



# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Resurrection of our Lord, God and Saviour

May 5, 2013

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

+++ We have festal anointing today on the occasion of our Lord's Triumphal and Victorious Resurrection. The customary greeting is "Christ Is Risen!" to which we reply, "Indeed He Is Risen!"

+++ Today a special holyday offering is taken after the homily. Please be generous as it reflects our gratitude to the Body of Christ for participating in its grace of eternal life.

+++ We celebrate Resurrection joy on Bright Monday and Tuesday. Each day the Divine Liturgy is celebrated at 7: 30 PM. Please join us in prayer and praise.

+++ During this coming Bright Week, we are freed from fasting as we rejoice in our gift of eternal life which has no limitations.

+++ We thank the good souls who offered their time to keep the Sepulcher Vigil. May the risen Saviour bless you devoted faithful souls who by their prayers enhanced our victorious celebration.

+++ Please keep the intentions of these members of our parish intercession community in your daily prayers: Anna, Ryan, Betty, Mary, Beth, Ann Helene, Debra and Michael.

+++ 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 invite all our parishioners to offer for seven day lights to beautify our church for the Resurrection services. Please remember to offer prayers for your intentions as the candles are lighted.

+++ 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, \$203.00; Candles, \$29.00; Self Sacrifice Great Fast Offering, \$45.00; Flowers, \$43.00; Kitchen, \$15.00; Holy Day \$185.00, for a total of \$520.00. 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! The attendance was 44 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, Eleni Pallas, Anna Zacharyczuk, Debra Szmajda, Michael Douglas, Maria Garcia 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 **\$1694.00** 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 \$5550.00 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.

+++ Please pray the Lord our God grants us an enrichment of our spiritual lives for his glory.



LORD



TEACH  
US

## Resurrection

*He will revive us after two days; on the third day he will raise us up, to live in his presence*  
Hosea 6: 2.

*God is not the God of the dead, but of the living* Matthew 22: 32.

*He is not here. He is risen!* Luke 24: 6.

*All who are in the grave shall hear his voice* John 5: 28.

*I will raise him up on the last day* John 6: 40.

*Your brother will rise again. I am the resurrection and the life* John 11: 23, 25.

*The dead man came out...let him go free* John 11: 43, 44.

*In the time after his suffering he showed them in many convincing ways that he was alive, appearing to them over the course of forty days and speaking with them about the reign of God* Acts of the Apostles 1: 3.

*This is the Jesus Christ God raised up and we are his witnesses* Acts of the Apostles 2: 32.

*Yet God raised him up from the dead* Acts of the Apostles 13: 30.

*Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up...He spoke of the temple of his body*  
John 2: 19, 21.



# Christ Is Risen!

We embrace one another as we rejoice in the unwaning brightness of the Lord's Passover. The tomb is empty and all of humanity – indeed all of creation – is called to enter into new and eternal life. The God-Man is risen and now human life is beckoned to enter into His divine glory. For in Christ, God has chosen us “before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will” Ephesians 1: 4, 5.

From the empty tomb comes the fundamental proclamation that death has been swallowed up by life. It is the proclamation that reveals the Saviour's death on the cross as life-bearing and life-giving. And it is His life-creating death that now places the Church in the midst of the world as the new paradise whose beauty surpasses that of Eden.

As the new paradise, the Church, sustained and guided by the Holy Spirit, is given to the world in order to continue the ministry of the crucified and Resurrected Lord. It is the Church which is now commissioned to announce and reveal that the realm of sin and death is vanquished. Thus, in our joy and in our fasting the missionary vocation of the Church is refreshed and bolstered. Now, as if for the first time, the Church is entrusted by the Lord Himself to extend His paradise, His kingdom, throughout the world.

But in order for the ministry of Christ to continue, in order for the saving news of the empty tomb to expand the boundaries of paradise, this great and radiant feast must be confirmed in and through our lives. For only when the Lord's Passover becomes our Passover from death to life, paradise will expand, and in the end, everyone and everything will rest in Christ Who will truly be “all in all” Colossians 3: 11.

What we celebrate is the salvation of the world. What we celebrate is the gift that takes away humanity's suffering and overcomes all its fears. Through the Cross, the tomb and the Resurrection on the third day, the world, steeped in countless divisions, violent conflict, agonizing misery and spiritual loneliness, is called to receive the unwaning light that leads to paradise. Here, in this new garden, all the maladies of human nature are cured. Here, in the paradise of the Lord's Church all evil and sin are consumed by the One Whose death has devoured death. Let us proceed to the empty tomb bearing in our hearts and on our lips the news that transfigures the universe. In word and deed, let us proclaim this news so that others maybe united to the new and eternal paradise where all shall bear the form of the risen triumphant and victorious Saviour!



