

Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Resurrection in the flesh of our Lord, God and
Saviour Jesus Christ

April 12, 2015

Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;
Subdeacon Daniel J. Korba and Nikitas Tsokris,
Cantors

Rectory 215-862-9227; Parish Center 732-780-3158

We Are A Stewardship Parish Of Time, Talent and Treasure

The mission of our parish faith community is to teach the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Orthodox Church; to enable people to reflect the image of Jesus Christ in every day activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Orthodox believers in our Freehold area.

We of St. Paul the Apostle Parish dedicate ourselves to maintaining the sanctity of worship and spiritual enlightenment in a family environment that reaches and involves all ages and unifies all people.

We believe in the spirit of ecumenism in which we share our faith by word and example and extend our spiritual insights to all people.

We accept the responsibility of Christian Stewardship that through generous giving we may all experience a faith communion with Christ as the Center of our lives.

We dedicate ourselves to insuring the well-being of all people so that we may truly experience the message of Christ's salutary gospel.

We are a beacon on a hill with the eyes of many upon us; that beacon is the inspired Light of Christ which must shine brightly in our lives.

It is not ourselves we preach but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts, that we in turn might make known the glory of God shining on the face of Christ. This treasure we possess in earthen vessels to make it clear that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way possible, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in us 2 Corinthians 4: 5 - 8.

GLAD TIDINGS

+++ Today we have festal anointing on the occasion of this glorious feast of Christ's triumphant Resurrection. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Risen!" to which we respond, "Indeed, He Is Risen!"

+++ There will be no Pirohi Sale in April.

+++ The three day Resurrection celebration is continued Monday and Tuesday with Divine Liturgies celebrated each day at 7:00 PM.

+++ Please remember there is no fasting this week.

+++ We pray our faithful recognize the gift of Resurrection joy and are generous to the Church on this feast.!

+++ We remind our faithful diocesan and parish dues are DUE. Only eleven diocesan dues are received. Please fulfill this obligation during this sacred season.

+++ Every Monday, we have prayerful devotions before the Myrrh bearing icon at 6:00 PM. Everyone is invited to be present in praise. The Birthgiver invites us to manifest our faith in response to her first shown love, to unite our prayers with hers for the salvation of our souls. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us.

+++ Please keep the intentions of these members of our parish intercession community in your daily prayers: Father George, Barbara, Betty, James, Yevlogia, Nicholas, Maria, Cynthia, Pani Anna Marie, Father Myron, Pani Delores and Andrea..

+++ The sign-up sheet for both the Web Site and Bulletin sponsors is on the bulletin board in the kitchen. Please sign up as soon as possible. Do NOT make payment until your sign-up month has arrived. This will make it easier for Father to keep track of payments. Thanks in advance to all who support the parish in this way.

+++ We offer thanks to the Blessed Trinity for inspiring generosity in the souls of our faithful and the blessing of abundant grace in our midst with the offering received last Sunday: Tithe Offering, \$287.00; Candles, \$53.00; Kitchen, \$200.00; Food Coupons, \$480.00; Great Fast Self-Sacrifice, \$5.00; Holyday, \$172.00; Flowers, \$30.00; Resurrection, \$100.00, for a total of 1387.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offer their God-given treasure and labored for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls!

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Father Lucas, Maria Idronmenos, Anna Zacharyczuk, Bob Gorbich, Marilyn Korba and Pani Buletza.

+++ We make a **PENNIES FROM HEAVEN** Canister available for our faithful to bring in pennies for our altar and its appointments. We are already in receipt of **\$1819.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

+++ Please be certain to see a member of the Parish Council if you would like to help our parish by using **Shop Rite Food Coupons** available in \$20.00 denominations. We invite **ALL** to be caring and supportive and use Grocery Coupons for food shopping as we have gratefully realized \$5750 on this project to date!

+++ The Clothing Drive is a permanent on-going project in our parish. Please bring any type of clothing and fabrics along with stuffed animals and shoes for the benefit of our parish. The bags can be



Resurrection

Meanwhile, Mary stood weeping beside the tomb. Even as she wept, she stooped to peer inside, and there she saw two angels in dazzling robes. One was seated at the head and the other at the foot of the place where Jesus' body had lain. "Woman," they asked her, "Why are you weeping?" She answered them "Because the Lord has been taken away, and I do not know where they have put him." She had no sooner said this than she turned around and caught sight of Jesus standing there, but she did not know him. "Woman," he asked her, "Why are you weeping? Who is it you are looking for?" She supposed he was the gardener, so she said, "Sir if you are the one who carried him off, tell me where you have laid him and I will take him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned to him and said in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" meaning "Teacher". Jesus then said, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Rather, go to my brothers and tell them, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." Mary Magdalene went to the disciples. "I have seen the Lord!" she announced. Then she reported what he had said to her John 20 11 - 18.

They got up immediately and returned to Jerusalem, where they found the eleven and the rest of the company assembled. They were greeted with, "The Lord has been raised! It is true! He has appeared to Simon." Then they recounted what had happened on the road and how they had come to know him in the breaking of the bread Luke 19: 33 - 35.

I handed on to you first of all what I myself received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures; that he was buried and, in accordance with the Scriptures, rose on the third day, that he was seen by Cephas, then by the Twelve 1 Corinthians 15: 3 - 5.

For thus says he who is high and exalted, living eternally, whose name is the Holy One: On High I dwell and in holiness and with the crushed and dejected in spirit; to revive the spirits of the dejected, to revive the hearts of the crushed Isaiah 57: 15.

The Glorious Resurrection

The glittering crown of the Church's liturgical year is the feast of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Iconographers through the ages have always tried to capture this glorious event in visual dimension. However, because the gospel revelation is silent on the manner and exact moment of Jesus' Resurrection, they ordinarily portray His descent into the realm of the Old Testament righteous dead, or the visit of the Myrrh-bearing women.

The icon of the Descent into the place of the righteous dead of the Old Testament reflects the hymnology of the Sixth Ode of Resurrection Matins: "You have descended into the realm of death, O Christ, and have broken the ancient bonds which held the captives and, like Jonah from the whale, on the third day, You rose from the tomb."

The very depth of the earth is shown as a dark, open, gaping and eagerly embracing pit. Christ in triumph stands in the very center of that place, clothed in resplendent garments. A radiant halo, symbol of glory encircles His entire being. Rays of light like those at His Transfiguration, emanate from His risen body and pierce the darkness. He stands and treads upon a broken gate of the kingdom of death, thus indicating His victory over this ancient enemy of man. He has entered and tasted death itself and emerged victorious over its dreadful clutches because of His own death and Resurrection. Satan, the prince of darkness and singular author of death, is depicted in some icons as he lies bound hand and foot to portray the destruction of his power and the dread power of death. Up to the time of Christ's triumph in the Resurrection, the doors of the place of the dead were bound and locked. Now can be seen smashed and broken in pieces the locks at the base of the icon. The broken chains, bolts, keys are scattered about to signify the freeing of those held captive and the utter destruction of death's hold over all.

All the remaining figures in the icon of the Descent into the place of the righteous dead represent us and our participation in this victory. For everyone who believes and lives that belief in faith commitment to our Saviour is depicted in the persons of David, Solomon, Deborah, Jonah, John the Baptist, Esther, Moses, Isaac, and Jacob along with the innumerable just souls who wanted so eagerly to be included in the redemption of Christ, but had to patiently await His coming victory. We have seen and witnessed what they could only dream and pray for. We are now included in the fulfillment of the promises made to us in paradise. We now know that our Lord literally takes us by the hand and leads us before the throne of the Eternal Father, there to find unending fulfillment and beatitude.

Christ is seen raising Adam and Eve from the grave. In freeing our first parents whose sin introduced death in our midst, Christ also frees those souls who placed their faith in His coming and triumphant victory. Truly, the Resurrection of our Lord is a liberating and blessed event for each of us!

St. Gregory The Theologian Our Resurrection In Christ

This is the Resurrection Day. Let us be enlightened by this feast and let us embrace one another. Let us call "brethren" even those who hate us and in the Resurrection forgive everything; and let us sing: "Christ is risen from the dead! By death He conquered death, and to those in the graves, He granted life" Resurrection Matins.

Yesterday, we were crucified with Him; today we are glorified with Him. Yesterday we died with Him; today we are made alive with Him. Yesterday in our sins, we were buried with Him; today we arise with Him. So 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 costly stones which for the most part are possessed by slaves of this world. But no, let us rather offer to Him ourselves. This is the possession most precious to God and most appropriate for us who are believers. Let us give back to the Perfect Image Who is Christ the Lord, what has been made according to the Perfect Image, which is ourselves, our entire and whole being. Let us recognize our dignity. Let us honor our Divine Archetype. Let us know the power and the mystery and the purpose for which Christ died!

Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us. Let us become Gods for the sake of God, since for our sake He became human. He assumed the worst that He might give us the best. He became poor that through His poverty we might become rich. He took upon Himself the form of a slave that we might receive back our original freedom. He came down that we might rise up and be exalted. He was tempted that we might conquer. He was dishonored that we might be glorified. He died that He might save us. He ascended that He might draw us to Himself who were lying low through our fall into sin.

Let us all give everything, offer all, to Him Who gave Himself as a ransom and a reconciliation for us. One can offer nothing quite as exclusive as oneself. Let us understand the Mystery and become for His sake all that He became for us!

Today salvation has come to the world, to the visible and invisible creation. Christ is risen from the dead; rise with Him! Christ is freed from the tomb; be freed from sin with Him! The gates

us free! As a result of our falling for the maliciousness in the world, we Christians are being laughed at by the heathen. Our holy religion appears to be a fable.

What luxury, what wantonness! What senselessness, what madness! So many poor stand around the church and though the Church has many members, and many who are wealthy, she is unable to give relief even to one poor person! "One is hungry and another is drunken" 1 Corinthians 11: 21. One voids his excrement into silver and another has not so much as a piece of bread. What madness! What brutishness is so great as this?

May we never come to the test in this matter. May we with willingness and patience avoid all this so that we may live to God's glory and be delivered from punishment in the age to come. May we attain to the good things promised to those who with love approach Him, and through His grace and love for mankind reflect His love, always now and ever and forever. May our lives and our devotion reflect the eternal truth that Christ is risen, that Christ lives, that Christ reigns in our hearts and souls!

*This is the day of Resurrection!
Let us be radiant with the triumph
and embrace each other and say
"Brothers" even to those who hate us.
Because of the Resurrection,
let us forgive all things and
then sing out:*

*Christ is risen from the dead!
By death he conquered Death,
and to all within the tombs,
he has granted life!*

Resurrection Matins

If, therefore, we shall appear with Christ in glory, let us not grieve when we do not enjoy earthly honors. If this life is not life indeed. If it is not our destiny, but if our life be hidden with Christ in God our Father, we ought to live this life as if we were already dead.

Then he says, we shall appear with Him in glory. He does not merely say "appear". He says "appear in glory." For this life is like the pearl that is hidden as long as it is within the oyster. If then we are treated with insults, or whatever else we may suffer, let us not grieve. For this life is not our life, We are strangers and sojourners here.

We are dead people as far as this world is concerned. And what is so indifferent as a corpse? A man dead and buried does not have any anxieties. He does not build a house or hire servants or prepare costly clothing. Neither then should we. For we seek only one thing, to appear with Him in glory!

Who, then, can be more senseless than the wealthy whose madness arises from their greed? And are there not many who admire the rich? If so, they share in the scorn which the sinful wealthy deserve.

When Christ is famishing, do you revel in luxury? Do you so play the fool? What punishment shall your actions not suffer? And you yet ask: "Why are there robbers? And murderers? All such evils?" When the devil has made you so ridiculous in your greedy gathering of wealth! For the mere possession of silver dishes is hardly in keeping with a soul devoted to Wisdom.

Are you devoted to luxury? I call it not luxury, but senselessness. Nay, not even senselessness, but madness. Nay, not even madness, but even worse than madness: a soul destined for perdition!

I know that many persons make jokes at me for saying such things. I pay no attention to them. I only hope that some good result will come of it. For in truth, to be rich in body, but not in soul only makes people senseless and mad.

Glory to You, O Christ! With how many good things You have filled us! How You have provided for our sanity! From how many great monstrosities and madnesses You have set



Paschal Greetings

Those of our good and faithful believers who have properly and seriously prepared themselves spiritually during the season of the Great Fast, who have accompanied us on the spiritual pilgrimage to the holy sites during this Passion Week and are now worthily prepared to receive the Holy Body and Blood of our Saviour on this glorious feast, can understand and appreciate fully the joyous greetings we offer each devoted soul because we are overwhelmed when we contemplate what our Loving Saviour has accomplished for those who truly believe and are committed to Him in the life of His Body, the Church. We embrace you warmly in body and soul, confident His grace will find its way into your life so that, as a believing parish community we may together witness to all we encounter and share His common love for all mankind. Particularly to the lukewarm do we impart an even stronger, profounder and firmer embrace of affirming love so that they become followers of us as we are already followers of Christ. To those among us which these greetings do not touch, we ardently pray the Lord will soften your hearts with His abiding grace that you, too, come to know the faith and reassurance we experience and live today. As the Book of Isaiah says, *"Come along with us that we may do you good..."*, we invite and challenge you to a deeper understanding and living of the life of the Risen Saviour. To all the good souls entrusted to our spiritual care, to each individual lamb and sheep of our beloved flock, our wish is for a blessed and holy celebration of this feast day as we joyfully repeat: *"Christ Is Risen!"* and we await your exuberant response, *"Indeed He Is Risen!"*



OBEDIENT TO DEATH

Christ's Incarnation is already an act of our salvation. By taking on our broken humanity to Himself, Christ restores it and, in the words of the hymnology of the Nativity of our Lord feast day, lifts up the fallen image of man. But in that case, we reason, why was death on the Cross necessary? Was it not enough for one of the most Blessed Trinity to live as a man on earth, to think, feel, and will as a man, without also having to die as a man?

In an unfallen world the Incarnation of Christ would indeed have sufficed as the perfect expression of God's outgoing love. But in the real fallen and sinful world, His love had to reach out even further because of the seriousness and tragedy of our sins. Because of the tragic presence of sin which we ourselves introduced into the world of God's perfect creation, the work of man's restoration was to prove infinitely costly. A sacrificial act of healing was required, a sacrifice such as only a suffering and crucified God could offer.

The Incarnation, it is said, is an act of identifying Himself with us, by knowing our human experience from inside. The Cross signifies, in the most stark and uncompromising manner, this act of sharing is carried to the utmost limits. God incarnate enters into all our experience. Jesus Christ our Saviour shares not only in the fullness of human life, but also in the fullness of human death. "Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4). He assumes all our griefs, all our sorrows. The unassumed is not healed but Christ our healer has assumed to Himself everything, even the dismal enemy death.

Death has both a physical and spiritual aspect, and of the two it is the spiritual which is more terrible. Physical death is the separation of man's body from his soul and is but temporary; spiritual death is the separation of man's soul from God and is eternal. When we say that Christ became "obedient to death" (Philippians 2: 28), we are not to limit these words to physical death alone. We should not think only of the bodily sufferings which Christ endured in His Passion, the scourging, the stumbling beneath the enormous weight of the Cross, the driving in of the nails, the thirst, the heat of fever, the torment of hanging stretched on the wood, the agony of knowing all that He endured would do no good for so many because they simply would not believe and accept. The true meaning of the Passion is to be found, not in this alone, but much more in His spiritual suffering, in His sense of failure, isolation, and utter loneliness, in the pain of love offered, but rejected by mankind.

