Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD **FREEHOLD, NJ 07728**

Glorious Resurrection in the Flesh of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ **April 24, 2011**

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

+++ The Scripture Study Class will not meets this Tuesday at 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Please come and join us by investing time in learning our precious faith so we can better enjoy and live it! The public is invited to participate with us, so invite a friend or neighbor. In preparation for the next class, please read the twenty-second to twenty-fourth chapters of the Book of Genesis.

+++ Please remember the Resurrection feast is celebrated three days. Monday and Tuesday the Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at 7: 30 PM. Come and join us in prayer and praise!.

+++ There is no fasting this week. Enjoy the Resurrection victory without the encumbrance of penitential fasting!

+++ We acknowledge with deep gratitude the generous and kind offering this past week of gifts to the parish in the amount of $65.00 in blessed memory of our beloved departed parishioner, +Paul Pallas. We pray the merciful Lord provide a blessed repose for the soul of +Paul and grant him Eternal Memory as we thank the generosity of these gracious souls. Any others who would like to join this exclusive list, please see Father as soon as possible.

+++ We have received recently $65.00 as gifts to the church from our parishioners in blessed memory of our beloved +Metropolitan Nicholas. We thank the gracious souls who made the offering and continue to pray the merciful Lord provide blessed repose to the soul of +Metropolitan Nicholas and create for him Eternal Memory!

+++ **A Donor/sponsor is needed for the candles for the coming feast of the Resurrection. The offering is $125.00 and may be given in thanksgiving for blessings received or in blessed memory of a departed soul. Please see Father.**

+++ 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 this past week: Tithe Offering, [redacted]; Candles, $[redacted]; Food Coupons, $[redacted]; Kitchen, $[redacted]; Self-Denial, $[redacted] Holyday, $[redacted]; Flowers, [redacted]; Palm Sunday, $[redacted] Candy Sale, $[redacted]; Resurrection, $[redacted], for a total of $[redacted]. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offered 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! The attendance was 41 adults and 13 children last Sunday.

+++ 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, Pani Lucas, Louis Pasquino, +Paul Szmaida, Debra Szmaida, George Idromenos, Kent Pasquino, Kyle Pasquino, Bob Gorbich, Marina Topsis, Anna Zacharyczuk 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 **$1617.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

For the expansion of our much needed parochial facilities, our parish pledge support to date totals [redacted] As we thank the Lord for inspiring generosity in the hearts of our faithful, we also thank the

donors for accepting the challenge of the Lord in building up His Body. We cordially invite and look forward to receiving additional and increased pledges from all our devoted parishioners.

+++ Please be certain to see **Helen Karpiak** or 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 $5250.00 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 left in the vestibule or on the front porch of the rectory. Please invite your friends and neighbors to assist us in disposing of unwanted clothing, shoes and fabrics.

+++ We remind our faithful only those who are present for the entire Divine Liturgy should come forward to receive Communion. The entire Liturgy means "Amen" to "Amen."

+++ Those who have from time to time taken food home from the church in either plastic kitchen containers or on the aluminum trays, please return them as we note a number of the containers are missing and four trays are no longer around.

+++ May all glory, adoration and worship be accorded our God in the Holy Trinity by all the faithful of our parish with one mind, one soul and one heart each day of the week!

Christ Is Risen!

Indeed He Is Risen!

Death Opens the Door to Life Evermore

We live a short while on earth below,
Reluctant to die for we do not know
Just what "dark death" is all about
And so we view it with fear and doubt,
Not certain of what is around the bend
We look on death as the final end
To all that made us a mortal being
And yet there lies just beyond our seeing
A beautiful life so full and complete
That we should leave with hurrying feet
To walk with God by sacred streams
Amid beauty and peace beyond our dreams—
For all who believe in the RISEN LORD
Have been assured of this reward,
And death for them is just "graduation"
To a higher realm of wide elevation—
For life on earth is a transient affair,
Just a few brief years in which to prepare
For a life that is free from pain and tears
Where time is not counted by hours or years—
For death is only the method God chose
To colonize heaven with the souls of those
Who by their apprenticeship on earth
Proved worthy to dwell in the land of new birth—
So death is not sad . . . it's a time for elation,
A joyous transition . . . the soul's emigration
Into a place where the soul's SAFE and FREE
To live with God through ETERNITY!