# Christ Is Risen!

Because Christ our God is true man as well, He died a full and genuine human death upon the Cross. But because He is not only true man, but true God, because He is Life itself and the source of life, His death was not and could not be the final conclusion.

The Crucifixion is itself a victory; but on Great Friday the victory is hidden, whereas on the day of Resurrection it is made manifest to the entire world. Christ rises from the dead, and by His rising He delivers us from the anxiety and terror of death. The victory of the Cross is confirmed, love is openly shown to be stronger than hatred, and life to be more enduring than death. God Himself has died and risen from the dead, and so there is no more death; even death is filled with God. Because Christ is risen, we need no longer be afraid of any dark or evil force in the universe. As we proclaim each year at the Resurrection services, words attributed to St. John Chrysostom:

**Let none fear death, for the death of the Saviour has set us free.**

**Christ Is Risen and the demons have fallen.**

**Christ Is Risen and the angels rejoice!**

Here, as everywhere, our blessed Church is maximalist. We repeat with St. Paul, "If Christ is not risen, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is also in vain" (1 Corinthians 15: 14). How shall we continue to be Christians, followers of Christ? If we believe Christianity and the Church to be founded on delusion, what is our recourse? Just as it is not adequate to treat Christ merely as a prophet or teacher of righteousness, and not as God incarnate, so it is not sufficient to explain away the Resurrection by saying that Christ's 'spirit' somehow lived on among his disciples. One who is not 'true God of true God,' who has not conquered death by dying and rising from the dead, cannot be our salvation and our eternal hope. We who follow the Saviour believe that there is a genuine resurrection from the dead in the sense that Christ's body was reunited with his human soul, and that the tomb was found to be empty. For us, when we engage in dialogue with other so-called Christians, some of the most significant divisions among those who call themselves 'Christian' is that not all believe in the Resurrection as the Church teaches it based on the evidence of Scripture.

**"You are to be witnesses of these things" (Luke 24: 48). The Risen Christ sends us out into the world to share with others the "great joy" of His glorious Resurrection.**

From its very beginning the Church of Jesus Christ has been proclaiming the joy, the only possible joy on earth, of the Resurrection truth without which our blessed faith is incomprehensible. It is only in Resurrection joy that the Church is victorious in the world and it loses the world when it loses its inherent joy, when it ceases to be a credible witness of Resurrection joy. Of all accusations against Christianity, the most damning one was uttered by Nietzsche when he said that Christians had no genuine joy. Thank God he was not speaking of Orthodox believers. "For behold I bring you tidings of great joy..." (Luke 2: 10; 24: 52). So we must recover this meaning of great joy as we celebrate this feast day today. It is precisely the proper celebration of Passion Week which ends with the celebration of the Resurrection that brings us to this uncontrolled joy in Christ because we have walked with Christ in his passion and entered the tomb with him, to be raised with him in Resurrection victory, that lead us body and soul to this



exuberant Paschal Joy! That is why absenting ourselves from the Passion Week celebrations is unthinkable for the believer.

Just as the pious old mystic used to say: "Spread abroad the name of Jesus in humility and with a meek heart; show Him your feebleness, and He will become your strength," so we were invited by the liturgical life of the Church to live the mystery of Passion Week at the Mystical Supper, at the Crucifixion, and finally at the tomb witnessing the entombment of Christ which finally led to the seeing the glorious Resurrection so that our faith commitment would be sealed and completed. The disciples could rejoice only because of what they saw and experienced. We can celebrate the Resurrection only because of what we lived and experienced this past week. If we did not keep company with Him these last few days without interruption, we can never come to understand the joy He frequently speaks of regardless how many slices of ham we digest and how many rings of sausage we swallow. We will never be filled on this food or satisfied because we are eternally empty unless we are satiated with Him. The Risen Christ alone can satisfy our thirst and our hunger.

## The Risen Saviour

Into the black, yawning grave fly all hopes, plans, habits, calculations, and above all, meaning: the meaning of our lives. Meaning loses its meaning, and another incomprehensible meaning has caused wings to grow on its back. Anyone who has had this experience of eternity, if only once; who has understood the way he is going, if only once; who has seen the One Who goes before Him, if only once, such a person will find it most difficult to turn aside from this path: to him all comfort will seem ephemeral, all treasures valueless, all companions unnecessary, if among them he fails to see the One Companion, carrying His Cross and leaping from the grave triumphantly.

Today's feast of the Resurrection teaches us that Christ has become everything for us and we must become everything for Him. The whole man would not have been saved unless Christ took upon Himself the whole man. Because Christ is perfect Love, His life on earth can never become a life of the past. He remains present for all eternity. He alone bore our sins as one whole person. But in death, He took us all into His work; therefore the gospel, the good news is now present with us for every generation. Each one of us, in our own time, enters into His own sacrifice, enters with Him into the tomb and rises with Him at the time of the Great Judgment.

