



## Parish Information Bulletin

Program for 8—14 May 2022

### CHRISTOS ANESTI ! CHRIST IS ARISEN!

**SUNDAY 8 MAY**      **SUNDAY OF THE MYRR-BEARERS, Mark 15: 43-47, 16: 1-8**  
• 7.30am  
Orthros and Divine Liturgy

#### 2021 SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES FOR ALL AGES

(A free voluntary program organised by the Church)

Lessons take place in the building behind the church and begin at 10.30am until Church dismissal.  
We have classes for ages ranging from 5yrs to teenage years. Lessons are taught in a relaxed, friendly environment.  
Please bring your children along to learn of their rich Orthodox faith and come close to God and His Love.

**MONDAY 9 MAY**      • 10.00am  
Meeting of Elderly Citizens in Church Hall

**THURSDAY 12 MAY**      • 8.00—9.00pm  
➡ **TEENAGE YOUTH GROUP**  
**ALL TEENAGERS WELCOME**  
Join the group and learn about your faith, make friends,  
enjoy refreshments, in a friendly, relaxing environment.  
- In Church Hall, upstairs behind the Church

**SUNDAY 15 MAY**      **GOSPEL READING: John 5: 1-15**  
**EPISTLE READING: Acts 9: 32-42**

#### Telephone Contact Numbers

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Fr Athanasios and  
Fr Ephraim are available  
at the Church every  
Monday to Friday  
between 4.00 and 6.00pm  
for Holy Confession and  
any spiritual need.

*'Does it not seem to you that He who scattered in three days the very great amount of sin that had been gathered from the beginning of time until the day of the passion on the cross, demonstrated for you only a small portion of this supernatural power?'*  
St. Gregory of Nyssa

### Homily on the Sunday of the Myrrh-Bearing women *Metropolitan of Pisidia Sotirios*

When reading the Holy Gospels, one of the most striking things we see is that after the Lord's Resurrection, His Disciples were not the first to see Him. Instead, it was the women who had anointed Jesus' dead body with myrrh, who would receive the blessing to see the Lord first. These pious women, who remained faithful to Him since the beginning, kept the flame of devotion constantly burning in their hearts. They followed Jesus and the Twelve Apostles during their public ministry, and served them in the needs of daily life. St. Luke the Evangelist notes that the women who accompanied Jesus provided for His needs from what they had (see Luke 8:3). Some of them were wealthy, such as Joanna, the wife of Chuza, who was an official for King Herod.

What is most remarkable about the Myrrh-bearers is their dedicated love for Christ, which was constant. They were there from the start, and remained with Him always. They were not only there with Him when He was speaking, doing miracles and attracting crowds, but also when He was abandoned by everyone else. They were there when He was arrested and crucified on the Cross as a criminal. They remained at the foot of the Cross, and stood by as He was taken down. They were there for His burial by Joseph and Nicodemus, and then returned to the tomb on Sunday morning to offer myrrh in their worship of Christ.

They would not allow fear or any threats to keep them away from the Lord. What a great example for all of us! To maintain our devotion to Christ to the very end, and to His Holy Body, the Church.

Sadly, sometimes there are many who have been with Christ in the Church for a long time, believing in Him and following Him, but are later separated from the Church. They can be clergy or laypeople, and it happens for a variety of .....

reasons. What this reveals is that these people have not really understood who Christ is, or what the Church is. Some view the Church of Christ in a human way, as if it was just a club that people go to in order to see friends on a Sunday morning. If those "friends" stop coming to Church, they also do not come. They forget that the Church is where we go to meet Christ, Who is the best and most faithful friend we could ever have. What other friend is there who sacrificed for us, loves us and embraced the Cross for our salvation? It is Christ alone, Who also calls us His friends. Not only do we rejoice in our fellowship and conversation with Him, but we also unite with Him and commune with Him in the Holy Mysteries! Our Lord Jesus Christ waits for us in His Holy Church with love, to relieve us of our burdens. All hardship, pain, sorrow and anxiety are healed in His loving embrace, curing us of the anguish caused by our sins. We are nourished by His Holy Body and Blood, and receive strength, peace of mind and the joy that enables us to continue to struggle towards the Heavenly Kingdom. If a person fails to realize this, then it will be easy for them to fall away for some frivolous reason. Perhaps they stay away because of a personal conflict with someone in the Church, it could even be their priest or bishop.

On the other side, when we see the steadfast love of the Myrrh-bearers to Christ, we are inspired. Even though we do not have Jesus Christ with us physically as He was then, we know that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). He Himself told us, "I will always be with you to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). This constant living presence of the Lord among us comes through the Church, which the Lord Himself founded (Matthew 16:18), Himself being the Head (Ephesians 5:23), and "the Church is the Body of Christ" (Ephesians 1:23).

There have been countless women of great faith associated with the Resurrection of Christ and His Church through the centuries, even to today. They too are "myrrh-bearers," offering their service to the Church in many ways. This includes charity, catechism, missionary work and serving the needs of others. They know that whatever they do for the poor, hungry, sick, and the stranger, the Lord accepts it as an offering to Him. Just as the Resurrected Lord appeared to the Myrrh-bearers, so too will He be revealed in all His glory to call upon those who have loved Him, and remained united with Him through His Church, to enjoy His eternal blessing.

May God enlighten us all to understand the great truth in all of this. Amen.

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NOTE: We do not know the names of all the pious women who accompanied Jesus from Galilee to Calvary, and brought their gifts to the Tomb that morning of the Resurrection. St. Luke the Evangelist writes that along with the Virgin Mother of the Lord there were many others who had come to adorn Him (see Luke 8:3). Of these, only seven are mentioned in the Holy Gospels:

**St. Mary Magdalene**, who was possessed by demons before being healed by the Lord. She followed Him with gratitude and devotion to the very end. St. Mark the Evangelist writes that after His Resurrection, Jesus first appeared to her (see Mark 16:9).

**St. Mary, the wife of Alpheus and mother of St. James the Less**, as he was called, in order to distinguish him from St. James the Greater, both Apostles.

**St. Salome**, wife of Zebedee and mother of the Apostles James and John.

**St. Mary, wife of Cleopas**. St. John the Evangelist call her "Jesus' Mother's Sister" (John 19:25). This is because her mother was the wife of the brother of St. Joachim, the father of the Theotokos)

**St. Joanna**, wife of Chuza, who was a Commissioner of King Herod.

**Sts. Mary and Martha**, the sisters of St. Lazarus, who was resurrected by the Lord.

Source: [pemptousia.com](http://pemptousia.com)

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### The Women Disciples

In ancient Jewish culture women were restricted to domestic duties. They didn't have full access either to the Temple or the synagogue. At least ten Jews were required to form a synagogue, but women did not count. Women could not be called as witnesses in court. Their religious duties were the same as a slave's on the assumption that women, like slaves, could not control their own time. A pious Jew would not talk to a woman on the street. Even when women had to come out of the house they had to wear veils and, if married, to walk a few steps behind their husbands.

As the Jewish historian Josephus put it: "The woman, says the Law, is in all things inferior to the man."

When one considers the place of women in the ministry of Christ, the contrast with the usual role of Jewish women of that time could not be more striking. Among the most faithful followers of Jesus were women. In a remarkable passage St. Luke reports that a close circle of women along with the male disciples followed Jesus and supported Him out of their own resources. Read Luke 8:1-3.

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**If we have the courage to believe against all odds and seek the Lord  
there will be a solution to our problems at the other end.**

**In order for our faith to grow we must insist on a daily effort  
of prayer, self-scrutiny, carefulness, awareness.**