The gospels are understandably reticent in speaking about this inward suffering, yet they provide us with certain sure glimpses. First, there is Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, when He is overwhelmed by horror and dismay, when He prays in anguish to His Heavenly Father, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me" (Matthew 26: 39), and when His sweat falls upon the ground "like drops of blood" (Luke 22: 44). Gethsemane provides the key to our whole doctrine of atonement. Christ is here confronted by a choice. Under no compulsion, freely He chooses to do so; and by this act of voluntary self-offering, He turns what would have been a piece of arbitrary violence, a judicial murder, into a redemptive sacrifice. But this act of free choice, of free will, is immensely difficult. It is for Christ and it is for us in our Christian vocation here and now. Resolving to go forward to arrest and crucifixion, Jesus experiences, in the words of the observer, the anguishing terror of the lost soul...the reality of eternal death." Full weight must be given to Christ's words in Gethsemane, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death" (Matthew 26: 38). Jesus enters at this moment totally and completely into the experience of spiritual death even though He has done nothing to deserve it. He is at this very moment identifying Himself with all the despair and mental pain of humanity; and this identification is far more important for us than His participation in our actual physical pain.

A second glimpse is given us at the Crucifixion, when He cries out with a loud agonizing voice, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me" Matthew 27: 46? Once again, full weight should be given to these words. They are substantial; they are literally pregnant with meaning. Here is the extreme point of Christ's desolation, when He feels abandoned not only by mankind, but by

our Heavenly Father as well, and all this because of our sins. We cannot begin to explain how it is possible for One Who is Himself the living God to lose awareness of the Divine Presence. But this is at least evident. In Christ's Passion there is no play acting, nothing is done simply for outward show. Each word from the Cross means precisely what it communicates. And if the cry "My God, My God..." is to signify anything at all, it must mean that at this moment Jesus is truly experiencing the spiritual death of separation from God. Not only does He shed His blood for us miserable sinners, but for our sakes, He accepts even the loss of God!

"He descended into hell" (Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed). Does this mean merely that Christ went to preach to the departed spirits during the interval between Great Friday and Resurrection morning? (1 Peter 3: 19). Surely it has also a deeper and profounder sense. Hell is a point not in space, but in the soul. It is the place where God is not. And yet God is everywhere! If Christ only descended into the place of the dead, and we are certain He did, that means He descended into the depths of the absence of God and harrowed that place. Totally, unreservedly, He identified Himself with all of man's anguish and alienation. He assumed it Himself, and by assuming it, He changed it, He healed it, He elevated it. There was no other way He could heal and restore except by making it His own, by actually experiencing it Himself!

Such is the message of the Cross to each of us who claims to believe. However far we must travel through the shadow of the valley of death, we know we are never alone. We have a companion, a Risen, Triumphant Saviour Who is not only true man, but most importantly, true God as well. He is as much the eternal living God as He is at the time of Transfiguration in the glory of Mount Tabor. Look upon Christ crucified and see there a resplendent Saviour and suffering God! But more importantly, see there a Risen, Glorious, Resplendent Saviour Who outstretches His hands to grasp ours and raise us up with Him!



CONQUERED BY CHRIST

Jacob's night of wrestling, as recorded in the very first book of Scripture, was a turning point in his life. *"And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hallow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him"* Genesis 32: 24, 25. Justification, strength for victory over sin and temptation, spiritual energy for effective Christian service, and the hope of future bliss are all inseparably bound up together with the reality of Christ's Resurrection from the dead. Jacob's night of wrestling was a turning point in his life. If we read the context we see that he is literally at wit's end. Upon until that time, by scheming and conniving he had craftily tried to direct his own future, but now he has finally come to the end of human devices. God is seeking by these adverse events to take full control of his life, and the man who wrestled with Jacob was none other than our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ Who made him realize what a poor, feeble creature he is by throwing his hip out of joint. Jacob surrenders, seeking a blessing, and then God takes over.

A man once asked his physician about the significance of God's touching Jacob upon the sinew of his thigh. The physician replied, "The sinew of the thigh is the strongest in the human body. Even a horse could scarcely tear it apart." So, the man came to realize that our God has to break us down at the strongest part of our self-life before He can have His own way of blessing and grace with us.

Our God is not looking for brilliant men, He is not dependent upon eloquent men, He is not even shut up to the use of talented men in sending His gospel out into the world. God looks for broken men, for men who have judged themselves in the light of the Cross of Christ. When He wants anything done, He takes up men who have come to an end of themselves and whose trust and confidence is not in themselves, but in God alone. So, we learn from this Resurrection feast, as did Jacob of old, that if we permit our God to touch the strongest part of our self-life, the thing that is holding back His full blessing and grace, we will then become conquered by Christ just as surely as He conquered death. Then we will be a power for our Creator because there is victory in surrender when we are conquered by Christ!

We know that the *"wages of sin is death"* Romans 6: 23, but as our Saviour had no personal sin, it flows that it is our debt of sin that brought Him to the tomb! And so, Scripture declares for our understanding, *"I handed on to you first of all what I myself received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, and in accordance with the Scriptures, rose on the third day..."* 1 Corinthians 15: 3, 4. Hence, Christ's Resurrection

signifies our debt has been paid in full, for had even one sin remained, death would have continued to hold our Lord in its icy grip. By virtue of His victory over sin, we now stand in the sight of our Heavenly Father pure and perfect if we cooperate with this hard won grace for our lives. If we have properly prepared ourselves during the Great Fast, we stand in the light of radiant Resurrection life. The complete realization of this legacy of grace, however will be ours only when we receive our glorified bodies. Jesus summed it up in seven precious words, *"Because I live, you shall also live"* John 14: 19.

The very same power of our God which produced the miracle of Christ's empty tomb now works in us if we cooperate with it. This is an electrifying truth which satan seeks to conceal, for he knows that such ignorance stunts spiritual growth. The devil prefers to have us concentrate on death and its terrors, rather than to think of resurrection life which dwells within, held constant by our worthy reception of the Eucharist which is both the promise and fulfillment of life eternal.

There is a touching story told of a small girl who had to have her arm amputated due to a dreadful malignancy. Her seemingly strange request that she might see her severed member before its burial was finally granted after some trepidation by parents and family. "Good-bye hand," said the child quaintly, "You have helped me make clothes for my dolly, to get my arithmetic completed at school, and to write to Mom and my loved ones; but now I must say good-bye to you, but I do not feel too badly, for I know that Jesus will give you back again in the Resurrection." Ah, if we could only all have this trusting faith for the future, together with a life purged from self and carnality so that Christ's Resurrection power may find in us a clear and acceptable channel. We like very much to be assured in the words of St. Paul that, *"...you are risen with him"* Colossians 2: 12. The faith-filled little girl knew and understood these words. That is why we also can go forth joyously today because we are risen with Him! Dying together with Jesus is the end of living strife while being buried with the Saviour leads us to the gate of life. Rising together with our Lord by the touch of God's grace is our destiny. While the light and power of eternal life is revealed through sanctification, its full blaze of glory is reserved for the Resurrection.

RESURRECTION FAITH

The gospel narratives do not describe the actual event of the Resurrection, but they do without question, announce the good news. *"They...ran to carry the good news to his disciples"* Matthew 28: 8. There are other things the gospels do not describe as well: among others, intimate details of the crucifixion or the virginal conception. These events are simply

announced. The book of Genesis does not describe creation at the hand of God; it simply announces it.

And so, we also, as followers of the Saviour are expected to announce the Resurrection to the world, to one another and not to explain it or defend it. When we see a star in the sky, there is no need proving it, nor defending it; it is simply announced to others so they see it as well.

Christ of the Resurrection is not a memory, but a present reality. The Risen Christ goes before us, into Galilee, ascending into heaven and sending the Spirit upon us so we have the initiative and strength to follow after Him in resurrection joy.

Christ does not lead us back to Bethlehem, the place of His Nativity; He makes no nostalgic return to the Cross; He does not take us to the tomb to see the rolled away stone, the pushed aside linens.