The deepest foundation of the hope and joy which characterize the Church of Christ and its celebration of this feast penetrates all its worship so thoroughly that the Resurrection becomes the very pivot, the very core, the very impelling center of all our exultation. It is an explosion of joy of soul, the same joy which the disciples felt when they initially beheld the risen Saviour in the flesh, recognized essentially by his wounds. It is the explosion of cosmic joy at the triumph of life, after the overwhelming sorrow over death, death which even the Lord God had to endure and suffer because He became man. That is why even the heavens rejoice and the earth exults; all the world both visible and invisible keeps this feast day and celebrates this holyday for Christ our eternal joy is risen. All things are now filled with the certainty of life, whereas before all only moved inevitably toward death.



## IDENTITY BADGES

The wounds of Christ are proof of his dying, the proof of His Resurrection. As He stands humbly before the disciples, glorified, yet bearing the marks of His agony, His friends can see and touch all that He has been through for them and for all mankind: *"Look at my hands and my feet; it is really I"* Luke 24: 39.

No impostor, no ghost, would take on the burden of these wounds. No one other than the risen Jesus could bring such joy and peace, and yet be so heavily scarred. Even on the icon of the Risen Saviour triumphing over death in the place of the righteous dead, the Saviour is shown bearing the scars from the Cross. This price of our salvation is marked on Him for all eternity; it is the price of assuming our sins and freeing us of them.

Wounds can be a source of identification. They are not to be forgotten, camouflaged or ignored, but worn like badges or trophies of great price and value. They testify to who we are, reflecting all the physical suffering, the mental anguish, the emotional crises that have been uniquely ours. They proclaim, that like Jesus, we also have endured a time of great trial, that we have been washed in our own blood, as well as in the blood of the Lamb.

Our Lord purchased our salvation at great price. The cost of our redemption was not cheap. The Saviour did not recoil from it; He accepted and fulfilled what the Eternal Father expected from Him in reconciling mankind from the alienation of Adam.

Our identity badges, our wounds are our guarantee that a time will come when all wounds will be bound and when all weeping will be turned into triumphant laughter because it is what we learn after we know it all that really counts. St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: *Our knowledge is imperfect and our prophesying is imperfect. When the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child, I used to talk like a child, think like a child, reason like a child. When I became mature, I put childish things aside. now we see indistinctly, as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. My knowledge is imperfect now; then I shall know even as I am known"* 1 Corinthians 13: 9-12.





## LIFE OUT OF DEATH

Only as we die to ourselves and live for God can we bring forth any fruit worthy of redemption in His sight. Total dying to self lies at the root of all true piety. The spiritual life must grow out of death. That is why St. Paul insisted, *"I die daily"* 1 Corinthians 15: 31. Many deceive themselves because they seek to be alive to God before they are dead to their own sinful nature. That is why St. Paul makes the assertion in truth because there must be a renunciation of all that is unspiritual, of all that is associated with the death of the world and man's old identity and ego. Only as we thus permit Christ to stir up the grace that is within us according to His perfect will, can we expect Him to work through us for His certain glory. And of course if we pursue this path of the Holy Spirit, we must expect to be scorned, misunderstood, and even persecuted. Those who take the pathway of self resignation must be insensible to everything that is done against them as long as they are certain they are treading the prescribed pilgrim-way of holy fruitfulness. To die daily to self, and thus experience more fully the Resurrection power of Christ working through and in us as clear channels for His grace, is the very nature of our baptismal vocation.

"O help! O have mercy! I'm buried alive,"  
The little seed said in distraction as it aloud cried.  
But the Gardener worked on with singing and mirth,  
Putting each seed deep beneath the good earth.  
The last words they heard as they left the sweet light,  
Were: "Fear not, little seed, it is quite all right,  
For this is my method for harvest so fair,  
To bury your ego with planning and care.  
You'll thank me for this with a smile,  
As you say, "Blessed gardener, It is worth while."  
We joyously sing, 'Let the beauty of Jesus be seen,'  
But what is our song, when the Gardener comes in?  
O Soul, in the process of beauty Divine,  
Forget not Your God is at work at all time.  
At tools He may use, therefore take not alarm,  
Let eyes look ahead, beyond temporal harm.  
Give place to the "burial" or "fire" with a smile  
And your life story will end, "It was all worth while."

We always want the Lord to work through us, but He desires to work in us. If we let Him do the latter, He will do the former.

## Resurrection Services

The feast of the glorious Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is the principal and most ancient Christian festival celebrated with great solemnity from its very inception. Already in the fourth century it was called *the feast of feasts*, since by its solemnity it surpassed all other holyday celebrations as the "sun surpasses all other stars by its brightness," according to the observation and insight of St. Gregory Nazianzen in one of his homilies. The commemoration of Christ's Resurrection is indeed "the day the Lord has made" therefore the faithful are encouraged to be "glad and rejoice in it" Psalms 118: 24.