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38, 39

Resurrection

Remember how he spoke to you when he was in Galilee, saying the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and crucified and on the third day, rise again **Luke 24: 6, 7.**

...two men were talking to him...of his passage which he was about to fulfill in Jerusalem **Luke 9: 30, 31.**

No need for you to be surprised at this for an hour is coming in which all those in the tombs shall hear his voice and come forth. Those who have done right shall rise to life **John 5: 28, 29.**

...and the One who lives. Once I was dead, but now I live forever and ever. I hold the keys of death and the nether world **Revelation 1: 17, 18.**

They have taken away my Lord **John 20: 13.**

She wept outside the sepulcher **John 20: 11.**

"Mary" **John 20: 16.**

"Rabbi, Teacher, Master" **John 20: 16.**

Go to my brethren **John 20: 17.**

I have seen the Lord **John 20: 18.**

You always associated with the lowly. Though incomparably greater than the mighty and wise, You never sought their company. When You willingly suffered for us, You conquered death by your death, and by your resurrection, You gave life to those who sing :

O Jesus, Delight of our hearts!
O Jesus, Strength of our bodies!
O Jesus, Purity of our souls!
O Jesus, Enlightenment of our thoughts!
O Jesus, Joy of our conscience!
O Jesus, confident Hope!
O Jesus, eternal Memory!
O Jesus, the highest Praise!
O Jesus, supreme Name!
O Jesus, my Desire, do not cast me away!
O Jesus, my Pastor, look after me!
O Jesus, my Savior, save me!
O Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me!

O Jesus, all the angelic choirs unceasingly glorify your most holy Name, singing in the heavens : Holy, holy, holy. Likewise, we sinners here on earth sing out with earthly lips : Alleluia.

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!"

Wisdom Of The

Byzantine Fathers

He has declared the cup, a part of creation, to be his own blood, from which he causes our blood to flow; and the bread, a part of creation, he has established as his own body, from which he gives increase to our bodies. When the mixed cup of wine and water, and the baked bread receives the Word of God and becomes the Eucharist, the body of Christ, and from these the substance of our flesh is increased and supported, how can they say that the flesh is not capable of receiving the gift of God, which is eternal life, flesh which is nourished by the Body and Blood of the Lord, and is in fact a part of him? Saint Ireneus.

Formerly there was baptism in an obscure way...now, however, in full view, there is regeneration in water and in the Holy Spirit. Formerly, in an obscure way, there was manna for food, now, however, in full view, there is true food, the flesh of the Word of God, as he himself says, "My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink" John 6: 56 Origen.

HARD TO BELIEVE

"To their minds the story was madness and they could not believe it."

There is a pessimism that persists in our spiritual thinking, despite claims that we prefer to "accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative." The darker side of life is always more convincing it seems, at least more compelling and interesting than the brighter. Bad news makes headlines; good news rarely does.

The Good News of the Resurrection is no exception. Many Christians can tell the story of our Lord's suffering and death in detail, from the triumphant entry into Jeruslaem to the Last Words from the Cross. But few know the gospel story of the glorious Resurrection.

We believe the Good News of course, as it is the very basis of our faith. Logically, we know that if Christ is not risen from the dead, we would be fools to be Christians.

For several reasons, though, we find it difficult to fully grasp the profound and abiding truth of the Resurrection, either spiritually or emotionally. Part of the problem is that western believers have no traditions and customs surrounding the feast of the Resurrection to help them savor it, as everyone has for the feast of the Nativity of our Lord. Yet, it is true there is nothing to compare with the holyday carols that are traditionally sung prior to the Nativity celebration, to prepare us for the wonder of Bethlehem. The celebration of the Lord's Resurrection follows what many consider the somber Great Fast and its joy is profoundly more pervasive and deeper.

Another more realistic obstacle to our feeling the reality of the Resurrection is that, as human beings, we have no experience of sheer glory or of life after death. There is no frame of reference for never-ending, glorified life. Having felt and experienced human joy and suffering, we can identify with the early life and the Passion of our Lord. But His glorious life beyond the grave in eternity has no parallel in our own existence that we can call upon to undergird and reinforce our understanding.

It is comforting to know that we are not alone in our difficulty. There are countless examples in the gospel account of the Resurrection of the reluctance of the disciples to believe our Lord is truly risen.

When Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found it empty, she ran to tell Peter and John. They observed the vacant spot and folded garments, and came back

"wondering what this might mean." After rejoining the other disciples in the Upper Room, they barred the doors in great fear.

When the holy women came and told of seeing an angel of the Lord at the tomb, who told them that Christ is risen, they still found it difficult to believe. "To their minds, the story was madness and they could not believe it."

They could easily believe in death, in loss, in shattered dreams, in privation; they could not believe in Life Renewed. The one thing they had all forgotten is what we should always remember: that our Lord never spoke of His Passion without immediately foretelling the Resurrection. "Destroy this temple," Christ said, referring to His body, "and in three days I will build it again."

On another occasion, He told them, "The time has come when the Son of Man will be ...mocked and scourged and crucified, but on the third day he will rise again."

As late as the Mystical Supper, Jesus told them, "I am going away, but I am coming back and then I will take you to myself, so that where I am you may also be." It was so clear, so constantly repeated, but they all forgot, overwhelmed by the significant final negative events. Even when He appeared in their midst in the Upper Room, they thought it was a ghost. He held out His hands so they could see the wounds, invited them to "grasp" his "hands and see" he "was flesh and blood and not a spirit." The only thing that finally convinced them was when He asked if they had anything to eat. The simple, human act of eating was what registered with them; ghosts cannot eat.

We cannot truthfully fault Thomas for doubting; he was not with the others; he did not see and witness as they did. In fact, we should be indebted to him for the words his doubt brought from our blessed Lord. "Thomas, because you have seen, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." It isn't seeing that's believing; it's just the opposite. We have not seen, so we can believe. There is a risk to faith. It takes courage to hope. The feast of the Resurrection is our grounds for both.

There was *one* who never doubted. We know that "she kept all his words, pondering over them in her heart." That is a true definition of hope, relying on the promises of Christ, remembering them and even joyfully living them. It was, surely this, which gave the Mother of God the strength to stand strong at the foot of the Cross. It is also why we can address her in prayer as "our Life, our Sweetness and our Hope." May our risen Saviour give us the courage to always look beyond the darkness of present troubles to the bright promise of eternal life that this feast promises us.

He Rose On The Third Day

Belief in the Resurrection of our Lord is the hinge point and pivotal vitality in the recitation and profession of the Creed. It is an event that demands our faith response and is challenged by the observable physical facts of the world in which we live. The fact, however, is that we are mortal and that the physical body that is "us," which we usually say we "have," and which we erroneously think is ours, will expire and die.

In this world, we exist with physical death every day. People that are close to us, whom we know and love, die and are buried. Newspapers have lists of people who die each day. We hear or read of tragedies continuously. All of these people, those close to us and those unknown and distant, depart from the world and do not return. Their exit is permanent. The body ceases functioning and dissolves into its component parts. No one who has died comes back to tell us what happened to them.

Even the funeral liturgy of the Church reflects these human realities. In the hymns of farewell in the heart-rending prayers, we sing, "Now all the senses are idle, yet a short time ago they were filled with life; all are useless, dead and numb. The eyes have closed, the feet and hands lie helpless and the ears are deaf; the tongue is silent, committed to the grave."

The prayer of the Church puts into perspective, from its source in the soul as an expression of the departed, into the mouth and on the lips of the dead person, "Yesterday I spoke with you and suddenly there came upon me the awesome hour of death. Come all you who love me and bid farewell, for I shall no longer walk with you or speak with you."

In the face of this human and physical reality of death, we proclaim in faith that one person has, in fact, risen from the dead, Jesus Christ, our Lord. He truly died on the cross. He was tortured; He was nailed, hands and feet, to the wood of the cross; He breathed his last and his side was pierced with a soldier guard's lance. He was wrapped in burial clothes and his dead body was reverently placed in a tomb. Yet, we proclaim He is alive.

