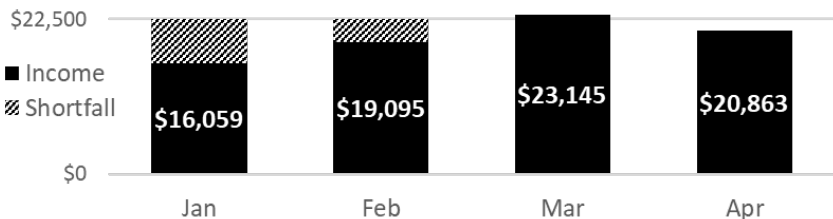


## Announcements

On March 31, Archbishop Alexander issued an updated directive to the Clergy and Faithful of the Diocese of the South regarding parish ministries during the present global health crisis. This letter may be read in full on the diocesan website at [www.dosoca.org](http://www.dosoca.org). A summary is given below:

- All services will continue to be served by a strictly limited number of participants on a fixed roster.
- Lenten schedules of Sunday Resurrectional Divine Liturgies and weekday Presanctified Liturgies may proceed as provided for in the previous letter.
- The following are recommended for Holy Week: One Bridegroom Service, Vespertal Liturgy of Holy Thursday, Vespers of Holy Friday, and Vespertal Liturgy of Holy Saturday.
- The Liturgy for Pascha should be served on Sunday morning, scheduled at the normal Sunday service time.
- These provisions will remain in place at least through April 30, 2020, unless otherwise updated. When the "all clear" has finally been signaled by all the civil jurisdictions, Archbishop Alexander will designate a common Sunday that all the parishes and missions of the diocese will be directed to celebrate the Paschal Matins and Liturgy in full (*viz.* 2 Chronicles 30:1-4).
- His Eminence concludes with this encouragement: *"Continue to be patient. Neither this pandemic nor any civil decree can keep you from keeping the Gospel commandments. in Christ Jesus, with the love of our Lord, and with the fast, +ALEXANDER Archbishop of Dallas and the South"*

## 2020 Parish Income



Though our first two months fell short of their targets, monthly donations have increased since then. Recent giving has helped close the gap to bring our year-to-date income \$7,000 behind pace.

YTD RUNNING TARGET	\$86,250
ACTUAL DONATIONS	\$79,162
	\$190,838 Remaining

# St. Sava Orthodox Church

MAKING DISCIPLES OF OUR NEIGHBORS

## Schedule

***Through at least April 30, all faithful are asked to remain at home in accordance with the advice of our bishop and civil authorities. Services will be available to view online at [www.facebook.com/stsavatx](http://www.facebook.com/stsavatx)***

### Saturday (April 25)

*Saturday of Renewal Week (Bright Saturday)*

*No Service*

### Sunday (April 26)

*2nd Sunday of Pascha: Saint Thomas*

9:30am—Divine Liturgy

### Saturday (May 02)

*No Service*

### Sunday (May 03)

*3rd Sunday of Pascha: Holy Myrrhbearers*

9:30am—Divine Liturgy



SAINT SAVA

ORTHODOX CHURCH



**Sunday, April 26, 2020**

**ANTIPASCHA. 2nd Sunday of Pascha**

**St. Thomas Sunday**

Our Parish Rector, **Fr. Photius Avant**, may be reached via either (972) 612-3881 or [fatherphotius@gmail.com](mailto:fatherphotius@gmail.com), or at the parish during the office hours listed below.

**office hours are suspended until further notice. Contact Fr. Photius directly for an appointment.**

Visit our website at [stsavaoca.org](http://stsavaoca.org) to keep up to date with the church calendar, Fr. Photius' sermons, upcoming events, photos and more!

1601 S. Jupiter Rd. Allen, TX 75002 — [www.stsavaoca.org](http://www.stsavaoca.org)  
Orthodox Church in America, Diocese of Dallas



**ANTIPASCHA. 2nd SUNDAY OF PASCHA — Tone 1.****St. Thomas Sunday.**

Hieromartyr Basil, Bishop of Amasea (ca. 322). St. Stephen, Bishop of Perm (1396). Righteous Virgin Glaphyra (322). St. Joannicius of Devich, Serbia (13th c.).