Where do we find him now that the Cross has flowered into the empty tomb? Where do we look for Him now that He has reconciled us with the eternal love of the Father by the grace of the Holy Spirit? We find Him in what He loved most, namely in one another who are baptized in His name. We find Him as we read and prayerfully mediate on His Word. We recognize Him in the life of His Body our blessed Church. We find Him most especially when bread is broken in loving devotion and friendship and He is received for the sake of our salvation in the Eucharist. Jesus comes out of the tomb for us. It is always Resurrection when Christ appears among us. That is why we are so eager to sing "Alleluia."

MESSENGERS FOR TRUTH

The most unlikely bearers carry the message of Christ's Resurrection throughout the world. Even today, it is simply meager priests, devoted deacons, impelled religious, and baptized pious lay people who accept the responsibility of sharing the good news of salvation. The early morning commission was given to a woman to share with all. The truth, like a torch, had to be passed on. Once it began, its spread depended on a whole chain of persons and events. Just one break in the chain, one weakness, one bad link, could have spoiled the whole mission. But the word of Christ resonated from the empty tomb: *"Go to my brothers and tell them that I am ascending to my Father and your Father"* John 20 17.

But despite human weakness, despite persecution, hostility, and even the powers of hell, the torch has been passed on and continues to be passed on, often through very unlikely bearers.

We can many times be overwhelmed by our responsibilities and inadequacies. Or we can look back to that long line of flawed but faithful torchbearers and claim the courage and the strength that goes with the torch. It is the message that is important, not so much the messenger. As Byzantine Catholics, faithful to the Risen Lord, we will bear the message and the torch. We will pass it on, maybe in different ways and in new situations. But we know in faith commitment that the Resurrection Light, our eternal Paschal Candle will endure. May this feast of the Resurrection be the occasion today for our resolve to reclaim the courage, the strength and the fullness of faith to advance the torch of faith and assuredly share it with others.

MESSENGERS OF TRUTH

We do not always accept news, even good news, from sources we consider inferior or inappropriate. And so it was with the disciples of Christ. They did not wish to believe the women's account of the empty tomb. *"The story seemed like nonsense and they refused to believe them"* Luke 24: 11. And yet, Truth was in the women's story, without question. The Spirit of Truth is not confined by our notions of propriety or seniority or rank or class or education. The Spirit of Truth is in the women's Resurrection story, often in the words of children, in the insights of others, even when we may disagree with them. It can even be found to the consternation of some, in the insights of other religious groups. The Spirit of Truth ranges more widely than we ever seem to expect. It is not our task to grasp truth in such a way as to try to control it. Rather, we should strive always to be open enough to recognize truth from whatever sources it comes. Every truth, without exception, and whoever may utter it, is from the Holy Spirit and has its source in the third Person of the Holy Trinity.

Therefore, on this glorious feast, the message offered us is not simply that Christ rose from the dead for the sake of our salvation, but that *"there is no salvation in anyone else"* Acts of the Apostles. Our power for Christian living is founded in the Resurrection. Without it, our life is empty and futile. Those who saw the Risen Saviour shared it with others. They in turn told of their personal encounters with the Risen Christ. The strength of their Christian living, of their Christian witnessing, derived only from the truth that they experienced themselves. That is the power! No matter how many promises life has broken, no matter what life has done to us, the only truth that counts is that the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is our joy as it is His joyful victory. Nothing adverse that we encounter in life is not an end for us because Christ conquered. Because Christ conquered by His power and grace, we can too!

The Risen Life

That our Lord did not simply live in the Spirit after His death for three days, but that He rose from the grave in a glorified human body, is the truth which most of all reminds us of the noble dignity and high destiny of our own bodies, and most of all impresses upon us the importance of seeing that we discipline and subject our bodies here and now. Were it not in this respect for the lessons of the Resurrection of Christ, we might be involved in the same round of perplexity which has always marked man when he has either no particular revelation, or when the revelation of God has been misunderstood.

Our Byzantine Catholic faith is well known for its serious attempt to heal the breach that is felt between the body and the soul. That is why we prepared for this feast with increased prayer, fasting and abstinence and alms-giving, because according to the testimony of our Lord Himself, "This kind can be driven out only by prayer and fasting" Mark 9: 29. We are called upon to sacrifice the needs of the body to the higher needs of the soul, but now in our hedonistic society we are only too eager to sacrifice the needs of the soul for those of the fleeting body, and in the end we will be far away from having solved the problem we daily experience. We cannot overindulge ourselves with the Paschal foods, even though they are solemnly blessed, because we respect and revere the creation of God in our bodies. Moderation in all things applies to soul and body!

The Resurrection of our Lord alone gives us the solution, teaching us, as it does, the sacredness of both. No mere doctrine of the immortality of the soul could do this, and no unfounded belief that the Lord now reigns in a disembodied state upon the throne of heaven could do it. It is done by believing in the power of the Risen Lord alone, by which we know He still has a body as we do, but it is glorified, as will ours be when we rise from the dead. That is precisely why we rejoice in this feast, that Christ lives and reigns in our human body at the right hand of the Eternal Father, that it is worthy in its glorified state to exist among all the pure spirits of heaven.

Animated by this thought, we learn to discipline, not only the spirit but the body, and to conform the one as we conform the other for the time when He Who is Himself been fashioned anew, shall also fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working in which He subdues all things to Himself. "For he must reign, until 'he has put all his enemies under his feet.' And the last enemy to be destroyed will be death, for 'he has put all things under his feet.' And when all things are made subject to him, then the Son himself will also be made subject to him who subjected all things to him, that God may be all in all" 1 Corinthians 15: 25 - 28.

It would be praiseworthy if we could learn to look on these matters as eternal; set forth, manifested and emphasized only at certain times, such as the Great Fast, but true inherently in the very nature of God; except for us who tend to think like the earthy people we sometimes too much are. How vitally

different the words of Christ when He says, "I am the resurrection and the life" from "I have risen" or "I did rise" That is precisely why we greet each other in the present tense on this and other feasts, why the hymnology is sung in the present tense because it is vital here and now for each of us. Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen! It is almost like the crucial difference between the "Way" John 14: 6, and one who stands in the way. The same victorious Risen Saviour, the only-begotten Son of God Who overcame death and opened to believers the gates of ever-lasting life, grants us who truly celebrate the solemnities of this feast, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, the will and desire to rise from death not only with a purified soul, but most importantly, with a truly glorified body. Because we now have a Resurrection vision, it is grossly erroneous to think we only need to present a disciplined and conformed soul to Christ. Our bodies must also reflect the perfection won for us in this triumphal victory. And all this must be done in the present, here and now, not tomorrow or with a wistful disheartened thought that we failed at it yesterday.

Come, let us partake of a new drink, not miraculously produced from the barren rock, but from the Fountain of Immortality, springing up from the tomb of Christ. In Him is our firm strength.

Today all things are filled with light - earth and heaven and the world beneath. Then let all creation celebrate the resurrection of Christ. In Him is the firm foundation of all things.



Indeed He is Risen!

No sealed stone tomb could keep our Lord in the power of His enemies. No shut door could keep Him away from His dear friends. No lock could separate Him from achieving His purpose and goal on earth. The restraint of the empire ruling all racial groups in the world could not smother Christ. The sheer tyranny of the mightiest army could not intimidate the Saviour of mankind. A barrier set up by fear for life itself cannot remove the living, glowing, personal presence of our Lord among His followers. Today, resolve to faithfully follow Him. Live triumphantly as He lived. Give of yourself to the good of others as He did. The Resurrection renews the assurance that our companionship with the Saviour is secure for all eternity.

Resurrection Joy

"Having seen the Resurrection of Christ, we adore the holy Lord Jesus, Who alone is without sin. We venerate Your Cross, O Master and sing and glorify Your Resurrection; for You are God and we know no other beside You; we call upon Your holy name. O come, all you faithful, let us adore Christ's holy Resurrection, for by the Cross, great joy has come into the world. Ever praising the Lord, let us sing of His Resurrection; for, enduring crucifixion, He conquered dead by His own death" Resurrection Matins Prayer.