The ancient word for this holy day, *the Pasch* is derived from the Hebrew *pesach* which means *passing over*. St. Gregory Nazianzen explains for us: "This great and venerable Feast of Passover in Hebrew is called *Pesach* which means passing over. Historically it recalls the passing over of the Israelites from Egypt into the Promised Land, but spiritually for Christians, it means the passing over from things below, from the earth, to things above, to heaven."

Among Slavic people, this great feast is called *Velikden, the Great Day*. And it is indeed a great day on account of its important events, its lasting meaning and its solemn celebration. The use of this word is inspired by Scripture, "for that day was a great and solemn feast day" John 19: 31,

and can be traced to the fourth century, being used for the first time by St. Athanasius (d. 373), in one of his pastoral letters for the holy day. Another description for this holyday among Slavs is *Svi'tloje Voskresenije*, translated as *Glorious Resurrection*, since it is celebrated with solemn, joyous festivities of all sorts, both religiously, spiritually and socially.

The astounding Resurrection of our Lord in the Orthodox Church is solemnly proclaimed at the feast day morning services, called *Matins of the Resurrection* celebrated shortly after midnight or early in the morning. These services were composed at the beginning of the eighth century by the renown Orthodox hymnographer, St. John Damascene (d. 749). He was inspired in their composition by Holy Scripture and by two famous Resurrection Orations of St. Gregory Nazianzen (d. 389).

The *Matins of Resurrection* are constructed around the Passover Canon in which the Risen Christ is repeatedly extolled and glorified for His final victory over sin and death. Because of its enchanting beauty and its deep spiritual meaning, it is called *The Golden Canon*, since by it St. John Damascene inaugurated the golden age of Orthodox hymnography.

The Resurrection Canon of St. John Damascene is a magnificent liturgical



poem in honor of Christ's victorious Resurrection and its leading theme is given to us in the first hymn: "It is the day of Resurrection, O people, let be enlightened by it. It is the Passover of the Lord, the Passover from death to life; by which Christ our God has brought us from earth to heaven. Therefore, we sing a hymn of victory." These services begin with the removal of the Holy Shroud from the tomb. The priestly celebrant, vested in festive vestments, incenses the Holy Shroud, takes it from the tomb and places it on the altar table where it remains until the feast of Ascension in testimony that our Saviour, after His glorious Resurrection, remained on earth for forty days.

Having prepared the altar table, the priestly celebrant, acolytes and the faithful, with lighted candles, process once around the parish church repeatedly singing the resurrectional verses, "Your Resurrection, O Christ our Saviour, is praised with angelic voices in heaven; make us also worthy here on earth to praise and glorify You with a pure heart." After all the faithful leave in procession, the main doors of the parish church are closed. The procession symbolizes and brings to mind the Myrrh-bearing Women, who "very early in the morning on the first day of the week" John 20: 1, came to the tomb to anoint the sacred Body of Christ, and found the tomb empty. For this reason the procession is made only once around the church.

The procession stops before the closed doors at the main entrance to the church

and the celebrant, having incensed the doors and the people, begins the Matins of Resurrection.

The service begins with a customary invoked blessing by the priestly celebrant who intones, "Glory to the holy, consubstantial, life-creating and indivisible Trinity, always, now and ever, and forever." After the immediate associative and supportive response of "Amen," the celebrant with most solemn voice begins to sing the Resurrection announcement in hymn: "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the graves, bestowing life." Here the celebrant represents the angelic visitor, sent from heaven above to announce the glorious Resurrection news of our Saviour to the Myrrh-bearing Women at the tomb. While the people jubilantly repeat the festal hymn, the church bells carry the glad tidings to the rest of the world, inviting it to celebrate with them.

At the conclusion of the responsorial Psalm, the celebrant once again intones the hymn and at the words: "by death He conquered death," signs the doors with the hand cross and opens them solemnly with cross in hand. In doing so, he symbolizes our Saviour Who by His death on the cross, has "conquered death" and opened the gates of heaven for all of us.

Leading the people back into the church, the celebrant chants the Litany of Peace which is immediately followed by the Golden Canon of St. John Damascene. The entire Canon is pervaded by a



certain triumphant mood, perhaps best expressed by the third Troparion of the first ode: "Let the heavens properly rejoice and let the earth exult, let the whole world, both visible and invisible, celebrate for Christ, our eternal Joy is risen!"

It is interesting that Orthodoxy alone keeps alive the ancient traditional insightful belief about the angelic visitor announcing the good news of the Resurrection of Christ first to the Blessed Virgin Mary, as described by St. John Damascene in the prelude to the ninth ode of his Canon: "The angel exclaimed to her, full of grace, Rejoice, O pure Virgin, again I say: Rejoice! For your Son after three days is risen from the grave and has raised the dead. Therefore, all you people, rejoice!"