When the women came to the tomb to complete the anointing of the body, they found no body, but angels instead, who told them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here; He is risen!" Luke 24: 5, 6. A similar scene is described in the Gospel of St. Mark (16: 5 - 7) and St. Matthew (28: 5 - 7). The gospel of St. John does not describe the vision of angels, but the women find the tomb empty of a body and Jesus himself appears to Mary Magdalene.

Physical science would hold it to be impossible, that a dead body can come back to life, but this is precisely what these witnesses tell us. This is our precious faith, not wishful thinking.

How then, do we accept the Resurrection in faith? How owe embrace its enveloping truth as our own? Do we say the Resurrection is a miracle? The gospels speak often of the miracles, the "wondrous works" done by Jesus. In fact, when the disciples of John the Baptist ask Jesus if He is the Messiah, Jesus responds, "...the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them" Matthew 11: 5.

We would define a miracle today as a suspension of the laws of nature in a particular case. Though people sometimes claim that this is impossible, the gospel is full of eyewitness accounts that wondrous things did happen. We cannot, therefore, say that they are impossible.

The gospels record resurrection from the dead Jesus raises his friend Lazarus from the tomb after four days and He raises the daughter of Jairus and the son of the widow of Naim. In Jesus' name, Peter raises Tabitha, and Paul raises the young boy who falls from the window. In all these cases, the return to life might be described as the ultimate cure. They are also a sign that Jesus brings life, that his very presence is life-giving to human beings who have the living gift of faith.. This last point is vital and very important to remember.

When we profess the Creed, we are expressing faith response in a person, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. If we remain within the natural world and its physical limited laws, miracles become improbable. However, here we encounter God not as some impersonal power, but as a personal, ever-creating and always sustaining Life.

In the gospels, Jesus does give life to others, but they return to a life in this world. A wise elderly man once questioned his parish priest. He said, "If Lazarus had to return to a life which he would again have to depart in death, what was the meaning of his resurrection?" Of course we know it was a prefiguring of the actual Resurrection of Christ. If He could raise Lazarus, He certainly can of his own volition rise from death meted out to him by enemies. He shows He has power over life and death, that He is obviously not mere man

Here we see the difference between the resurrection of Lazarus and the Resurrection of Christ. When Jesus rose, it was a wondrous event of an entirely different class. Jesus is not returned to daily ordinary life with us; He did not die again. His Resurrection is a glorification of the human nature that He embraced in infancy at his coming into the world.. It changes the whole meaning of our existence. Therefore, when we say, "He rose on the third day," we are testifying that we are no longer the same. We have a new relationship with a person who overpowers nature because He is the Author and Creator of it.

We are indeed immortal flesh and blood, but now, in Christ, we have a hope fulfilled and a destiny obtainable that is beyond nature. Through the living revelation of the Word of God beyond words, we begin to understand what the Gospel of creation means, "God created man in his image; he created him, male and female he created them" Genesis 1: 27.

In this way, the Resurrection of Jesus is a more than simple suspension of the laws of nature. It is instead, a new and enduring vision of what kind of creature man actually is. Therefore, the Creed is our expression of St. Paul's faith in Jesus Christ, when he wrote, "Christ is raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" 1 Corinthians 15: 20.

In the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great, we make his our prayer: "Descending by the cross into the place of the righteous dead to fulfill all things in himself, He free us from death's despair and rose on the third day...He became the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep, the first-born of the dead."

Do I Know Him?

I wish to know Christ and the power flowing from his resurrection; likewise to know how to share in his sufferings by being formed into the pattern of his death. This do I hope that I may arrive at resurrection from the dead
Philippians 3: 10.

In the hometown of Jesus, folks had a hard time accepting him for who He really is. Didn't they know him while He was growing up? Did they permit familiarity to breed contempt? They knew his parents and the rest of his family. The question is, did they really *know* him?

The people of Laodicea knew about Jesus and claimed to belong to him. They were comfortable in just knowing about Jesus and did not want to see themselves as needy. They had money and a goodly share of earthly treasure and everything needed for a good life. Did they know Jesus?

For as long as most of us can remember, we have been taught about Jesus Christ. We have even memorized many of the words and teachings of Christ. We continue to enjoy singing many songs and hymns about Jesus, his work and the lives of the saints He inspired to holiness. We have studied many of this teachings. The question remains, do we really know him?