A Brave New World

When Columbus discovered America, he could never have even wildly imagined what a great country this would become. Here is to be found perfect freedom to practice our Orthodox faith and to educate our children in the very same spiritual tradition and faith commitment. People in most foreign lands are not at all so free. This freedom we enjoy carries with it a commensurate responsibility: the obligation to live, practice and enjoy our Orthodox faith, guard our political rights, and support both our Church and our government. As long as America worships God, its freedom will not only have His blessing, but sustaining grace to continue. If we as individuals and our nation as a whole take advantage of the

freedoms God has given us without responding sincerely to our obligations, we do stand a serious chance of losing His grace and blessing. Our brave new world must unite our people in worshipping our Creator and because of our faithfulness to the risen Saviour, unite as well, in support of our American way of life that it might endure and redound to the benefit of our children's faith in the future. Be faithful to Christ and you will thereby be faithful to our nation as an exemplary citizen!

Teach us To Pray

In spite of all the good things we can say about prayer, the simple fact is that prayer is a problem for many. So many barriers in our lives take up our time and make us busy at everything else and the last thing, unfortunately we get around to do is pray. Prayer is not a serious priority for many.

Lack of faith is the biggest problem. When it comes to having a life of prayer, it is not enough to simply have a vague notion about the existence of God or even of the person of our Lord and Saviour. What we need is a vital living relationship with our heavenly Father. And prayer is hard work; lazy Orthodox Christians do not tend to do much of it. Prayer is the hardest work believers can do and that is because everyone does their easy things first, prayer is many times left until last.

The solution for us is the same as it was for our Lord. In the spiritual events we encountered in the life of our Lord this past week, we see how naturally and how quickly He resorted to prayer. The Resurrection of Christ has its foundation in prayer. In all our difficulties, we should seek solutions in God. When we encounter problems, we ought to have already been in the habit of finding success with God. Praying should be a very natural and real solution to the challenges we face in our lives. As He went to the Father, so we must go to Him and ask Him to help us. If we do not have time for prayer, we should ask Him to help us find time, to assist us in allotting our schedule, time for prayer will be amply found. Our heavenly Father hears and answers prayers. And this is especially true when we ask Him to teach us how to pray sincerely and devotedly.

Resurrection Homily

Of Our Father Among The Saints, St. John Chrysostom

Let every person who sincerely loves God be filled with happiness on this most important feast day. Let every good person rejoice and enter into the joy of the Lord. Let him who is weary of fasting be filled with good things. Let anyone who has worked from the first hour receive his just reward. If someone has begun work only at the third hour, let him join the feast with gratitude. If anyone has arrived at the fifth hour, let him not be anxious for he shall not be deprived. If someone has delayed until the ninth hour, let him draw near and fear nothing. Perhaps someone has even waited until the eleventh hour, let him not be alarmed, for the Lord is very gracious and receives the last even as the first. He will be generous to the last as well as to him who has worked from the very first hour. To the one He is merciful, to the other, appreciative, for He accepts both gifts and welcomes the good intentions of all.

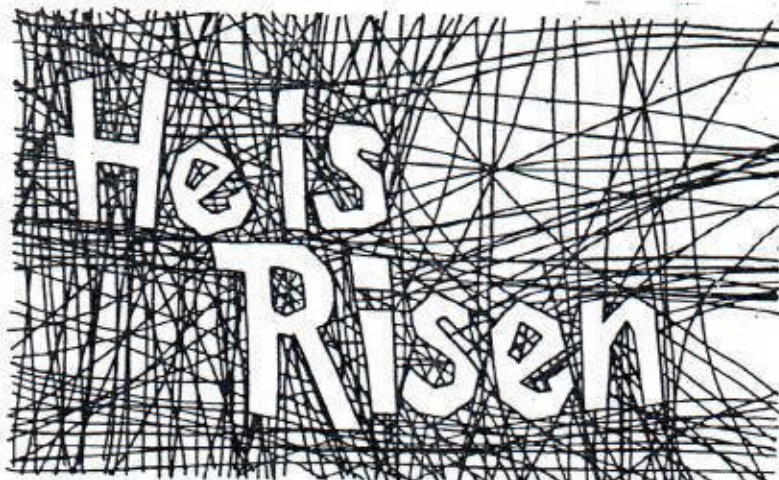
Let all, then enter into the joy of the Lord. Let the first and the last receive thier reward. Let everyone rejoice in the feast; the rich and the poor together, the zealous and the lazy, those who kept the fast and those who did not. Let the tables be filled with food today, and feast sumptuously for no one should go hungry. All should enjoy this feast of faith and the goodness of the Lord. Let no one bewail his poverty, for God's kingdom has been revealed. Let no one mourn over his sins, for forgiveness has come forth from the grave. Let no one fear death for the Saviour's death has set us free. By enduring it, He conquered it. By entering the domain of the dead, He destroyed its power. When death accepted Him, it could nor hold Him, and so Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled: The dominion of the dead was confused when it encountered You. Death was angered for it was abolished. It was angered for it was mocked; it was angered for it was conquered; it was angered for it was made captive. It received a body and met God face to face. It took what belonged to the earth and encountered heaven. It took what was visible and was overcome by the invisible. O Death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen and death is overthrown. Christ is risen and the devil is cast down. Christ is risen and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen and life is restored. Christ is risen and the dead are freed from their tombs. For Christ, having risen from the dead is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. To Him belongs all glory, honor and adoration forever and ever. Amen.

of hell are open and death is destroyed. The old Adam is put aside and the new Adam is perfected. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Be renewed!

It is the Passover of the Lord, the Passover in honor of the Divine Trinity. It is the feast of feasts, the festival of festivals, as far above as the sun is over the stars. We celebrate the Resurrection no longer as an eager anticipation or expectation, but as an accomplished event which gathers the whole world into itself. Let all different people bring forth different fruits and different offerings for all such offerings are precious in the light and sight of the Lord!

Let us now partake of the Passover which is ever new and now becoming known. It is ours to learn what this eating and this drinking means. It is God's to teach us and to communicate to us His Word. Let us be receptive to it!

Come now, then, let us partake of the Word in the manner of the gospel: perfectly and entirely and eternally. Let us make our goal not the earthly Jerusalem but the heavenly city, not that which is trodden under foot by earthly human armies, but that which is glorified by heavenly angels. Let us not sacrifice young lambs or goats, but let us offer to our heavenly Father the sacrifice of praise upon the heavenly altar which is being offered in our churches today. Let us keep a heavenly festival. Let us approach the Holy of Holies in the heavens. And shall I not say that there is still a greater act of devotion and love? There is! Let us sacrifice ourselves to our heavenly Father! And let us go on sacrificing ourselves every moment of every day. Let us accept everything for the sake of the Word Who is Christ our God. By our suffering, let us imitate His passion. By our blood let us venerate His Blood. Let us gladly mount the Cross by taking up our crosses each day of our lives. For to suffer with Christ and for Christ is better than any life at ease with others.



He is Risen

WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE!

Christ is risen from the dead! By death He conquered death, and to those in the graves, He granted life Troparion, Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.

Shout joyfully to the Lord all the earth, sing praise to His Name. Give to Him glorious praise! Through the prayers of the Birthgiver of God, O Saviour save us! First Antiphon, Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.

In your choirs, bless God! Bless the Lord, you of Israel's wellspring! Entrance Hymn, Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.

Although You descended into the grave, O Immortal One, You destroyed the power of death; You arose again as Victor, O Christ God! You announced to the women bearing ointment: "Rejoice!" You gave peace to your apostles and Resurrection to the fallen Kontakion, Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.

This is the day the Lord has made; let us exult and rejoice in it Prokimenon, Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.