The second portion of Matins of Resurrection begins with the Psalms of Praise (Psalms 148 – 150), which are followed by four Verses of Praise reminding us to praise Christ's "saving passion and to glorify His Resurrection" in hymns and song. These four resurrectional verses are followed by four Paschal Verses. In them the triumphant joy of Resurrection victory reaches the highest point. Let us direct our attention to the four verses.

"A delightful Passover, the Passover of the Lord, the venerable Passover has dawned on us. Because of this Passover, You are our deliverance from all sorrow, since today Christ has come out of the grave as radiant as He would come out

from the bridal chamber, and He filled the women with joy, saying, 'Announce the glad tidings to the Apostles.'"

This personal individual announcing of the glad tidings of the Resurrection takes place exactly during the chanting of these Passover verses as the people approach the priestly celebrant to venerate and kiss the Holy Cross, the Book of Gospels and the Icon of The Resurrection. The celebrant stands outside the sanctuary and invites the faithful to venerate the symbol of salvation on which their redemption began to take place. During this veneration, they are greeted with the words "Christ Is Risen!" to which their personal affirmation in faith and belief is announced, "Indeed He Is Risen!"

The Holy Cross is venerated because by His death upon this sacred wood, the Saviour "conquered death"; the Holy Gospel officially proclaims the glorious encompassing victory of the Resurrection and the Icon reminds us of the descent of Christ into the place of the Old Testament righteous dead, liberating the souls of the faithful just "and to those in the graves He granted life." The festal greeting "Christ Is Risen! – Indeed He Is Risen!" is our personal proclamation and affirmation of faith in Christ's glorious Resurrection, and is the greeting used by the faithful until Ascension Thursday.

The old and venerable Greek *Synaxarion* or feast day explanatory text, gives the following insights for the radiant and joyous celebration of the victorious and triumphant Resurrection:



"On this glorious and most holy day, the whole and entire Church celebrates the joy of the final victory and life-giving Radiant Resurrection of our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ. After the long period of darkness brought about by sin, after the endless expectation of the prophets, after the glad tidings of Christ's Nativity when the designated time had come, after thirty years of Christ's hidden life and three years of His public teaching life, after the frightful passion, death upon the cross and three days in the tomb, behold an astounding consequence: Christ Is Risen!"

"Indeed, indeed, indeed He is Risen! And all is true, every promise of God is made complete and fulfilled; the Saviour is come, the Lamb of God is sacrificed for the sins of the world, and totally triumphant, He crushes death by His death, restoring us to everlasting life through His glorious Resurrection. The time of weeping is over because the eternal gift of life is imparted. Now is the time of heavenly never-ending joy. Now is the time of heavenly consolation. Now is the moment of man's restored rightful dignity. Now that we have repented of our sins during the penitential season of the Great Fast, now that we have been cleansed by the Passion of Christ; now finally let us rejoice, let us embrace in fraternal love, let us give one another the Christ-like kiss of peace, thus confirming our God-inspired love towards all and celebrating the total and final end of all enmity because Christ our Saviour is risen!"

## Resurrection Hymn

Your resurrection, O Christ our Savior, is praised with songs by the Angels in heaven, make us worthy to praise You also here on earth and to glorify You with a pure heart.



## Kontakion

Although You have descended into the grave, O Immortal, You did destroy the power of death, and You arose as conqueror, O Christ our God, telling to the Ointment-bearing women: Rejoice! To Your Apostles You granted peace and to the fallen, resurrection.



## Resurrection Catechesis

"O death, where is your sting?  
O hell, where is your victory?  
Christ is risen, and you are overthrown.  
Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen.  
Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice.  
Christ is risen, and life reigns.  
Christ is risen, and not one dead remains in the grave.  
For Christ, being risen from the dead, is become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep. To Him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen."

(St. John Chrysostom)





## The Glorious and Radiant Resurrection

*Pasch delightful, Pasch of the Lord, Pasch most honored Pasch now dawned upon us: it is the Pasch! Therefore, let us joyfully embrace one another!* Versicle from Resurrection Matins.

It is impossible to witness the Resurrection and *not* change. It is impossible to live and breathe in the dawn of the Passover feast, and not gleam with the uncreated light of God's Son rising in our heart and soul.

The eleven disciples were men who could not help but change, having been met by the overwhelming power of Christ's triumph over death. These motley, ragtag few - a band of fishermen, third-rate bureaucrats and insurgents - became witness to and participants in the Resurrection of our Lord. Having stumbled and stuttered along as they followed Christ through His salutary passion, they were literally yanked by the Spirit of God from their dead-end, earth bound careers as they walked into glory.

