

THE ORTHODOX Faith

FOR TEENS

SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2017 · HOLY PASCHA

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THE MESSAGE

PASCHAL ENCYCLICAL OF HIS EMINENCE
METROPOLITAN IAKOVOS OF CHICAGO

Dearly Beloved,

“Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem...”

“Come receive the Light...” So we begin our proclamation and praise of the Resurrection of Christ our God at the glorious “feast of feasts, and festival of festivals,” the Lord’s Pascha. Our Lenten journey has prepared us for this moment, when we sing out for all to hear, that the Lord Jesus is risen from the dead, by “death trampling down death.” Pascha is not only a time for us to celebrate and feast, but a call to “pass over” into a new manner of life where fear, and sin, and death hold no sway. Having received the Light, we hear the paschal hymn imploring us, the faithful of the Church, the Body of Christ, the New Jerusalem, to shine, for the “glory of the Lord has dawned” on us. If our joy and gladness shall be full and complete, then we must heed this imperative to shine. Let us shine in radiant enthusiasm for the Christian way of life, forgiving one another as we have been forgiven by the Lord. Let us shine in our actions and words, bringing relief to those in need of our aid and loving charity. Let us shine as examples to all around us so that the whole world will know that we have become children of the Light and beacons for all those who desire to live the truth, and live in peace. Let us shine so bright that those of ill-will will be inspired to pattern their lives as citizens of Paradise and join themselves to Christ, risen from the dead. Reaching out to embrace all the faithful, with the joy of the Unwaning Light of our Lord, we greet all with the triumphant hymn and the Good News: Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

WITH PATERNAL BLESSINGS THIS PASCHA,

His Eminence Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago

FROM
THE
FATHERS

“Yesterday I was crucified with Him; today I am glorified with Him; yesterday I died with Him; today I am quickened with Him; yesterday I was buried with Him; today I rise with Him. But let us offer to Him Who suffered and rose again for us— you will think perhaps that I am going to say gold, or silver, or woven work or transparent and costly stones, the mere passing material of earth, that remains here below, and is for the most part always possessed by bad men, slaves of the world and of the Prince of the world.

Let us offer ourselves, the possession most precious to God, and most fitting; let us give back to the Image what is made after the Image. Let us recognize our Dignity; let us honor our Archetype; let us know the power of the Mystery, and for what Christ died.”

St. Gregory the Theologian - Homily on Pascha

THE TRUTH | John 1:1-17

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WORD

and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Sing PRAISES TO THE Lord



It is the day of Resurrection; let us be radiant for the festival, and let us embrace one another. Let us say, O brethren, even to those that hate us: Let us forgive all things on the Resurrection; and thus let us cry: Christ is risen from the dead, by death He has trampled down death, and on those in the tombs He has bestowed life.



Christ is Risen from the dead, by death, trampling down upon death, and to those in the tombs He has granted life.

1 Corinthians

15:54-57

**FOR SINCE BY
MAN CAME DEATH
BY MAN ALSO CAME**

the

Resurrection

OF THE DEAD.

FOR AS IN

ADAM ALL DIE

EVEN SO IN

Christ

ALL SHALL

BE MADE

alive.



The Resurrection | ICON OF VICTORY



At the center of the Christian faith is Jesus Christ and His Resurrection from the dead. As such, the Icon of the Resurrection is the most celebrated, the most common, the most cherished, the most instructive.

It is all of these things because the Orthodox Icon of the Resurrection is not content with simply showing us the Risen Christ, or the empty tomb; the Victory shown in the Icon of the Resurrection is complete.

Jesus Christ was not content with laying in the tomb for three days after His crucifixion. Instead, while His body was entombed, Christ's soul descended into Hades, or Hell. Christ descended there not to suffer, but to fight, and free the souls trapped there. Just as bringing a light into darkness causes the darkness to disappear, the Source of all Life descending into the abode of the dead resulted in Jesus' victory over death, and not death's victory over Jesus. This is the full reality of what Christ's death and resurrection accomplished.

In the Icon, Jesus Christ stands victoriously in the centre. Robed in Heavenly white, He is surrounded by a mandorla of star-studded light, representing the Glory of God. Christ is shown dramatically pulling Adam, the first man, from the tomb. Eve is to Christ's left, hands held out in supplication, also waiting for Jesus to act. This humble surrender to Jesus is all Adam and Eve need to do, and all they are able to do. Christ does the rest, which is why He is pulling Adam from the tomb by the wrist, and not the hand.

Surrounding the victorious Christ are John the Baptist and the Old Testament Righteous (Abel is shown as the young shepherd-boy). Those who predeceased Christ's crucifixion descended to Hades, where they patiently waited the coming of their Messiah. Now they are freed from this underworld, and mingle freely with Christ and His angels.

Within the dark underworld are scattered broken chains and locks; and at the very bottom is the personified Hades, prostrate and bound. Hades is not destroyed – it is still there – but its power to bind people is gone. There are no chains, no locked doors. If only we raise our hands in supplication and longing for Jesus Christ, He is there to lift us from the grave. *Source: iconreader.wordpress.com*

PASCHA CHALLENGE

Bringing the Light Home - After midnight services, plan on bringing the light of the Resurrection home. Purchase one of the five-day candles from your parish and light it with the Pascha flame as you leave the church. Keep the flame lit during bright week or, and gather as a family to pray the Paschal Hours and sing "Christ is Risen" before it at your family iconostasion each day. *Source: www.goarch.org*



• Mary Magdalene, remaining faithful to Christ even until His last breath on the Cross, is the first person sent to proclaim the risen Lord, and is the first apostle of the Resurrection. In the Church she is known as "the apostle to the apostles." (Orthodox Study Bible, page 1465)

• From Pascha until the Feast of the Ascension of our Lord, we greet one another with "Christ is Risen" and respond with "Truly He is Risen".

• The Royal doors/gates of the Altar are left open as a symbolic act signifying that Christ, by His Resurrection, has opened the gates of heaven and has granted to everyone direct access to God.

Information obtained from A Year of the Lord: Liturgical Bible Studies, Vol. 4: Easter to Pentecost by Rev. Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos



Sing: Christ is Risen (Christos Anesti)

Let us who have beheld the resurrection of Christ worship our holy Lord Jesus who alone is without sin. We worship Your Cross, O Christ and we praise and glorify Your holy resurrection. For You are our God. We know none other beside You and we call upon Your name. Come, all you faithful. Let us worship Christ's holy resurrection, for through the Cross joy has come to the whole world. Christ endured the Cross for us, and by death He destroyed death. We praise Your resurrection, Lord, and we glorify You forever. Amen

Sing: Christ is Risen (Christos Anesti)

A Resurrection Ode and read during Orthros (Matins)

WHAT'S THE WORD? ΔΙΑΚΑΙΝΗΣΙΜΟΣ ΕΒΔΟΜΑΔΑ RENEWAL WEEK (BRIGHT WEEK)

The first week of Pascha is called Renewal Week (Bright Week) as each day is the celebration our Lord's Resurrection. All is fulfilled in the new creation. All things are renewed by Christ. Christ's Resurrection begins a new heaven and a new earth. The Lord declares: "I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5)!

During renewal week there is no fasting at all and by tradition we do not kneel during private or corporate worship.

Information obtained from A Year of the Lord: Liturgical Bible Studies, Vol. 4: Easter to Pentecost by Rev. Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos