



74th Year

April 26, 2026

Pamphlet #17 (3804)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (Mark 15:43-16:8)

“He has risen; He is not here”

At that time, Joseph of Arimathea, a respected member of the council, who was also himself looking for the kingdom of God, took courage and went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered if he were already dead; and summoning the centurion, he asked him whether he was already dead. And when he learned from the centurion that he was dead, he granted the body to Joseph. And he bought a linen shroud, and taking him down, wrapped him in the linen shroud, and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Jesus saw where he was laid. And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week they went to the tomb when the sun had risen. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the door of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone was rolled back; for it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe; and they were amazed. And he said to them, "Do not be amazed; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, he is not here; see the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him, as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

THE LIGHT OF THE RESURRECTION AS A TRANSCENDING OF FEAR

On this Sunday, the Church calls us to commemorate the buriers of Christ, Joseph and Nicodemus, as well as the holy Myrrh-Bearing Women who were the first to go to the Tomb in order to anoint the Body of the Lord with myrrh. They were deemed worthy to hear the Gospel of the Resurrection from an Angel of God and to see the Risen Christ. Those days were tragic. Everyone had abandoned the Crucified One; they were hiding for fear of the Jews, the authorities, and the Roman authorities. And yet, the aforementioned small group of people overcame fear, dangers, and logic, and offered burial honors to the scourged and bloodied and almighty Lord of Glory, the One who “abides in eternal light.”

Fear, we might say, is a natural emotion inseparable from man: fear of the unknown, of dangers, of possible calamities; fear for life, for the health of the people we love; fear for our own life and for death. However, the Myrrh-Bearing Women transcend the natural feeling of fear through the power of true love, which leads a person to actions that go beyond logic. Indeed, in one of the hymns of today’s Matins service, this truth is especially emphasized: “Because a compassionate intention was pleasing to God.” That is, the desire, the inclination of their heart that loved Christ, was accepted with favor by God. Therefore, the more a person loves God, the more his or her inclination and longing are oriented toward Him, the more that person overcomes fear which nevertheless does not cease to exist as long as the person remains in this life.

The fear of the Myrrh-Bearing Women

The holy Myrrh-Bearing Women arrive at the Tomb, see the stone that has been rolled away, and then they are seized by fear: “and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid,” as we heard in the Gospel. At the very height of the victory of the

Resurrection, fear is also present, together with silence. There is an alternation of emotions and conditions: boldness, determination, and the overcoming of fear and weakness on the one hand; terror, timidity, anxiety, and silence on the other. Yet, just as it is natural and understandable for fear to appear at times in its various forms, it is equally unjustifiable for it to remain deeply rooted in the hearts of those who believe in the Resurrection of Christ and accept the Lord Jesus as the only true God, Redeemer, and Savior.

How great a consolation, comfort, joy, hope, and courage faith in Christ and His Resurrection brings! It is an opening to life itself; it is the foundation of fearlessness; it is the expectation of the absolute victory of the slain Lamb (Revelations 5:6). For this reason, the person of God overflows with gratitude. He gives thanks, hymns, and glorifies the Risen One for everything that occurs along the path of his life: for the pleasant and the unpleasant, for courage and for fear, for difficulties, for what is inaccessible and unattainable, for life and for death, but above all for the fact that this Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead, who is everything and beyond everything, comes and transfuses into us His risen, divine human life.

The fear of God

Saint Gregory the Theologian emphasizes succinctly that there is one thing we must fear: "Let us fear only one thing, that we might fear anything more than God, and insult the image [of God] through wickedness." That is, to fear something else more than we fear (that is, revere and love) God, and to offend through our wickedness the image of God, the Lord Jesus, whom we carry within us and according to whose image we were created. This fear is not connected with the natural feeling of fear, but with love. For this reason, it frees a person from every earthly fear and teaches reverence, trust, gratitude, and devotion to God.

With today's feast, the Victor over death is glorified. The One who was dead – this is affirmed by Joseph and Nicodemus –

who became living; it is affirmed by the holy Myrrh-Bearing Women. As for us, let us softly chant in prayer that the Savior truly rose from the Tomb and filled the whole universe with fragrance, joy, and light.

Archimandrite N. K.

April 26, 2026: THIRD SUNDAY OF PASCHA

Of the Holy Myrrh-Bearing Women, together also with Joseph of Arimathea, and the nocturnal disciple Nicodemus. Basil, Bishop of Amaseia, and hieromartyr (†332); Glaphyra and Justa, venerable women (†322).

2nd Tone – Eothinon: 4 – Epistle: Acts 6:1-7
– Gospel: Mark 15:43-16:8

NEXT SUNDAY: May 3, Sunday of the Paralytic
Epistle: Acts 9:32-42 – Gospel: John 5:1-15

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