And what a change that heavenly glory produced! The fishermen became fishers of men. The bureaucrats and tax collectors became our first priests and bishops, ambassadors of the Kingdom of Heaven. The insurgents and zealots for Jewish independence became martyrs to death, renouncing the world for the sake of Christ and His paradise. These simple, nondescript men became pillars of the eternal Church and their proclamation of Christ turned the world upside down.

All this simply because they encountered Christ. Beyond and above all human logic, they saw and they touched the physical body that passed through death. That same person, Whom they had come to know as Divine Friend through fear and wonder, through storm and miracle, now stood before them as the Conqueror of death and Lord of life.

Of course, isn't it plain to see? How could the disciples have become anything less than men who would go anywhere, risk everything, speak forth God's anointed word? They met the Master of eternity; how could they be quelled by the petty tyrants of this age? They had been nourished on the Eucharist, the Medicine of Life; how could they fear the sting of the grave? They experienced the Spirit of peace, the breath of the Lion of Judah upon their brows, so how could they be beaten down by the sound, the fury and the evil of the Prince of air?



They were witnesses and participants in the Resurrection of the Redeemer and that made all the difference to each of them. To a man, the disciples lived and died for Christ Who loved them in an everlasting way. They walked in His glory to the utter ends of the world, singing out their news of the Risen One in the depthful splendor of apostolic theology. Their vision of the God-man Jesus reigned simple, grand and true. They feared nothing, for their Divine Friend was with them, faithful to His word. How could it not be so? For everywhere they went, they were a part of the Body of Christ which fills the universe.

And thousands, tens and hundreds flocked to hear the good news - the gospel - that rocked the cosmos. For whether the gospel was preached in the mountains of distant lands north, east, south, or west, eager human hearts were found in every place just as weary of disappointment. It was everywhere just as fatigued by the mindless succession of passions; it was just as fearful about what lies on the unknown horizon of death. Man in his heart and soul was sick, dark, oppressed the same all over the weary world. But when the gladsome news of this new message, this glorious gospel was preached, the hope of Eucharistic Life broke disappointment, as a candle surely shatters the whole arena of darkness. The peace of the uncreated Light melted the icy clench of passion, lust, and aggression and the reality of Christ's glorified presence overwhelmed all the rumors of death and futility. The multitudes who were once-weary now thronged within hearing distance of the disciples in hope as they took their place in the Body of Christ after being immersed in the water of regeneration. Their resounding Paschal voices sent praises to Heaven, the Mount of Sion, from all over the world:

*Lift up your eyes, O Sion and behold. See your children coming to you.  
From the east, west, north and south they come to you like stars of light  
divine, ever blessing Christ* Eighth Verse, Resurrection Canon.

So, we are constrained to ask, on this joyous feast of the Radiant Passover from death to life: is your voice heard today in Sion? Are you a mirror of the glorious Resurrection? Have you joined the throng of apostles and saints, thus truly reflecting and resonating the enthralling splendor in hymn of Christ's victory? Does the world in which you live feel the warmth of your renewed faith commitment to our Saviour? Do you echo Resurrection joy in your language, words great and small? Does your "Amen" at the Divine Liturgy resonate your convincing and firm faith? Has your conversation and attitude been positively affected at home and where you labor? Can a non-believer sense even in your gait the joy that animates your body and soul because Christ is risen?



If you are not...if you have not...if you do not... then perhaps you have not even noticed the Paschal Dawn that breaks out all around you. Perhaps you have not awakened from your sleep to the morning of gladsome Light. For you see, it is not possible to encounter the strident force of Resurrection joy and not rejoice. Once you have awakened to the morning of the Eighth Day, the eternal and never-ending season of the feast of feasts, you are utterly infused with the joy from heaven:

*The reign of life has begun, the tyranny of death is ended...This is the day the Lord has made, a day far different from those made when the word was first created, and which are measured by the passage of time. This is the the beginning of a new creation. There is no longer any time, for God has opened eternity to us. On this day, as the prophet says, God makes a new heaven and a new earth* St. Gregory of Nyssa.

Today, all are called and invited to notice and to believe. Each believer is invited to become a witness to the Resurrection and having seen it, to be filled with its heavenly power and be transformed in Christ.

Look about you and see through the eye of your soul; ponder the voice of the Holy Spirit in your heart. Creation glistens with the glory of God today. Resurrection victory thunders from the mountains and through the valleys. Its clarion exaltation sings over the seas and plains. And in every whisper of creation, there are certain glad tidings that the King of Glory on the Cross is the same King of Glory in Resurrection victory.

Believer, allow your soul to be flooded with jubilant light from the empty tomb. Relent to the fervor of Paschal joy. Submit to its newness, to its regeneration, to its uncontainable magnificent splendor. This Great Day is the morning of a forever Spring. Its joyful gospel has vanquished the winter of sorrows, the cold night of spiritual dread.

