gospels, Let us not consider it of secondary importance; but let us examine it in faith. The woman and the drachma: who are they, and what is the nature of the coin she lost? She sought for it diligently, lighting a lamp and sweeping her whole house; and when she had found it, she called in her neighbors, saying, “come, rejoice with me, for I have found what I lost.” Now we long for Christ, saying, “Lord, illumine our spirits so that light is established, the Life and Resurrection.”

The number of the coins is clear to all, for there were ten – ten in all which the Lord who made the universe possessed. The woman is, they say, the virtue and wisdom of the Creator, or she is Christ, the wisdom and power of God. There are ten coins, prime causes, resources, powers and thrones, and dominions, angels, archangels, Cherubim and Seraphim, and the first created man whom He destroyed and sought for, and whom He found when fallen, He – the Life and Resurrection.

Overcome by love, He came into the world to seek His creature who had wandered. Without beginning, ineffable, Son of God and our God, makes the search wisely and with divine providence, as God. He is made flesh from His mother whom He cleansed (as though swept clean) and sanctified; and He offers His body as a lamp to the fire and oil of His divinity which illumines all – for fire and clay always make light. Thus from His divinity and Incarnation, Christ shed the light of the Lamp – the Life and Resurrection.

Then He ascended the cross, as a lamp in a lampstand, and from there He saw Adam, the first created man sitting in gloom and darkness; and He who is inseparable from His home hastens to journey far in the flesh to Adam. He who was not separated from the bosom of His Father still brings to pass all events. He took with Him the gall and the vinegar, the nails and the spear in order that, with the spear and the nails, He might immediately overcome Death and Hades, when Hades came in contact with the bitter gall and vinegar which He drank, He, the Life and Resurrection.

After the crucifixion, when the King first arrived below in Hades, His light shone in the darkness and illumined it below, for the darkness was not able to check Christ; He had ample strength in darkness. For, just as Jonah was in the belly of his tomb, so He was carried into the tomb and yet in the grave He was alive, for His divinity was not separated from the flesh. This, Hades on beholding His awesome miracle cried out, “Come, Death, let us behold what sort of light He has kindled, He, the Life and Resurrection.”

“Quickly,” he said, “let us take courage, for this is the body of a man carried in the tomb; let us guard with bolts the one who comes, and let us give him over to putrefaction.” And immediately as he said this, he ran quickly and laid hold on the body; but Jesus Christ, as though arising from sleep, enchains him and forcibly puts him down as He cries out to those in Hades, “Rise up, all, and trample on Hades. Adam and Eve come into my presence; do not be afraid as through liable for past debts, for I have delivered all, I, the Life and Resurrection.”

“Shamelessly strike the face of Hades, mortals, and trample on his neck; come to them crying, 'Hades and Death are destroyed.' For you I have come, for I am the life and resurrection of all; so, all with joy recite psalms and song: 'Where is your victory, O dishonored Hades? Where, O Death, is your sting?' You lie powerless, Death, condemned to death, and you, Hades, skillfully bound down, once ruling, now enslaved, as you behold that He is the Life and Resurrection.”

In answer to this, the hated Hades, along with Death and bound with him, even as he lay there cried out; and as master he gave order to his men: “Run now, since you see that I suffer injustice; quickly close the bronze gates and guard them. Put up the iron bars on the gates and permit no one of those assembled to come forth from the tomb, for I wish to contend with the one Who comes against me. Make fast and secure those who cry out, 'He has come, the Life and Resurrection.’”

“What kind of injustice am I undergoing, since until now I have been king of men? Tell me then, O man, who you are, and how you have come here? For it is clear that you are a man; I see a human body, but everyone descended from the race of Adam is my possession. Why, then, do you overpower me as though you came on behalf of all men? For every man is subject to me whether he lived a long or short time on earth. How, then, have you become more than human and a redeemer of men, the Life and Resurrection?”

“Let me who have been treated unjustly state a case against you, for I see that the son of man has accomplished the deeds of God and not of man, though he appears human. I see the wound in your side and the prints of nails; but I see your power and the undefiled light flashing forth. If, then, you are man, you are subject to Death and Hades; but if, becoming man – a thing to be seen, You have remained

God – a thing to be discerned in You, then now interpret for me that we may see how, if you appear as man, You have become the Life and Resurrection.”

Now when Christ heard him shouting these things, at once He spoke to him: “I plead my case and am judged; for I do not wish to do you wrong in any way – for even if you are unjust and shameless and worthy of condemnation, I have indeed become man, as you see; but I am faultless, the Word of God, and Creator of all men and God, the ruler of all. But even if I am God, I do not judge as a despot, but along with you, I shall plead my case as far as Adam is concerned. I was born of his nature, and I shall conquer you and overthrow you from the kingdom which you possess. I am the Life and Resurrection.”