Saul knew much about Jesus and it upset him that his fellow Jews were following and living the teachings of this Jesus. He determined to bring a stop to this growing menace and spreading heresy. Did Saul know Jesus? Only after his dramatic encounter with Jesus did he really know him. What a profound and life-changing difference!

Knowing about Jesus can be helpful, but knowing Jesus is a must for salvation. There is a difference between knowing about and actually knowing Christ. Most people know about him, but how few are those who actually know him. And there is a profound difference. The only way for us to have everlasting life is through Jesus and it cannot be a cursory relationship. Knowing Jesus is suffering with him and dying to self. No matter how much we may know or understand about Jesus, we do not know him until we understand plainly how needy we are, Jesus wants us to study and learn more about him and his teaching. But He longs for us to know him in an intimate way.

The Risen Christ

Christ is risen and no dead remain in the grave..." What is the meaning of this daring and startling statement in that admirable and encompassing sermon of St. John Chrysostom which is solemnly proclaimed at the Matins of the Resurrection? Are not men still dying and not one of the dead arose again? Does not human life still stand under the sign of death, inevitable and universal? And men are still sitting "in the region and the shadow of death..." So it may seem. But "a great light" has already arisen, and man has hope, or rather he has certainty and assurance. Christ is Risen! He "was dead and buried," but He arose again on the third day. He rose as the First of all departed, as the First of all who sleep in death. He is the First and all men will follow Him in due season.

By His Resurrection He raises the entire human race. He deposes death. He renders death impotent and powerless and opens the way of life and incorruption to all mortals. In the Resurrection of the Lord, the mystery of the general Resurrection is inaugurated. St. Paul makes this plain: "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen...for if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen" 1 Corinthians 15: 13, 16. The whole meaning of Christ's Resurrection is a beginning and potent sign of the final and last and general Resurrection. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, concludes St. Paul (1 Corinthians 15: 22). This is the very message of the Resurrection. At this time we celebrate this mystery of an ultimate healing and restoration of all creation, which had been mortally wounded and infected by sin. But the sing of death is already taken away. The hopelessness of death is already abolished and abrogated. "Death was shown to be but sleep" as St. John Chrysostom puts it. He continues, "It is true, we still physically die as before, yet we do not remain in death, and this is not to die... the power and very essence of death is that a dead man cannot return to life... but if after death he is to be restored and given a better life, then this is no longer death, but just a falling asleep..." By the power of the life-giving Cross, which is disclosed in the glorious Resurrection of our Lord, the power and dominion of death are extinguished, the power of destruction itself is destroyed, "trampling down death by death."

The whole and entire cosmos is as it were restored and rejuvenated in the Resurrection of our Lord, to Whom all power belongs in heaven and on earth. A mysterious "Spring of Grace" has already begun, an unfailing spring of restored life and renewed truth, which never ends has been initiated. In His glorious Resurrection Christ manifested the power of life and the whole of creation was enlightened and permeated by the brilliance of Resurrection triumph. New life has been bestowed from heaven. This gives us assurance of an everlasting joy, of an ultimate victory.

We celebrate the death of death, the destruction of the place of the dead, the abolition of fear, the beginning of another and eternal life. This is the message of the Resurrection. On this day the Church celebrates in anticipation and in advance the coming day when the last enemy will finally and totally be destroyed and eliminated and annihilated. Death will be swallowed up in victory, when

this corruptible body of ours will put on incorruption, that God maybe all in all (1 Corinthians 15: 26, 54, 28). And this far more than just a promise.

The new and enduring age is already inaugurated, the mystery of the Resurrection is being enacted and celebrated in the world. We have now a betrothal of life eternal in the sacramental Mysteries of our blessed Church. We have already passed from death to life and life abundant, in Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. "Let no one fear death," says St. John Chrysostom, "for the Saviour's death has set us free."

"Fear not, for I am the First and Last; I am he who lives and was dead; and behold I am alive forever. Amen. And I have the keys to the place of the dead and death itself" Revelation 1: 17 – 19.

OUR SAVIOR TRIUMPHANT

What a glorious dawn when Jesus arose,
Our blessed Redeemer, our Savior and King!
Our thoughts are reversed to that wonderful day,
When life in all nature blooms anew in the spring.

