



# HOLY TRINITY

## ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH



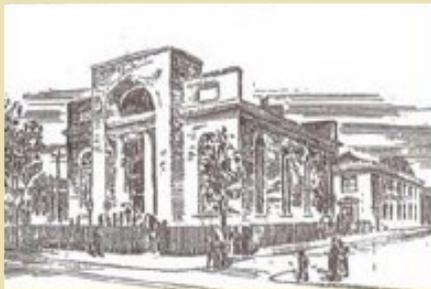
723 N BODINE ST PHILADELPHIA, PA 19123

# CHURCH BULLETIN

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## The Resurrection of Our Lord

### Gospel Reading John 1: 1 – 17



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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 came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into

being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 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 or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me."') From his fullness his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.



### Apostle Reading Acts of the Apostles 1: 1 – 8

In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over the course of forty days

and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'

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## Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death; and upon those in the tombs, bestowing life! (Pascal Troparion)

# Pastoral Letter On the Feast of Our Lord's Resurrection 2019

† **NICOLAE**

by the mercies of God  
Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox  
Archdiocese of the  
United States of America and Met-  
ropolitan of the Ro-  
manian Orthodox Metropolia  
of the Americas

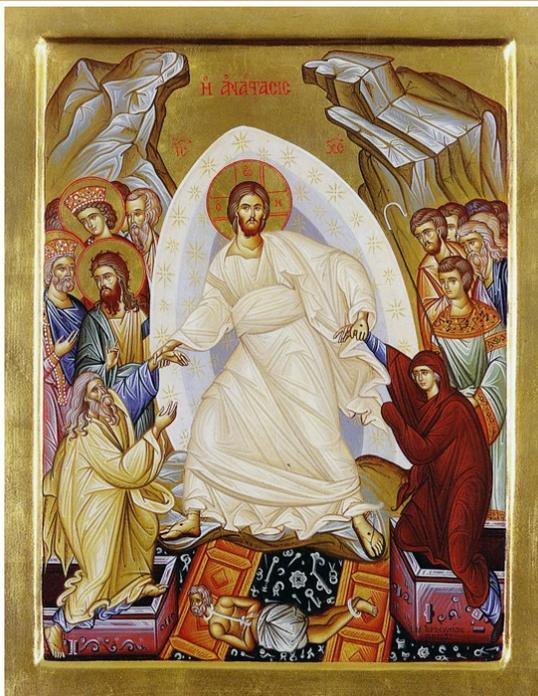
**To the Beloved Clergy  
and Orthodox Christians  
of our Holy Archdiocese,  
peace and holy joy  
from Christ the Risen Lord,  
and from us  
hierarchical blessings!**

*“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.” (Hebrews 10:23-24)*

**Most Reverend Fathers, Beloved Faithful,  
Christ is risen!**

The message of the Lord's Resurrection this year is completely different from other years, for we find ourselves, like the Myrrh-bearers and the Apostles, burdened by doubts and uncertainty due to the new epidemic that has spread through many parts of the world. Arriving at the Lord's tomb early on Sunday morning, the Myrrh-bearers were met by an angel with the announcement, “I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay” (Matt 28:5-6). The Apostles Peter and John ran to the tomb to discover the same reality of the empty tomb, giving rise to a multitude of questions. Just like them, many of us ask what has happened to the world, to Christians, where is the meaning of our life in this world dominated by panic and frightened at the possibility of illness and even death.

We must immediately add that the bewilderment of the Myrrh-bearers and Apostles was dispelled by the news of the Lord's Resurrection, confirmed by



the appearances of the Risen Lord. This brings us to the subject of unwavering confession of hope, for He who promised is faithful.

St. Peter the Apostle speaks about this hope in the Resurrection of Christ, the source of Christian life and the purpose of our earthly life: “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.

This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Pet 1:3-5).