“Adam had the complete joy of eternal life; but he was especially deceived. I, the Creator of all things, am become life which really exists; but you, Hades, did not exist in the beginning, nor did the reality of Death. The suffering of terrible sin engendered him and you. And so Adam, through a trick of the deceiver, became enslaved to sin, and he became subject to you and a prisoner for you and bitter Death. For this reason you are without any actual existence and easily captured. How, then, will you prevail over the Life and Resurrection?”

“Exalted by folly, you control the descendants of Adam as partners in sin, and you imprison them as though they still owe an ancestral debt. But every descendant of Adam, born in sin, was liable to me. He was born of corruption, and of union with husband, and intercourse; but I am free from all that, from sin, and from intercourse, for even if I became man, as I willed it, a virgin womb brought me forth blameless; and, for the sake of all men, I have given my blood to the One who engendered me, the Life and Resurrection.”

“Examine me, readily I allow it, and see that you will find no unjust word or deed. For I have not done wrong in any action, nor have I uttered anything deceitful in word. Therefore I speak. 'Who of you will accuse me of sin?' For among all the dead now I am shown to be free in every respect, and of all sensual mortals I am the one who is unacquainted with sin. How, then, Hades, did you dare to restrain the faultless as guilty? Examine me carefully, for I wish to know the truth, that I have even now refuted you justly, I, the Life and Resurrection.”

“And so you are shamelessly angry, for it is a just trial and you will have been completely thrown out, you lawless leaders of the realm of darkness, for transgressing what is just; for if you have found in me any remnant of sin, then use against me, O unjust one, all of your punishments; but if you have found nothing, restore quickly whatever record you keep. Since, in this case, you happen to have been exerting all your strength against the faultless Christ, make ready for restitution of those whom you seized in advance, those whom I have raised up, I, the Life and Resurrection.”

“Only in order that you may not be ignorant about what you are facing, Hades: not only will you give back those whom you took, but also I have raised up those whom I take with me as I leave here, for indeed, as you know, if for the rest of time, men are conveyed to you, they will arise, since at the sound of the trumpet I shall raise them up all together because you have had the daring to lay hold on the blameless Son of the King.” As Christ said this, Hades was overcome. The gatekeepers threw away their keys and fled as they saw Christ crush and break their bolts, He, the Life and Resurrection.

Suddenly the bodies of the dead became animated; they were resurrected, and they trampled on Hades, crying out, “O unjust one, where is your victory, and Death, where is your sting?” Suddenly all of the tombs were opened of themselves and all of the dead were released from them and formed a chorus; and an angel coming down rolled the stone from the tomb of the Savior. “O Lord, Master, You have opened the tombs at a command, not needing anyone. How is it then that You have need of someone to roll away the stone from Your tomb? You, the Life and Resurrection.”

“Now in order that no one may be led astray, I shall answer you and explain the question set by you. The stone was not wholly a hindrance to my way out of the tomb. Since everything obeys and is subject to me as God, for even if I become flesh, I am still Lord and Creator of all, and at my command not long ago sea and land came forth; the Jordan was turned back; springs of water gushed from the rocks for people in the desert; and the sun withdrew when they crucified me, the Life and Resurrection.”

You opened up all the tombs and released the dead at the mere nod of command, and never had need of an angel to roll away Your stone; now, teach me a clever scheme, for I fear that this symbol, and sign for mortals, the opening up of this stone from the tomb, will not work in the graves as formerly, when in this hour, the gates of Hades were pulled up from their foundations. Then, an angel appeared in shining raiment and sang a paean of victory, saying that there has been resurrected the Life and Resurrection.

In return for these things, O Redeemer, what do we have to offer except a doxology? Therefore, spare, O Christ God, those who believe in Your cross, tomb and resurrection. Grant to us forgiveness of sins, and whenever the awakening common to all comes, consider us worthy to see Your face and to hear Your voice with confidence: “Along with my saints, inherit my kingdom with joy.” Then grant to your spirits, merciful One, a spirit of peace that we may glorify the Life and Resurrection.

– St. Romanos the Melodist, *Kontakion 27 “On the Resurrection”*

Holy Apostle Carpos of the LXX

*The Lord received the fruits you produced O Carpos, * which you brought every hour till the end as a harvest. * On the twenty-sixth Carpos flew away from the earth to a distant place.*

Saint Carpos was among the Seventy Apostles of the Lord, who ministered to the Apostle Paul in the preaching of the gospel, and delivered his epistles. He taught many pagans to revere Christ. Some sources say he was Bishop of Varna in Thrace, while others say he was Bishop of Berroia in Macedonia. As a shining star he illumined the universe with his teachings. Daily he worked great miracles and banished evil spirits from the possessed.

In his second Epistle to Timothy (4:13), Saint Paul requests, "The phelonion that I left at Troas with Carpos, bring when you come, and the books." Carpos also preached the gospel in Crete where he received Saint Dionysius the Areopagite in his home. Saint Dionysius testifies in a letter that Carpos was a man with an exceptionally pure nous, with meekness and innocence, and that the Lord Jesus, with His angels, appeared to him in a vision, and that he never began the Divine Liturgy unless he did not have a heavenly vision beforehand.

It happened that the Apostle Carpos lost his patience and began to pray that God send down death upon two sinful men; one a pagan and the other an apostate from the Christian faith. Then the Lord Jesus Christ Himself appeared to Carpos and said: "Strike me; I am prepared to be crucified again for the salvation of mankind." Saint Carpos related this event to Saint Dionysius the Areopagite and he wrote it down and gave it to the Church as a lesson to all, that prayers are needed for sinners to be saved and not for them to be destroyed, "for the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).

Having brought many people and cities to Christ, and divided believers from unbelievers through Holy Baptism, many unbelievers came against him, and he endured all things with bravery and courage. In as much as he glorified God even in the midst of his trials and sufferings, God glorified him. For this reason even when he reposed in peace and delivered his spirit to the Lord, his relics continued to work miracles on a daily basis, healing all types of illnesses and diseases, and banishing evil spirits from the possessed. *(from johnsanidopoulos.com)*

Venerable Regintrudis, Abbess of Nonnberg

There is little information on the life of St. Regintrudis extant. Whilst she and her husband Theodo, Duke of Bavaria (†c. 716) provided a great deal of support overall to St. Rupert ([27th March](#)) in his work to evangelise the Duke's lands, St. Regintrudis took special interest in the establishment of the monasteries which

came to be known as St. Peter's Abbey and Nonnberg. She helped choose the site and made sure the community was endowed with the properties which would generate income to support the abbey at what came to be known as Nonnberg (mountain of nuns). Following Duke Theodo's repose St. Regintrudis entered Nonnberg where she received monastic tonsure and eventually served as the community's fourth Abbess. St. Regintrudis reposed circa 750. *(from drjohnhutchisonhall.com)*

Also Commemorated Today

Apostles [Carpus](#) of the Seventy and [Alphaeus](#) (1st c.).

Translation of the relics (1534) of New Martyr [George](#) of Kratovo and Sofia (1515). (martyred Feb 11)

[Uncovering of the relics](#) (1521) of Venerable [Macarius](#), abbot of Kolyazin (1483).

Martyrs [Abercius](#) and [Helen](#), children of Apostle Alphaeus (1st c.).

Venerable [John](#) of Psichaita the Confessor of Constantinople (9th c.) (May 7 Grk Cal.)

New Martyr [Alexander](#) of Thessalonica, who suffered at Smyrna (1794) (Greek).

St. [Synesios](#), 2nd bishop of Karpasia in Cyprus

St. [Augustine](#) of Canterbury, evangelizer of England (ca. 605) (Celtic & British).

New Hieromartyrs Milan Banjac and Milan Golubovic of Drvar, Serbia (1941-45).

104 Holy New Martyrs of [Cherkasy](#) (1937-38) (Ukraine)

St. [Becan](#) of [Cork](#), Abbot of Kill Baggan (6th c.)(Ireland)

St. [Oduvald](#), [abbot](#) of Melrose (698)

Heiromartyr [Eleutherius](#), [pope](#) of Rome (c. 189)

Sts. [Fugatius](#) (Phaganu, Fagan) and Damian (Diruvianus, [Dyfan](#)), missionaries to Britan (2nd c.) (St. Dyfan – see also May 14)

Martyrs [Felicissimus](#), Heraclius and Paulinus of Todi (c. 303)(Italy)

St. [Guinizo](#), hermit of Monte Cassino (c. 1050)

Martyr [Priscus](#) and Companions of Auxherre (c. 272)(France)

Martyr [Quadratus](#) and 5 companions of Africa Proconsularis (before 430)

Martyr [Simitrius](#) and 22 Companions of Rome (c. 159)

Hieromartyr [Zachary](#), bishop of Vienne (c. 106)

Social Team for June 2

None – light fare only next week.

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In Your Prayers – Please Remember... His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, His Eminence Metropolitan GREGORY, Fr. Joseph & Family, His Grace Bishop Neofitos of Nyeri & Mt. Kenya, Bennett family, Tatyana & Slava Chumak & family, Luke & Marlena Cooper, Roberta Corson, Tina Crull, Marlene Doukas, Linda A. Georgiev, Sandi Hebel, Howl family, Helen P. Janowiak, John M. Janowiak, Johnson family, Andrew Kinn, Kopan family, Helen, Brian, Luke and Mia Mahony, Valentina Makowelski, Susan Matula, David & Kathryn Newman, Bobby Nutter & family, Nicholas Pavlik, Weston Perry & family, John Reece, Mary Reed, Marge Rusnak, Rose Song, Fr. Nectarios & Ia, Mother Virginia Marie & the Carmelite Nuns of Port Tobacco, the suffering people of Ukraine & the Holy Land, and those in need of our prayers. (Please advise Fr. Joseph of changes.)