



# 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

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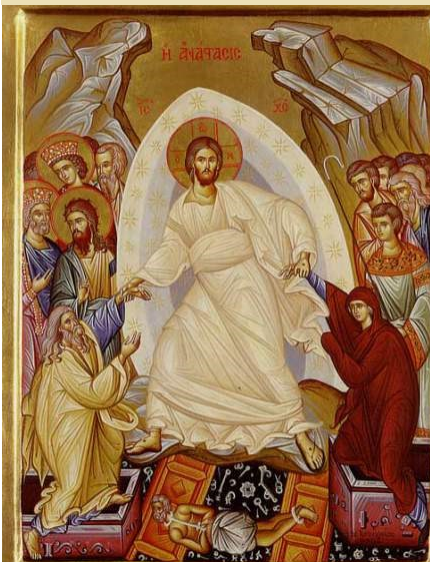
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Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death; and upon those in the tombs, bestowing life! (Pascal Troparion)

# Pastoral Letter for the Feast of Our Lord's Resurrection

† **NICOLAE**

by the mercies of God  
Archbishop of the Romanian  
Orthodox Archdiocese  
of the United States of America  
and Metropolitan of the  
Romanian Orthodox Metropolia  
of the Americas

**To the Beloved Clergy  
and Orthodox Christians  
of our Holy Archdiocese,  
peace and unwavering hope  
from Christ the Risen Lord,  
and from us hierarchical  
blessings.**

*“O Death, where is your sting? O Hell,  
where is your victory? Christ is risen,  
and you are overthrown... Christ is  
risen, and life reigns!”*

(St. John Chrysostom)

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

With great joy I greet you on this holy morning with this salutation as a call to understanding and witness, as a proclamation of the miracle of the victory of life over death, of the victory of faith in the power of God over all anxieties and the fear of disease and death. From this greeting we also receive the power to witness that if Christ is risen, we too shall rise. And this is the foundation of Christian teaching.

St. Paul the Apostle reminds the Corinthians of the content of the Gospel, of the proclamation full of joy, preached by him and the other Apostles: “I declare to you the Gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (1 Cor 15:1-4). The receiving of the Gospel by the inhabitants of the city of Corinth is the foundation by which they stand in the temptations of the world and by which they are saved (verses 1-2). The content of the Gospel preached by St. Paul refers not only to redemption of our sins through Christ's death on the Cross, according to the Scriptures, but also to the third day Resurrection, according to the Scriptures.



Desiring to convince the Corinthians of the truth of the Resurrection of Christ, St. Paul first speaks of the fulfilling of the Scriptures with regard to the Savior's death. The Prophet Isaiah had already spoken, many hundreds of years previously, of the sufferings and death of the Messiah for our sins: “Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (Is 53: 4-5). Father Staniloae explains the

necessity of this death of Christ's: “Christ had to take upon Himself the death of others because He had taken upon Himself their sin. Sin brings death upon itself. And since He had taken the sins of all, He had to also take the death of all” (1). Through death, through his complete self-offering as a man in the name of all mankind to God the Father, Christ procured our reconciliation with God. But reconciliation was not sufficient if it were not followed by the vanquishing of death as the defeat of human living, that is, eternal separation from God, ending in hell. Christ rises from the tomb and brings us all to the life of communion with God, to the eternity of the Kingdom of the Father in the joy of our Lord (2).

Christ's rising from the tomb shows that death was defeated. The songs of Resurrection morning proclaim this trampling down of death. St. John Chrysostom says: “Let no one fear death, for the Savior's death has set us free... O Death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are overthrown”(3). This is the reality that St. Paul attests to the Christians of Corinth. For if Christ has died, confirming the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures, Christ who was dead and laid in the tomb arose on the third day. The proof lies in His many appearances to His disciples: “He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born



due time" (1 Cor 15:5-8). The Gospel which St. Paul had preached to the Corinthians and which he now confirms through this epistle is the result of man's meeting with the Risen Christ, it is the witness of this meeting, verified many times over and recorded in the Scriptures.

Only those chosen by Christ to be the witnesses of His Resurrection can also be the preachers of this miracle. Christ appeared to the myrrh-bearers, the apostles, the disciples and lastly to St. Paul. Only this election gives us the right to be preachers: "by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor 15:10). We too are following in the footsteps of those who met the Risen Christ, we who seek salvation in the Church. We too have received the grace of Holy Baptism, and we are chosen through the Mystery of Chrismation to be witnesses and proclaimers of the Resurrection. And we must labor to work with the grace that is in us, just like St. Paul the Apostle.

This ministry is the purpose of the Christian life. Our faith has as its foundation the Resurrection of Christ and is fulfilled through faith in our own resurrection. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable" (1 Cor 15:19), says St. Paul to the Corinthian Christians who didn't believe in their own resurrection. Christ is called the firstfruits (of the resurrection) of those who have fallen asleep (1 Cor 15:20) and the firstborn from the dead (Col 1:18). Through His Resurrection Christ has opened for us the way to resurrection: "For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor 15:21). *If we believe the Scripture's words about the Death and Resurrection of Christ, we must believe in our own resurrection, at the end of the ages, but also the present one, our resurrection to a life full of the light of communion with God. Christ first conquered, as man,*

the fear of death in the Garden of Gethsemane, then sin on the Cross, in order to finally conquer death through the Resurrection. Our resurrection already in this life refers to victory over all the fears that we find around us, including that of sickness and death, and resurrection with Christ through *life in Christ*.

In these days of the Resurrection, I call upon you all, priests and faithful, to witness to our Christian belief that fear, sickness, sin, and death have been conquered by Christ through His Death on the Cross and Resurrection. My desire is that you all be strengthened in this belief and that you witness it to those who are still frightened and lacking in understanding. I urge you through word and deed to bring light and hope to those around you and to those still suffering these days.

I embrace you in Christ the Risen Lord and I wish you health and a joyful feast!

***Truly He is risen!***

***Your brother in prayer to God,***

***† Metropolitan NICOLAE***

*Chicago, The Feast of the Lord's Resurrection, 2021*

(1) Fr. Dumitru Stăniloae, *Iisus Hristos sau restaurarea omului*, Craiova, 1993, p.313.

(2) *The Paschal Catechetical Homily of St. John Chrysostom*.

(3) *Ibidem*.



## Pascha: the Day that Lord Has Made (Ps. 118: 24)

Christians throughout the world celebrate the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. On the day of the Resurrection, we give thanks to God who has granted us victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord, and put an end to the power of sin, which brought death to our Lord. Jesus Christ is the first who rose from the dead. He destroyed death by His death, and opened unto us the doors of paradise, and bestowed upon us the fullness of life and of great mercy. The power of the Resurrection of Christ transforms our weakness, and releases within us the dynamic of growing into the image and likeness of our Risen Lord.



The Church of the Risen Christ is not an institution with human organization; it is a new life with the Risen Lord. The light of Christ enlightens those who seek their Lord with faithfulness and with love. All faithful believers express the good news of the Resurrection every time they recite the symbol of the faith, the Nicene Creed, which declares that our Lord, Jesus Christ, after his death and burial, “rose again, according to the Scriptures.” This particular expression is taken from 1 Cor. 15:3-4. St. Paul writes: “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that He was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.”

The prophetic message of Isaiah, Chapter 53, concerning the Suffering Servant who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, who was wounded for our transgressions, and was bruised for our iniquities, summarizes and articulates topologically the scriptural foundation of the passions and death of the Saviour, who “was numbered with the transgressors, yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isaiah 53:12).

In the same manner, we read in the synoptic Gospels (Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31, Luke 9:22) that Jesus Christ foretold his disciples and taught them that he would suffer rejection and death, and after three days He would rise again.

Moreover, the Resurrection of Christ stands at the center of all truths, the seal of the Christian faith, and it is the dynamic power behind the emergence of the Church and the very center of all her preaching. Pascha is the cornerstone of Christian proclamation and ministry of the Gospel of Christ. The whole of Christianity is the outcome of the joy of the paschal celebration. St. Paul emphasizes

that the denial of the Resurrection of Christ amounts to the denial not of one element of the Christian faith, nor of one truth among others, but of the Christian faith itself. “If Christ has not been raised,” St. Paul writes, “then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain.” I Cor. 15:12ff. For St. Paul, the Resurrection is the evidence of our salvation; it binds and unites the Christian with Christ as the only hope of those who are asleep in him. “For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep” I Thes. 4:14.

The Fathers of the early Church dealt with certain aspects of this Great Feast. St. Gregory of Nyssa (+394) says that in His glorious Resurrection, Christ has emerged as God, impassable and immortal. He was under no compulsion to suffer or to come down on earth. Orthodox theology affirms this fact by calling Christ “the second Adam,” by whose Resurrection the primal sorrow was absorbed in joy and rejoicing (Matt. 28.8ff.). And so, the discovery of the empty tomb, the different appearances, and the announcements of the women to the Apostles that Christ has risen were not accidents. “For a woman was both the cause of the transgression and the herald of the resurrection. Woman who caused the first Adam to fall testifies that the Second Adam has risen,” writes Basil of Seleucia (+468).

In view of such a great mystery, Byzantine iconography depicts the Resurrection of Christ in such manner that it incorporates heaven, earth, and hell as well. In heaven, the powers cry with joy to the hosts above: “Princes raise your gates, lift up your eternal gates that the King of glory may come in ...” (Ps. 24, 7ff).

On earth, the Resurrection of Christ proclaims to the earth the Father’s will for the universe. And in hell, the risen Christ stamps out hell, delivers all humanity and extends a liberating hand to Adam and Eve. Hippolytus of Rome reflects on the whole picture and refers to Pascha as the common feast: invisible feast for angels, immortal life to the entire world, total wound of death, indestructible nourishment of man, sacred feast of heaven and earth, prophet of mysteries old and new, seen by the eyes here on earth and contemplated by the spirit of the heavens.

Because of the Resurrection of Christ, all men become heirs of God and participants in the divine promises,

and the history of the people of God finds in Christ a total and final fulfillment. In the realization of the design of salvation in respect to man and the world, the bodily resurrection of Christ initiates a new state of man which makes him participate in the condition of the resurrected Christ. In his sermon on Easter Sunday, St. Gregory of Nazianzus (+390) writes that, "He who today is risen from the dead, will renew me in spirit, and put on me the new man, giving to this new creation (those who are born according to God), a good worker and a good master, eager to die and be resurrected with Christ." Such an invitation on the part of God means that, first, because of the hope of the Resurrection, virtue is pursued and evil is an object of hatred. "For without the Resurrection," writes St. Gregory of Nyssa, "one view will be found to prevail over all others, 'let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die' " (I Cor. 15:32). Second, the Resurrection of Christ becomes the pledge of our resurrection and regeneration. The Resurrection of Christ frees man from the alienation of sin and of death, and so regenerated man enters a new era, a new existence which enables him in faith and hope to partake in the life of the risen Christ. This "personal" participation in the death and Resurrection of Christ and its utmost and total victory over death is seen by St. John Chrysostom (+407) as a baptismal garment and the gift of new life. On this victory over death, he writes: "Two days ago the Lord died on the cross. Today he has risen from the dead. In the same way two days ago these neophytes (converts) were held in the bondage of sin. But today they rise along with Christ. He died in the flesh and rose in the flesh. They likewise were dead in sin and have risen from sin.

Finally, the Resurrection of Christ introduces a new concept of human relations. It brings about a total transformation, and transfiguration of the whole of man opens for him a new way of life: a life that is genuine, authentic, and full of love, peace, and brotherhood. On the day of the Resurrection of Christ, all faithful believers are called to embrace one another, and because of the life-giving Resurrection of Christ, they are called to forgive one another in all things, so that they can wisely exclaim. "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs, bestowing life."

Let us pray that God will generate in us His love; may we ask our Risen Lord to grant us and our loved ones his blessings and many more good years to come. Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

**V. Rev. Joseph Antypas**

## **HOLY TRINITY'S Liturgical Schedule for Holy Pascha and Bright Week (from May 2 to May 9, 2021**

### **HOLY PASCHA**

#### **The Resurrection Night,**

#### **Saturday, May 1 - 2:**

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

**12:00 am** - Resurrection Service

**12:30 am** - Divine Liturgy

**2:00 am** - Paschal Brotherly Meal

#### **Sunday, May 2 - Holy Pascha**

**12:00 pm** - The Resurrection Vespers

#### **Monday, May 3 - Holy Easter (Church Official Celebration of Holy Martyr George):**

**9:00 am** - Matins

**10:00 am** - Divine Liturgy

#### **Tuesday, May 4 - Holy Pascha:**

**9:00 am** - Matins

**10:00 am** - Divine Liturgy

#### **Friday, May 7 - All Holy Lady Theoto- kos of Lifegiving Font:**

**9:00 am** - Matins

**10:00 am** - Divine Liturgy

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

#### **Sunday, May 9 - St Thomas' Sunday:**

**9:00 am** - Matins

**10:00 am** - Divine Liturgy

**12:00 pm** - Coffee Hour