Rise up sleeper, rise from the death of your sins, be washed in Reconciliation splendor, stand from your confession of sins so that the Risen Christ may embrace you, may shine the grace of life eternal upon you, around you and through you. And then you shall find yourself in this blessed dawn, having walked into eternal glory, a witness of the Glorious Resurrection, for all time a child of God.



## THE INCREDIBLE RESURRECTION

How is it possible that man should doubt the resurrection from the dead? And it is not a modern phenomenon, because St. Paul also asks, *"Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"* Acts of the Apostles 26: 8. It is far more incredible that there should be no resurrection. The surprised question of St. Paul to King Agrippa was thought provoking. If there be no resurrection, then life loses all its meaning; it becomes a hollow mockery; then God Who created us is a God of caprice and sadism. Is this life after all? Just a few years of alternate crying and laughing - mostly crying - and then eternal darkness? Then with St. Paul, we can say, *"If our hopes in Christ are limited to this life only, we are the most pitiable of men"* 1 Corinthians 15: 19. But it should not be incredible at all, since things all around us remind us of the resurrection. The buds on the trees, the flowers in the garden, the emerging life after a long winter of inactivity proclaims the resurrection.

In an ancient tomb in France, buried under tons of debris, archeologists found flower seeds which had been buried for two thousand years! The explorer took the seeds and planted them and caused them to grow. Egyptian garden peas, which had been buried for three thousand years were brought out and planted on the fourth day of June, 1844. Within a few days they germinated and broke ground. Buried for some thirty centuries, then resurrected. Why then should it be thought a thing incredible that our Heavenly Father should raise the dead? If God could cause a lump of clay to become life at the creation of man, why then think it incredible for this same God to bring about resurrection from the dead? Yes, it is most credible that Jesus is risen from the dead as our Church never tires of proclaiming. Yes, it is most credible that Christ is risen from the dead. It would be most incredible that after the life He lived He should remain in death.

Up from the grave He rose with a mighty triumph over His enemies and ours. He arose a Victor from the dark domain and He lives forever to reign with His saints. Our Lord wrote the promise of the Resurrection not only in Scripture, but in every leaf of springtime. He has written it on our hearts and souls so that we might celebrate and live its truth in our lives. We must match with our faith commitment the promise made us by the victorious Lord. We must live like Resurrection believers. We must envision the triumph of life over death in our own existence so that it motivates us and provides the spiritual stimulation for triumphant Christ-like living.



## LOCKED DOORS

We are experts at locking doors. Newer and more sophisticated door locks are released every year. Our sense of self preservation extends beyond locking doors and locking car doors and house locks to locking the doors of our hearts. Just as effectively as we keep out thieves and vagabonds from our property, so we learn to keep out those who would extend friendship if we would only permit them. Sometimes we even succeed in locking out God.

We are so familiar with the invitation in the Scripture to *"...knock and the door will be opened to you"* Matthew 7: 7,8, that it seems strange to think of our God knocking on our doors instead, desiring our company. In today's gospel narrative, Christ, fresh from the tomb, doesn't even bother to knock, but breaks through the closed doors of the upper room and through the disciple's worst fears. *"Despite the locked doors, Jesus came and stood before them"* John 20: 26.

In His presence and company, they find belief and direction and are once again affirmed in their faith commitment. He imbues them with the courage to move back into the world away from the self imposed isolation behind locked doors. From this point on, life for them will be all open doors, and locks and bolts become relics of the past. Not only has Christ exploded the locks and bolts of the tomb and the doors of the place of the righteous dead have been bashed and overcome, so now He breaks down the barriers to the heart of man, announcing as myth the safety and security behind locks and bolts.

This very day the Saviour has confirmed His salutary teaching to the disciples by bursting forth from the tomb and so He also approaches them and enters not only their company, but their hearts and souls even in the barricaded upper room. He shows we must offer access to the depth of ourselves if we desire oneness with our Creator.

Now that faith is confirmed with the exposure of His wounds to the disciples, we are reminded how happy is the blessed soul which realizes that God's enduring love and commitment to us is far stronger than all the complicated barricades man is so adept at building for his own seeming protection. How many times has man erected barriers between himself and the Source of his being because he attempted to establish a measure of security from imagined and real enemies, and instead found himself alienated from God?

Let us raise a sincere and serious prayer before the Lord today, asking that we be shown all the locked and bolted doors of our lives and how they can be removed in the grace of Christ.