The angel exclaimed to her: full of grace, "Rejoice, O pure Virgin, again I say rejoice. Your Son is risen from the grave on the third day and has raised the dead! Let all nations rejoice." Shine in splendor, O new Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord is risen upon you! O Sion, sing with joy and rejoice. And you, pure Birthgiver of God, rejoice in the Resurrection of your Son! Hymn instead of 'It is Truly Proper', Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.

When You descended to death, O Immortal Life, You destroyed the Abyss by the radiance of your divinity. And when You raised the dead from the depths of the earth all the heavenly powers cried out: "O Giver of life, Christ our God, glory to You!" Troparion, Matins, Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.

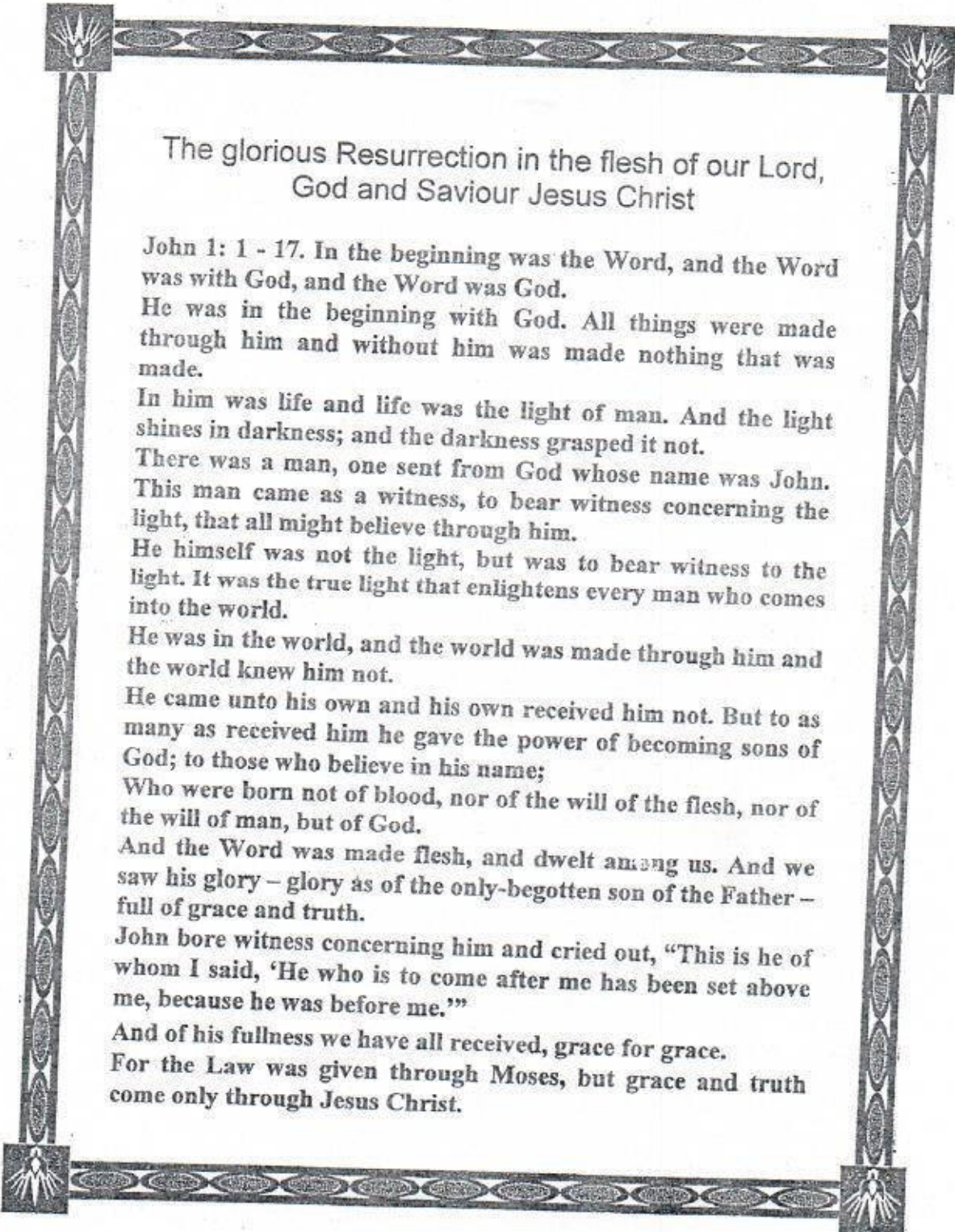
It is the day of Resurrection, O People, let us be enlightened by it. The Passover is the Lord's Passover, since Christ our God has brought us from death to life and from earth to heaven. Therefore, let us sing the hymn of victory Ode from Canon, Matins, Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.



The glorious Resurrection in the flesh of our Lord,
God and Saviour Jesus Christ

Acts of the Apostles 1: 1- 8. In the former book, O Theophilus, I spoke of all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day on which he was taken up, after he gave commandments through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he chose. To them also he showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, during forty days appearing to them and speaking of the kingdom of God. And while eating with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father "of which you have heard," said he, "from my mouth, for John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit, not many days hence." They, therefore, who came together, began to ask him, saying, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" But he said to them, "It is not for you to know the times or dates which the Father has fixed by his own authority; but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you shall be witnesses for me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the very ends of the earth."





The glorious Resurrection in the flesh of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ

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 made nothing that was made.

In him was life and life was the light of man. And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness grasped it not.

There was a man, one sent from God whose name was John. This man came as a witness, to bear witness concerning the light, that all might believe through him.

He himself was not the light, but was to bear witness to the light. It was the true light that enlightens every man who comes into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made through him and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own and his own received him not. But to as many as received him he gave the power of becoming sons of God; to those who believe in his name;

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 was made flesh, and dwelt among us. And we saw his glory - glory as of the only-begotten son of the Father - full of grace and truth.

John bore witness concerning him and cried out, "This is he of whom I said, 'He who is to come after me has been set above me, because he was before me.'"

And of his fullness we have all received, grace for grace.

For the Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth come only through Jesus Christ.

Bright Monday

Acts of the Apostles 1: 12 - 17, 21, 26. In those days the Apostles returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath's day journey. And when they entered the city, they went to the upper room where were staying Peter and John, James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot and Jude the brother of James. All these with one mind continued steadfastly in prayer with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus and with his brethren. In those days, Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren, (now the number of persons meeting together was about a hundred and twenty), and he said, 'Brethren, the Scripture must be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit declared before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was the leader of those who arrested Jesus; inasmuch as he had been numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry. Therefore, of these men who had been in our company all the time the Lord moved among us, from John's baptism until the day he was taken up from us, of these one must become a witness with us of his resurrection.' And they put forward two: Joseph, called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed and said, 'Lord, who knows the heart of all, show which of these two is chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell to go to his own place.' And they drew lots between them, and the lot fell upon Matthias and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Bright Monday

John 1: 18 -28. No one has at any time seen God; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father has revealed him. And this is of John, when the Jews sent to him from Jerusalem priests and levites to ask him, "Who are you?" And he acknowledged, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elias?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" And he answered "no." They therefore said to him, "Who are you that we may give answer to those who sent us. What have you to say of yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying in the desert, 'Make straight the way of the Lord' as Isaiah the prophet said." And they who had been sent were from among the Pharisees. And they asked him, "Why, then do you baptize, if you are not Christ, or Elias, or the Prophet?" John said in answer, "I baptize with water, but in the midst of you stands one whom you do not know. He it is who is to come after me, who has been set above me, the strap of whose sandal I am no worthy to loosen." These things took place at Bethany, beyond the Jordan where John was baptizing.