Christ's Resurrection has given us new birth into a living hope, says St. Peter, assuring us, like the Apostles and Myrrh-bearers, that from the empty tomb the destination of humanity has been changed into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. That revelation at the tomb is repeated with each of us as we receive the Mystery of Baptism and then partake of the outpouring of grace in the Mysteries of the Church. By being immersed in the baptismal water every one of us dies and is resurrected with Christ. We die to the old life of sin, of separation from God, and we rise to the new life, lived with God. Receiving this grace at baptism we through faith are shielded by God's power [unto] salvation, again in the words of St. Peter. In the Mysteries we receive the love of God which is imparted to us as the fruit of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and of the Resurrection. For in the name of all humanity Christ sacrificed Himself that He might regain the love of God. The offered Body was raised through the power of God, and this power and divine love are poured out upon us in every Holy Mystery

of the Church, imparting to us the saving power of the Risen Christ. Having spoken of the living hope springing out of faith in God's power, St. Peter addresses us who are undergoing the trials of these days: "In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed" (1 Pet 1:6-7). Just as gold is tried in fire, our faith is tried through all kinds of trials... for a little while. As gold is refined of all impurities by fire and becomes more precious, our faith through testing is freed of every trace of doubt and becomes steadfast. The brilliance of gold is passing, but our steadfast faith is unto eternal glory. St. Peter's words, written in Rome around the year 50 A.D. to the Christians who were undergoing persecutions and trials, speak of the steadfastness in faith that will be revealed and will result in praise at the Savior's second coming. St. Peter's words apply to every Christian who has received Baptism and believes in the Resurrection. These words of St. Peter are a source of illumination now for us who are asking who we are and where we are headed.

**Most Reverend Fathers, Beloved Faithful,**

Our doubt during these days can be healed by faith in God's power and can bring us to unwavering confession of faith, for Christ is risen! St. Peter and the other Apostles were afraid and hid, but the Risen Christ entered through the closed doors, spoke peace to them, and sent them out to proclaim His Resurrection. St. Paul sought the Christ who was dead and hidden by the Apostles. On the Damascus Road he met the living Christ, the risen Christ. Proclaiming the Resurrection, we too confess that we have met the One who has conquered death, the One who has entered the chamber of our soul and granted us His peace. Proclaiming the Resurrection, we all receive the power to witness to our neighbors, for Christ has risen and we too will rise (cf. 1 Cor 15). Every doubt and every faltering in our faith are conquered by the message of the Lord's

Resurrection and our own. During these days we do not only proclaim our faith that we will rise at the Lord's Second Coming, but we confess that we already live in a world that is renewed through the Resurrection, a world in which our faith and hope are being tested, that they may be unto glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Only this message can bring hope to our world that is so troubled with fear and doubt.

I encourage all of you, clergy and faithful of our Archdiocese, to experience the Holy Feast of the Lord's Resurrection with living hope, for Christ the Lord has conquered death and granted Resurrection to us. The One Who left the empty tomb and entered through locked doors now comes to every home and family and cannot be stopped by the isolation in which we now find ourselves. The One who conquered death now overcomes every restriction and comes down to bring peace in all our souls. I want you to rejoice and fear not, for He is risen! I encourage you, through word and deed, to bring light and hope to your loved ones and those who undergoing trials during these days.

I embrace you in Christ the Risen Lord and  
I wish you health and hope!

**Truly He is risen!**

**Your brother in prayer to God,**

† **Metropolitan NICOLAE**

Chicago, The Feast of the Lord's Resurrection, 2020



## All Things New in the Resurrection

The Resurrection of Christ is the one of the most important and central aspects of our Orthodox Christian faith.

In three of the Gospels, an event is described in which Jesus Himself was challenged by the leading Sadducees, who rejected belief in the resurrection. Jesus countered their denials with an affirmation of resurrection (Mark 12:18-27); Matthew 22:23-33; Luke 20:27-40), saying "You are quite wrong!" (Mark 12:27).

In John 5:29 Christ taught that "those who have done good, (will come) to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment. Elsewhere He declared, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).

So, on the third day after His Crucifixion and death, Jesus Himself became the victor over death, sin, evil and the Devil, by conquering death through His Resurrection. The biblical words are still powerful and striking: "He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. Lo, I have told you" (Matthew 28:6-7). It was the first sermon of the Church – "He has risen from the dead!"