**Hymns**

*From the sealed tomb, Thou didst shine forth, O Life!  
Through closed doors Thou didst come to Thy Disciples, O Christ God.  
Renew in us through them an upright spirit,  
by the greatness of Thy mercy, O Resurrection of all!*  
*(Troparion for the Second Sunday of Pascha)*

*Thomas touched Thy life-giving side with an eager hand, O Christ God,  
when Thou camest to Thine Apostles through closed doors.  
He cried out with all: "Thou art my Lord and my God!"*  
*(Kontakion for the Second Sunday of Pascha)*

**Readings****Matthew 28:16-20 (1st Matins Gospel)**

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen."

**Acts 5:12-20 (Epistle)**

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. Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, 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. 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. 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, and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."

**John 20:19-31 (Gospel)**

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." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 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." 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!" 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." And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 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.



*The following is excerpted from a homily given by St. Gregory Palamas (c. 1296-1359) on the Feast of New Sunday (St. Thomas Sunday)*

**T**oday we keep the feast of New Sunday, or rather we celebrate the inauguration of the New Lord's Day. [...]

You will understand how much better Sunday is than other feasts from what follows. Every other festival comes round once a year, but the Lord's Day comes round four times every month, and this frequent recurrence makes the whole year a year of true remission for us, a year acceptable to the Lord (*cf.* Isa. 61:2). It was in order to teach us to celebrate it in practice at the end of each week that the Lord first appeared to the disciples inside the house while Thomas was absent (John 20:19-24). He proved He was alive and gave them peace. By His breathing upon them He renewed the divine breath given in the beginning (Gen. 2:7), and endowed them with the grace of the Holy Spirit, imbuing them with divine power to bind and loose sins. He made them sharers in the exercise of His heavenly lordship, saying to them, "receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:22-23).

The Lord granted them this power and grace when He appeared to them on the very day of His resurrection, obviously a Sunday. Then, letting the intervening days of the week elapse, He appeared in the same manner and in the same house, on the eighth day, the Sunday we celebrate today, to inaugurate His festival and to bring the hesitant Thomas to faith. According to the Saviour's beloved evangelist and disciple, "After eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you: (John 20:26). [...]

But are some of you puzzled that Christ could enter when the doors were shut, since He had a body? Apparently you are unaware that spiritual things must be compared with spiritual and understood on their own terms, as the holy apostle says (*cf.* I Cor. 2:13). Christ did not spoil the womb of the Virgin who bore Him in the flesh. He did not undo the signs of virginity when He was born, but kept them intact, even though at that time His body was subject to suffering and death. So it is not at all surprising if now that He had immortalized the humanity He had assumed and His body was no longer subject to death, He could enter through closed doors. However, as He undoubtedly had a body free from suffering and death, how was it that on His Side and His Hands He had marks of wounds and holes from the nails? For the evangelist tells us that the Lord said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing" (John 20:27). Why did He have scars? It would be impossible for a mortal, suffering body to display marks of wounds and nails and to remain healthy and sound. On the other hand, an immortal body without suffering can show the scars and wounds it suffered to anyone at will, and nevertheless continue free from suffering and death.

This enables me to understand something else: that those who have suffered for Christ are adorned for ever with their wounds. [...] the body's suffering for Christ and the resultant wounds become for those who bear them windows to let in the light without evening. And when that light shines forth they will be recognizable by the divine beauty and radiance of their wounds and not by their ugliness. [...]

Christ's body held within it the fount of divine light, which shone forth spiritually to enlighten the mind of him who hesitated, so that Thomas cried out at once, with perfect theology, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). The Lord said to him, "Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29), showing that those who saw the Lord with their own eyes are not in greater glory than those who have been brought through them to faith in Him.