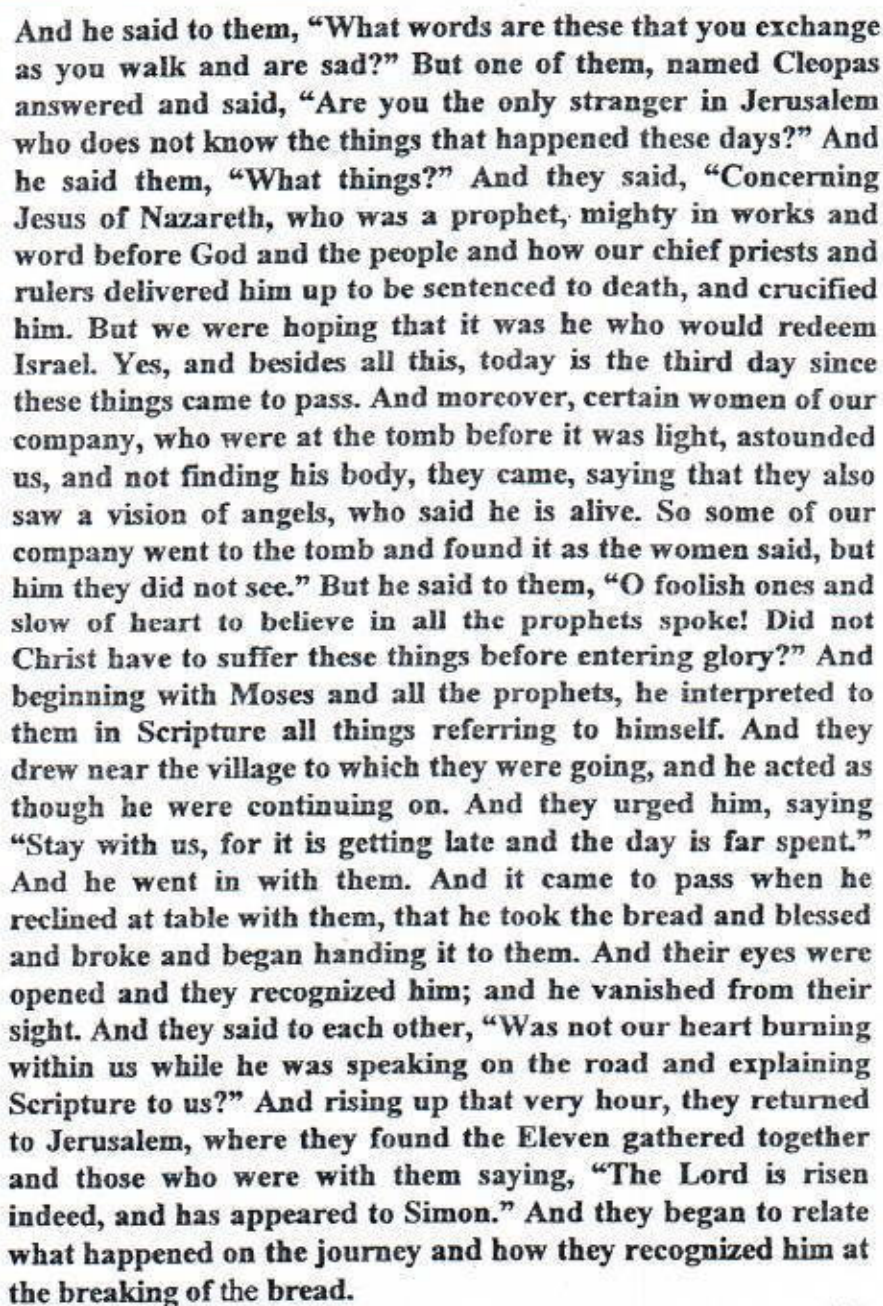


Bright Tuesday

Acts of the Apostles 2: 14 – 21. In those days, Peter standing up with the Eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke out to them: "Men of Judea and all you who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. These men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says the Lord, that I will pour forth my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And moreover, upon my servants and my handmaids in those days will I pour forth my Spirit and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"

Bright Tuesday

Luke 24: 12 – 35. At that time, Peter arose and ran to the tomb and stooping down, he saw the linen cloth laid there and went away wondering to himself what had come to pass. Behold, two of them were coming that very day to a village named Emmaus, which is seven miles from Jerusalem. And they were talking to each other about all the things that just happened. And it came to pass, while they were conversing and arguing together, that Jesus himself also drew near and went along with them; but they were restrained from recognizing him.



And he said to them, "What words are these that you exchange as you walk and are sad?" But one of them, named Cleopas answered and said, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that happened these days?" And he said them, "What things?" And they said, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in works and word before God and the people and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be sentenced to death, and crucified him. But we were hoping that it was he who would redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, today is the third day since these things came to pass. And moreover, certain women of our company, who were at the tomb before it was light, astounded us, and not finding his body, they came, saying that they also saw a vision of angels, who said he is alive. So some of our company went to the tomb and found it as the women said, but him they did not see." But he said to them, "O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe in all the prophets spoke! Did not Christ have to suffer these things before entering glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in Scripture all things referring to himself. And they drew near the village to which they were going, and he acted as though he were continuing on. And they urged him, saying "Stay with us, for it is getting late and the day is far spent." And he went in with them. And it came to pass when he reclined at table with them, that he took the bread and blessed and broke and began handing it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. And they said to each other, "Was not our heart burning within us while he was speaking on the road and explaining Scripture to us?" And rising up that very hour, they returned to Jerusalem, where they found the Eleven gathered together and those who were with them saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon." And they began to relate what happened on the journey and how they recognized him at the breaking of the bread.

APOSTOLIC TRADITION

Is Scripture the sole rule of faith for Christians? Not according to the Bible. While we must guard against merely human tradition, the Bible contains numerous references to the necessity of clinging to apostolic tradition.

Thus Paul tells the Corinthians, "I commend you because you remember me in everything and maintain the traditions even as I have delivered them to you" (1 Cor. 11:2), and he commands the Thessalonians, "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us, either by word of mouth or by letter" (2 Thess. 2:15). He even goes so far as to order, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is living in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us" (2 Thess. 3:6).

To make sure that the apostolic tradition would be passed down after the deaths of the apostles, Paul told Timothy, "[W]hat you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). In this passage he refers to the first four generations of apostolic succession—his own generation, Timothy's generation, the generation Timothy will teach, and the generation they in turn will teach.

The early Church Fathers, who were links in that chain of succession, recognized the necessity of the traditions that had been handed down from the apostles and guarded them scrupulously, as the following quotations show.

PAPIAS

"Papias [A.D. 120], who is now mentioned by us, affirms that he received the sayings of the apostles from

those who accompanied them, and he, moreover, asserts that he heard in person Aristion and the presbyter John. Accordingly, he mentions them frequently by name, and in his writings gives their traditions [concerning Jesus]. . . . [There are] other passages of his in which he relates some miraculous deeds, stating that he acquired the knowledge of them from tradition" (fragment in Eusebius, *Church History* 3:39 [A.D. 312]).

EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA

"At that time [A.D. 150] there flourished in the Church Hegesippus, whom we know from what has gone before, and Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, and another bishop, Pinytus of Crete, and besides these, Philip, and Apollinarius, and Melito, and Musanus, and Modestus, and, finally, Irenaeus. From them has come down to us in writing, the sound and orthodox faith received from tradition" (*Church History* 4:21).

IRENAEUS

"As I said before, the Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although she is disseminated throughout the whole world, yet guarded it, as if she occupied but one house. She likewise believes these things just as if she had but one soul and one and the same heart; and harmoniously she proclaims them and teaches them and hands them down, as if she possessed but one mouth. For, while the languages of the world are diverse, nevertheless, the authority of the tradition is one and the same" (*Against Heresies* 1:10:2 [A.D. 189]).

"That is why it is surely necessary to avoid them [heretics], while cherishing with the utmost diligence the

things pertaining to the Church, and to lay hold of the tradition of truth. . . . What if the apostles had not in fact left writings to us? Would it not be necessary to follow the order of tradition, which was handed down to those to whom they entrusted the churches?" (ibid., 3:4:1).

"It is possible, then, for everyone in every church, who may wish to know the truth, to contemplate the tradition of the apostles which has been made known throughout the whole world. And we are in a position to enumerate those who were instituted bishops by the apostles and their successors to our own times—men who neither knew nor taught anything like these heretics rave about.