Later, when Judas had to be replaced among the Twelve Apostles, one of the conditions of his replacement was that the candidate "must become with us a witness to His resurrection" (Acts 1:22). At Pentecost, St. Peter proclaimed the Resurrection of Christ: "This Jesus, God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses" (Acts 2:32). The Apostles began their preaching by "proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead" (Acts 4:2). We learn that the preaching on the central importance of Christ's Resurrection continued in the Church: "With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33). In Saint Paul's apostolic ministry, the Resurrection of Christ was central. In describing his message to the Christians in Rome,



of greatest significance was his preaching of Christ, who was the "Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 1:4).

When some of the Christians in Corinth raised doubts about the resurrection of the dead, St. Paul responded with a vehement argument:

"Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:12-19).

So it is, that St. Peter declared this core affirmation of the Christian faith when he wrote "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1:3).

In our Orthodox Church, the Resurrection of Christ is central, especially in worship. Every Sunday is a little Pascha, commemorating Christ's Resurrection. At Pascha, we read St. John Chrysostom's Easter Sermon where it is proclaimed, "O death, where is your sting? O Hades where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are annihilated. . . . Christ is risen, and life is liberated . . . for Christ having risen from the dead, has become the first fruits of those who fall asleep."

*Brothers and sisters! Christ is Risen! Truly, He is Risen!*

**Fr. Stanley S. Harakas**

## “Let us greet the Bridegroom...”

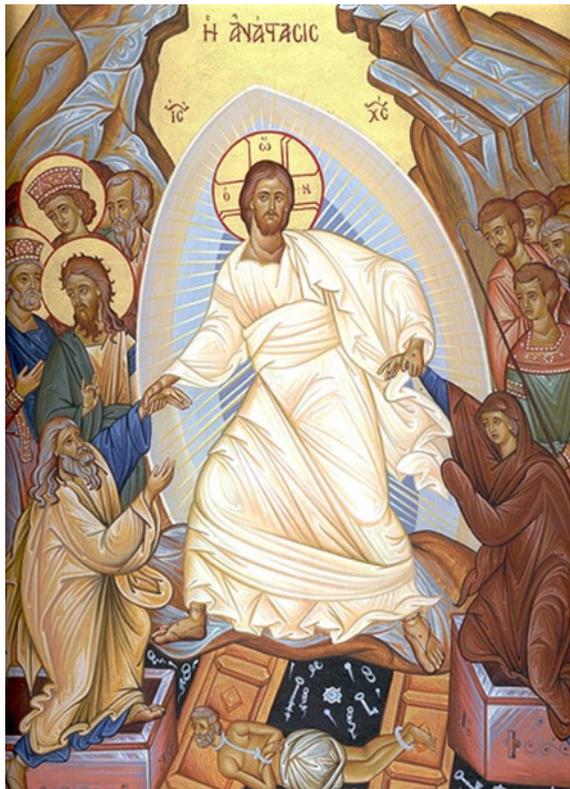
*Come, receive the light from the unwaning light, and glorify Christ Who is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and bestowing life on those in the graves. (Orthodox Resurrection hymn at the start of the Paschal Matins)*

The Eastern Orthodox calendar consists of a sequence of feasts and fasts commemorating the Incarnation and its fulfillment in the Church. Pre-eminent among all the festivals is Pascha, the Feast of Feasts, which determines all the movable feasts for the liturgical calendar.

The week before Pascha in the Orthodox Church, called Great and Holy Week, is set apart in the ecclesiastical year, so that we might stop and change our pace, meditate upon, and relive the last week in our Lord's life which opened the doors of paradise. The events are presented as a drama bringing us to identify ourselves with them and elevate us in an all-embracing movement upward to God. As we relive the annual drama, we receive its benefits and allow the events to transform us into renewed Christians. We fully participate in the services as if actually entering God's Kingdom with hearts filled with faith, minds open to revelation, and a will of concern for spiritual ascent. The scenes take place in Jerusalem. The participants are real. The events, though historical, occur in the present. The laity responds to what it sees and hears.

Saturday of Lazarus- The first scene is the Saturday before Palm Sunday and is called the Saturday of Lazarus. It is the day in which Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead. Jesus responds to the sisters of Lazarus, who are lamenting the death of their brother. Jesus is greatly moved.