Victor o'er death, He's the Giver of life,
Life for eternity, life evermore.
Oh, what a blessed hope for us all,
Through the dear Savior we love and adore!

Thank God, there's victory for all who'll obey,
Victory from every allurement and sin,
Freedom through Christ, our Savior triumphant,
Freedom from evil without and within.

Lives Distressed Cannot Be Blessed

Refuse to be discouraged,
Refuse to be distressed,
For when we are despondent
Our life cannot be blessed—
For doubt and fear and worry
Close the door to *Faith* and *Prayer,*
For there's no room for blessings
When we're lost in deep despair—
So remember when you're troubled
With uncertainty and doubt
It is best to tell *Our Father*
What our fear is all about—
For unless we seek His guidance
When troubled times arise
We are bound to make decisions
That are twisted and unwise—
But when we view our problems
Through the eyes of God above,
Misfortunes turn to blessings
And hatred turns to love.

Fear thou not; for I am with thee:
be not dismayed; for I am thy God:
I will strengthen thee;
yea, I will help thee;
yea, I will uphold thee
with the right hand of my righteousness.
Isaiah 41:10

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.

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.**

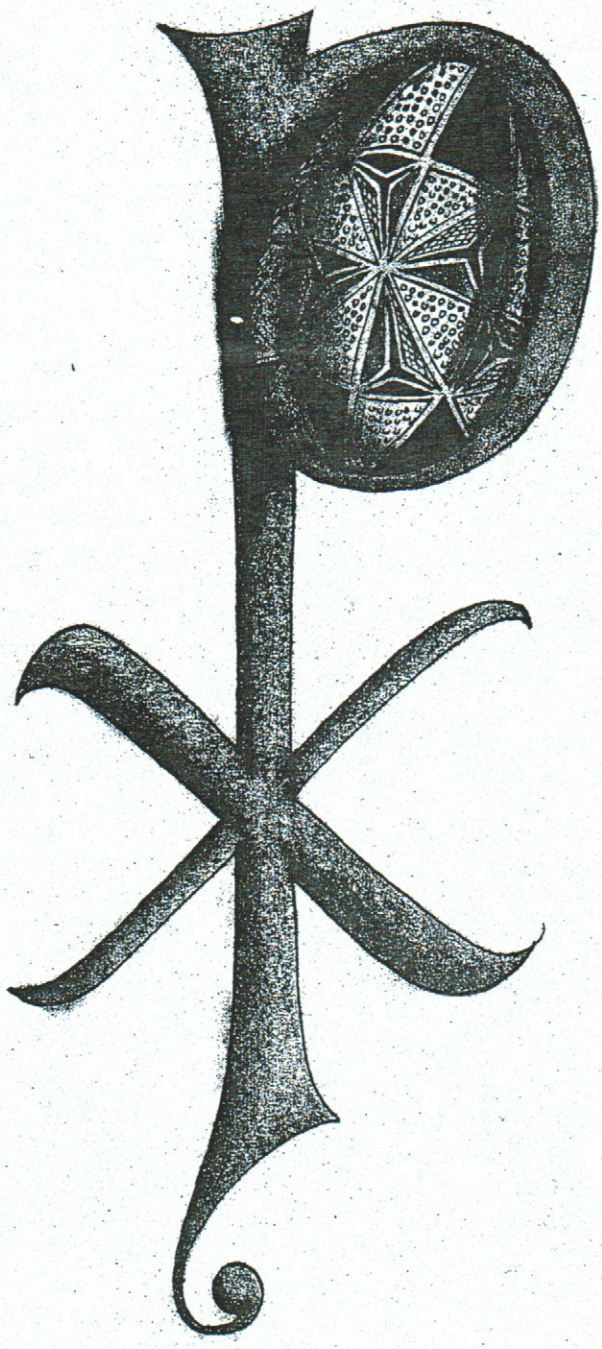
Although You descended into the grave, O Immortal One, You destroyed the power of death; You arose again as Victor, O Christ God! You announced to the women bearing ointment: "Rejoice!" You gave peace to your apostles and Resurrection to the fallen **Kontakion, Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord.**