"But since it would be too long to enumerate in such a volume as this the successions of all the churches, we shall confound all those who, in whatever manner, whether through self-satisfaction or vainglory, or through blindness and wicked opinion, assemble other than where it is proper, by pointing out here the successions of the bishops of the greatest and most ancient church known to all, founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul, that church which has the tradition and the faith which comes down to us after having been announced to men by the apostles.

"With this church, because of its superior origin, all churches must agree—that is, all the faithful in the whole world—and it is in her that the faithful everywhere have maintained the apostolic tradition" (ibid., 3:3:1-2).

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA

"Well, they preserving the tradition of the blessed

doctrine derived directly from the holy apostles, Peter, James, John, and Paul, the sons receiving it from the father (but few were like the fathers), came by God's will to us also to deposit those ancestral and apostolic seeds. And well I know that they will exult; I do not mean delighted with this tribute, but solely on account of the preservation of the truth, according as they delivered it. For such a sketch as this, will, I think, be agreeable to a soul desirous of preserving from loss the blessed tradition" (*Miscellanies* 1:1 [A.D. 208]).

ORIGEN

"Although there are many who believe that they themselves hold to the teachings of Christ, there are yet some among them who think differently from their predecessors. The teaching of the Church has indeed been handed down through an order of succession from the apostles and remains in the churches even to the present time. That alone is to be believed as the truth which is in no way at variance with ecclesiastical and apostolic tradition" (*The Fundamental Doctrines* 1:2 [A.D. 225]).

CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

"[T]he Church is one, and as she is one, cannot be both within and without. For if she is with Novatian, she was not with [Pope] Cornelius. But if she was with Cornelius, who succeeded the bishop Fabian by lawful ordination, and whom, beside the honor of the priesthood the Lord glorified also with martyrdom, Novatian is not in the Church; nor can he be reckoned as a bishop, who, succeeding to no one, and despising the evangelical and apostolic tradi-

tion, sprang from himself. For he who has not been ordained in the Church can neither have nor hold to the Church in any way" (*Letters* 75:3 [A.D. 253]).

ATHANASIUS

"Again we write, again keeping to the apostolic traditions, we remind each other when we come together for prayer; and keeping the feast in common, with one mouth we truly give thanks to the Lord. Thus giving thanks unto him, and being followers of the saints, 'we shall make our praise in the Lord all the day,' as the psalmist says. So, when we rightly keep the feast, we shall be counted worthy of that joy which is in heaven" (*Festal Letters* 2:7 [A.D. 330]).

"But you are blessed, who by faith are in the Church, dwell upon the foundations of the faith, and have full satisfaction, even the highest degree of faith which remains among you unshaken. For it has come down to you from apostolic tradition, and frequently accursed envy has wished to unsettle it, but has not been able" (*ibid.*, 29).

BASIL THE GREAT

"Of the dogmas and messages preserved in the Church, some we possess from written teaching and others we receive from the tradition of the apostles, handed on to us in mystery. In respect to piety, both are of the same force. No one will contradict any of these, no one, at any rate, who is even moderately versed in matters ecclesiastical. Indeed, were we to try to reject unwritten customs as having no great authority, we would unwittingly injure the gospel

in its vitals; or rather, we would reduce [Christian] message to a mere term" (*The Holy Spirit* 27:66 [A.D. 375]).

EPIPHANIUS OF SALAMIS

"It is needful also to make use of tradition, for not everything can be gotten from sacred Scripture. The holy apostles handed down some things in the scriptures, other things in tradition" (*Medicine Chest Against All Heresies* 61:6 [A.D. 375]).

AUGUSTINE

"[T]he custom [of not rebaptizing converts] . . . may be supposed to have had its origin in apostolic tradition, just as there are many things which are observed by the whole Church, and therefore are fairly held to have been enjoined by the apostles, which yet are not mentioned in their writings" (*On Baptism, Against the Donatists* 5:23[31] [A.D. 400]).

"But the admonition that he [Cyprian] gives us, 'that we should go back to the fountain, that is, to apostolic tradition, and thence turn the channel of truth to our times,' is most excellent, and should be followed without hesitation" (*ibid.*, 5:26[37]).

"But in regard to those observances which we carefully attend and which the whole world keeps, and which derive not from Scripture but from Tradition, we are given to understand that they are recommended and ordained to be kept, either by the apostles themselves or by plenary [ecumenical] councils, the authority of which is quite vital in the Church" (*Letter to Januarius* [A.D. 400]).

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

"[Paul commands,] 'Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you have been taught, whether by word or by our letter' [2 Thess. 2:15].

From this it is clear that they did not hand down everything by letter, but there is much also that was not written. Like that which was written, the unwritten too is worthy of belief. So let us regard the tradition of the Church also as worthy of belief. Is it a tradition? Seek no further" (*Homilies on Second Thessalonians* [A.D. 402]).

VINCENT OF LERINS

"With great zeal and closest attention, therefore, I frequently inquired of many men, eminent for their holiness and doctrine, how I might, in a concise and, so to speak, general and ordinary way, distinguish the truth of the Catholic faith from the falsehood of heretical depravity.

"I received almost always the same answer from all of them—that if I or anyone else wanted to expose the frauds and escape the snares of the heretics who rise up, and to remain intact and in sound faith, it would be necessary, with the help of the Lord, to fortify that faith in a twofold manner: first, of course, by the authority of divine law [Scripture] and then by the tradition of the Catholic Church.

"Here, perhaps, someone may ask: 'If the canon of the scriptures be perfect and in itself more than suffices for everything, why is it necessary that the authority of ecclesiastical interpretation be joined to it?' Because, quite plainly, sacred Scripture, by reason of its own depth, is not accepted by everyone as having one and the same meaning. . . .

"Thus, because of so many distortions of such various errors, it is highly necessary that the line of prophetic and apostolic interpretation be directed in accord with the norm of the ecclesiastical and Catholic meaning" (*The Notebooks* [A.D. 434]).

POPE ACATHO

"[T]he holy Church of God . . . has been established upon the firm rock of this Church of blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles, which by his grace and guardianship remains free from all error, [and possesses that faith that] the whole number of rulers and priests, of the clergy and of the people, unanimously should confess and preach with us as the true declaration of the apostolic tradition, in order to please God and to save their own souls" (Letter read at fourth session of III Constantinople [A.D. 680]).

MAN'S GREATEST ENEMY HAS BEEN VANQUISHED

In this day of the glorious Resurrection of Our Lord, the words of the ancient Psalmist can still be heard: "This is the day which the Lord has made, let us be glad and rejoice in it." But we must remember the events that came before. That first Feast of Feasts was preceded by some very dark days. The Light of the World was pitted against the powers of darkness. The Lord of Life was crucified on the tree of death. His body was taken down, wrapped in a shroud and placed in a tomb. This, in turn, was sealed by the might of the Roman Empire, as its soldiers stood guard at the grave.

Bitter disappointment filled the hearts of Christ's followers. They had thought He would restore the glory of the throne of David, but now He lay dead, imprisoned in a tomb. The apostles had fled in fright and cowered behind closed doors.

Then the astounding and unexpected happened! On the morning of the third day, Christ pierced the seal of the tomb and emerged risen, alive and resurrected. The bonds of death and hell were broken. The hope that Christ's Resurrection brought has since filled the soul of every believing Christian. We now look beyond the grave and death, and towards the hope of reigning with Christ in eternity. "Because I live, you shall live also," is the promise of the Victor over death.

This hope speaks of a reunion with those whom we have "loved and lost for a while." It speaks of the time when we shall see Him whom we have loved and served. It sweetens the sad days of our journey on earth. It sustains us in every circumstance of life, even the moment when we depart this world. Let us proclaim the truth that fills our churches and homes, as well as our hearts: "Christ is Risen! Indeed His is Risen!"