As Jesus exhibited His divinity in His transfiguration, He exhibited that He is also fully human in His weeping. We stand at Lazarus' grave and behold this miracle of the giving of life, by the Giver of life, and acknowledge him as true God, He Who became man to save our souls and grant us new life. The raising of Lazarus from the dead causes us and many others to believe in him as the



long-awaited Messiah.

The day after this glorious event, Palm Sunday, Christ's kingdom on Earth begins. We gather to welcome and recognize Christ's divinity proclaiming him King and Master of our lives. We receive palms as tokens of this proclamation. We pray to God to help us make a meaningful ascetic effort for the entire week, for by having acknowledged His kingdom, we might truly become a part of it.

During Holy Week, the Matins Service of the forthcoming day is celebrated the evening before. On Palm Sunday evening, we perform the Matins of Monday morning and thus relive the events of Monday. The evenings of Palm Sunday, Holy Monday, and Holy Tuesday share a common theme

and are devoted to the Nymphios Service, or the Service of the Bridegroom. Its reference is to the Parable of the Ten Virgins (St. Matthew 26:1-13), which calls for preparedness at the Second Coming, for the "thief comes in the middle of the night." This theme is reflected in the following hymn which is chanted each night.

*"Brethren, let us greet the Bridegroom with love, trimming our lamps so that we reflect virtue and true faith. So shall we be ready, like the prudent maidens of the Lord, to enter with Him into the wedding feast. For, being God, the Bridegroom bestows on us the gift of an incorruptible crown."*

The Divine Liturgy is celebrated on Holy Thursday morning. The faithful are called to be joined to the mystical body of Christ and thus receive the saving benefits of His life and live as citizens of His kingdom. The Reserved Holy Communion represents the earthly presence of Christ realized at the Last Supper.

On Holy Thursday evening, we relive the events from the upper room to the Crucifixion and the burial. The centrality of these events are found with the readings of the service referred to as the Twelve Gospels.

We follow Christ Jesus on the way to the cross and are crucified to our sinful ways with Him, anticipating our resurrection into a new life with Him. The rich expression found within hymnology of the Church is as follows:

*"Today the Maker of heaven and earth said to His disciples, 'The hour is at hand, and Judas my betrayer also is at hand. Let none of you deny me when you see me on the Cross between two thieves. For though I suffer as a man, as lover of man I redeem those who believe in me.'"*

Divine liturgy is not performed on Good Friday, for it presupposes Christ's presence in the world. On this day, Christ lies dead in the tomb. The services of the [Royal] hours are performed, commemorating the same events of Holy Thursday evening.

The Apokathlosis, or the Unnailing Service of our Lord, is re-enacted Friday afternoon. The body of Christ is removed from the crucifix on the soleas and wrapped in a burial shroud and placed in the sanctuary. *[This is common in Orthodox practice in churches based around the Mediterranean. This is not done in Russian practice. Ed.]*

The Epitaphios, the embroidered cloth bearing the body of our Lord, is carried in a solemn funeral procession around the church and placed in the sepulcher known as the *Kouvouklion*. As we behold Jesus lying in the darkness of the tomb, we pray that our passions, sins and pride might be put to death in us, so that we might not live in the darkness, that we might not live in the darkness that causes His death.

The third service for Good Friday is the service of Lamentations at the Tomb. The sepulcher of our Lord is decorated with flowers. The atmosphere begins to become theologically more joyous, and hymns with a resurrection color are heard and finally the Great Doxology, which is sung only on joyous occasions. The Procession of the Sepulcher around the church with the Epitaphios takes place with lighted candles held by the faithful. It does not represent a funeral procession but Christ's descent into hades, where He preached His word to its captives and resurrected them.