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.**



Let Us Pray on This Holy Day

Let our prayer continue
through a joyous waking spring
In thanking God for everything
a newborn spring can bring.
And in the resurrection
that takes place in nature's sod
Let us understand more fully
the risen Savior, Son of God.
And let us see the beauty
and the glory and the grace
That surrounds us in the springtime
as the smiling of God's face.
And through a happy springtime
and a summer filled with love
May we walk into the autumn
with our thoughts on God above.
The God who sends the winter
and wraps the earth in death
Will always send the springtime
with an awaking breath
To every flower and leaflet
and to every shrub and tree
And that same God will also send
new life to you and me.

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 Alpheus, 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.

Jesus Is the Resurrection

Jesus Is the Resurrection

John 11:17-24

A man named Lazarus lay sick in Bethany, Mary's and Martha's village. These women sent a message to Jesus: "Lazarus is sick." But when Jesus heard this, he waited two days. Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Let's go back to Judea."

"But Teacher," they said, "people want to kill you there."

"Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep," he said. "I'm going to awaken him."

"Well, Lord, if he's only asleep, he'll be fine." Jesus meant that Lazarus was dead. The disciples didn't understand this.

When Jesus got to Bethany, Lazarus had been dead four days. Martha went out to meet Jesus while Mary stayed home. "Lord, if you'd been here," she said, "Lazarus wouldn't have died. But I know God will give you anything you ask."

"Your brother will return from death."

"I know, Lord," said Martha. "He'll come back with the resurrection on the last day."

Questions: What did the disciples think would happen if Jesus went to Judea? When did Martha think Lazarus would return from death?

Jesus Is the Resurrection

John 11:25–38

I am the resurrection and the life," said Jesus to Martha. "Those who believe in me may die, but they'll live again. Do you believe this, Martha?"

"Yes, Lord." Martha replied. "I believe you're Christ, God's Son who's come into the world." Then she hurried home.

"Mary," whispered Martha, "the Teacher is here. He wants to see you." The Jews saw Mary leave and followed her. They thought she was going to Lazarus' tomb to weep. But they found her kneeling at Jesus' feet.

"Lord, you should have been here," Mary wept. "Then Lazarus wouldn't have died." Jesus saw her weeping. He looked up and saw all her Jewish friends weeping. This troubled him.

"Where did you bury him?"

"Come and see, Lord."

Jesus began to weep. "See how much he loved Lazarus," some said.

But others said, "He made the blind man see. Couldn't he have kept this man from dying?" These words made Jesus sad.

Questions: Jesus said he was the resurrection and the life. What did Martha think that meant? What did the people say that made Jesus sad?

PASCHA: THE GLORIOUS FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION

Of all the meaningful feast days on our Church Calendar, everything pales in comparison to Pascha, which is rightfully proclaimed to be the "Feast of Feasts" in the eighth ode of the Canon of Resurrection Matins. Many of the early Church Fathers wrote of the special significance of this Holy day. In his Paschal sermon, St. Gregory the Theologian writes: "The Resurrection is the feast that surpasses all others, just as the sun surpasses the stars." St. John Chrysostom extols Pascha with these words: "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you have fallen! Christ is risen, and life reigns! Christ is risen, and the tomb is emptied of the dead!"

The word "Pascha" is derived from the Hebrew word "pasach" which means "Passover." For the Apostles and the early Christians, our Lord's Resurrection was viewed as a victory over death - when Christ indeed "passed over" from death to life, thus opening the gates to the kingdom of heaven for all of His faithful followers.

Through its rich symbolism, the icon of the Resurrection beautifully portrays this victory. It depicts our Lord entering into the realm of death, breaking the bonds that had imprisoned mankind since the fall from grace of Adam and Eve. The icon shows Christ reaching out to our first parents, freeing them from the curse of sin. He is surrounded by John the Baptist and other righteous figures from the Old Testament, who lived their lives in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah. Christ's brilliant white robes further emphasize the radiance of this Feast.

May the light shining forth from the empty tomb illumine our path and ultimately lead us to our heavenly home. Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

The Orthodox Weekly Bulletin . . . . . Vestal, Cliffwood, New Jersey . . . . . Litho in U.S.A.