Holy Saturday evening gives witness of the faithful gathering in church to participate in the feast of feasts, Pascha, the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The church is dark, symbolizing the darkness of the world without Christ. The priest offers the Pascha light of Christ in the world, the light of life. The designated Gospel is read, the resurrection is proclaimed at

midnight, the morn of the new day. The faithful receive the unwaning light from the celebrant in proclamation of the good news "Christ is risen from the dead trampling death by death, and bestowing life on those in the grave." The Divine Liturgy is celebrated and the climax of a 60-day preparation period is fulfilled. St. Gregory the Theologian has written a beautiful poem honoring the events:

*Yesterday I was crucified with Christ;  
Today I am glorified with Him.  
Yesterday I died with Him,  
Today I am made alive with Him.  
Yesterday I was buried with Him,  
Today I am raised with Him.  
Let us become like Christ,  
Since Christ became like us.  
Let us become divine for His sake,  
Since for us He became man.  
He assumed the worse,  
That He might give us the better.  
He became poor, that by His poverty  
We might become rich.  
He accepted the form of a servant,  
That we might win back our freedom,  
He came down that we might be lifted up.  
He was tempted, that through Him  
We might conquer.  
He was dishonored, that He might glorify us.  
He died, that He might save us.  
He ascended, that He might draw to Himself us,  
Who lie prostrate, having fallen into sin.  
Let us give all, offer all, to Him who gave Himself;  
A ransom and reconciliation for us.*

Having faithfully followed the movements leading to the end, the Orthodox Christian feels reborn through the true joy over our Lord's Resurrection and anticipates Pentecost, the very birth of the Christian Church. The victory is won! For the next 40 days we will exclaim, "Christ is Risen! Indeed, He is Risen!"

### Fr. Konstantine Mendrinos



*Christ is risen!*



*The editor of  
"Holy Trinity" Parish Bulletin  
wishes you, readers, church  
parishioners and benefactors,  
Happy Easter Holydays!  
May the enlightened feast of  
the Resurrection of Our Lord  
fill your hearts with  
peace and joy!  
Christ is risen!*

*He is risen, indeed!*

## HOLY TRINITY'S Liturgical Schedule for the Holy Week and Pascha (from April 16 to April 26, 2020)

We would like to announce our parishioners that due to the conditions imposed by the current regulations regarding the state of emergency, our religious services of this period, including the vespers of the Great Week, the Good Thursday's Liturgy and Great Vesper, and the Lamentation Service on Good Friday, as well as the celebration of the Feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ will be performed inside the church, without the presence of our believers. You could be able to follow/listen online to our religious services through the church's Facebook website: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Holy-Trinity-Romanian-Orthodox-Church/134195816633296>

Here is the schedule of our religious services during the Great Week and Holy Paschal Feast-days, including those which will be broadcast live:

### **Thursday, April 16 – Holy Thursday:**

**10:00 am** - Vespers & Liturgy of St. Basil the Great (**live broadcast online**)

**6:00 pm** - the Holy Passions 'Great Vespers, of the 12 Gospel Readings (**live broadcast online**)

### **Friday, April 17 - Great Friday (Passion):**

**6:00 pm** - The Lamentations on Lord's Death (**live broadcast**)

### **HOLY PASCHA**

#### **The Resurrection Night, Saturday, April 18 - 19:**

**11:30 pm** - The Resurrection Vespers

**12:00 am** - Resurrection Service (**live broadcast**)

**12:30 am** - Divine Liturgy

**2:00 am** - Divine Liturgy ends

#### **Sunday, April 19 - Holy Pascha:**

**12:00 pm** - The Resurrection Vespers (**live broadcast**)

#### **Monday, April 21 - Holy Easter:**

**9:00 am** - Matins

**10:00 am** - Divine Liturgy

#### **Tuesday, April 22 - Holy Pascha:**

**9:00 am** - Matins

**10:00 am** - Divine Liturgy

#### **Thursday, April 23 - Holy Martyr Gheorghe:**

**9:00 am** - Morning

**10:00 am** - Divine Liturgy

#### **Friday, April 24 - All Holy Lady Theotokos of Lifegiving Font:**

**9:00 am** - Matins

**10:00 am** - Divine Liturgy

**11:30 am** - Service of the Lesser Holy Water (Aghiazma Mică)

#### **Sunday, April 26 - St Thomas' Sunday:**

**9:00 am** - Matins

**10:00 am** - Divine Liturgy