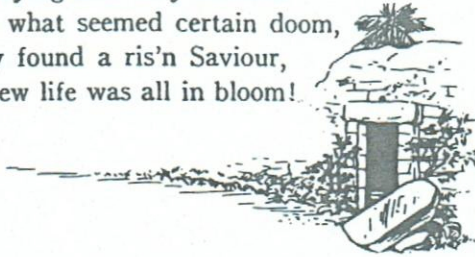


## RESURRECTION GLORY

A Roman cross stood ghostlike  
And it wore a crimson gown;  
The Roman spikes were empty —  
They had taken Jesus down;  
The grinning dice were lying  
With their black eyes open wide;  
A rusty spear was bleeding  
With the red blood from His side.

Three days his body rested  
In the darkness of the tomb;  
Could seeds of resurrection  
Burst from out the granite womb?  
Could hands on lifeless bosom  
Yet unlock the gates of dread  
And vindicate His promise;  
Would He rise from Joseph's bed?

I see a woman running,  
And her eyes are wide as day;  
"Come quickly! Oh, come quickly —  
They have stolen Him away!"  
With hurrying feet they followed  
On to what seemed certain doom,  
But they found a ris'n Saviour,  
And new life was all in bloom!





## 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!"*

the Lord has done great  
things for us. We are  
filled with





# 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.





## Newness of Life

Spring is the time of newness of life,  
A burst of bloom from the earth;  
A time of song and hope renewed,  
A time that's filled with mirth.  
Spring is the time of newness of life  
When rejoicing fills the heart,  
When all things that seem to lifeless  
    be  
Are granted a brand new start.

Spring is the time of newness of life,  
When old things have passed away:  
The winter will all its stormy blasts,  
Days tinged with shades of grey.  
The time when darkness of winter flees,  
As intervenes the light;  
Spring represents the newness of life,  
Newness of life in Christ.

*. . . Therefore if any man can be in Christ, he is  
a new creature: old things are passed  
away; behold, all things are become new . . .*

*(II Corinthians 5:17)*



## 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 their 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 not 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.



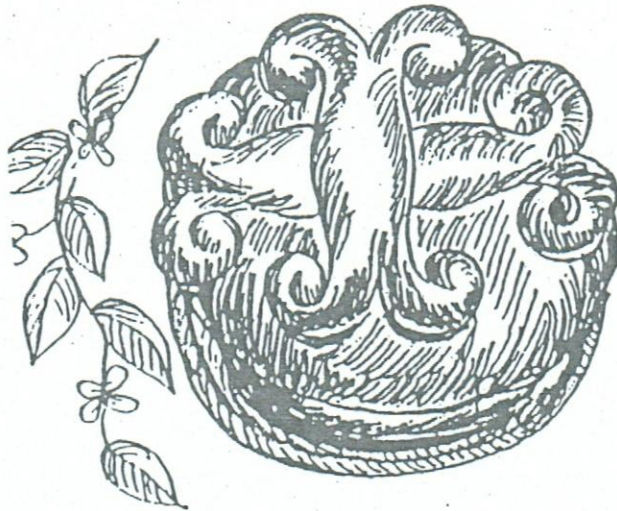


*Christ Is Risen!*

*Indeed He Is Risen!*

## *Foods for Blessing on the Day of Resurrection*

Christ is risen from the dead,  
trampling down death by death  
and to those in the graves, bestowing life.



Paska is the special confection particularly prayerfully prepared for Resurrection celebration. Many today, separated from genuine spiritual roots mistakenly call it bread. But years ago, the more spiritually based European immigrants would deny it is bread. My own mother somewhat angrily corrected me when I referred to it as "Chl'ib (bread) because it is not merely bread, although its appearance may be the same, it is emphatically different; it is Paska.

It is a round loaf of yeasted dough, prayed over as it is prepared and certainly as it is placed in the oven to bake, even receiving a hand blessing from its preparer. Its very name is closely associated with the triumphant victory of Christ because *Paska* in Old Slavonic means Passover, the very victory we celebrate. It embraces in its shape the eternal form of never-ending life which the risen Saviour embodies.



Expressing the artistic ability of its shaper, it may have decorative forms in the shape of the Cross of Christ on its upper portion, showing Christ is Conqueror of the misery of man's greatest enemy, death. It symbolizes the new and everlasting life granted us by Christ our Saviour and its never-ending joy. And while it is physical, it is possessed of a spiritual quality that is able to animate and inspire the soul and remind us in a dramatic way of our human dignity which is nothing without essential spiritual characteristics.

As we greet and celebrate Resurrection victory, Christ is referred to as the Passover (Paska in Old Slavonic) from death to life. As we nourish ourselves with this sacred food, we are reminded of our inherent dignity, created in the image of Almighty God, destined to live forever.

As we nourish our bodies, we are also challenged to nourish our souls on the virtue of Christ-like living and loving.



The egg, fully cooked and peeled is placed in the basket. In shell, it is symbolic of Christ's Resurrection. Appearing to be inanimate, it can burst forth life from beneath its stone-like appearance. Generally the Paschal Meal; is begun by ingesting the egg in concert with other family members.

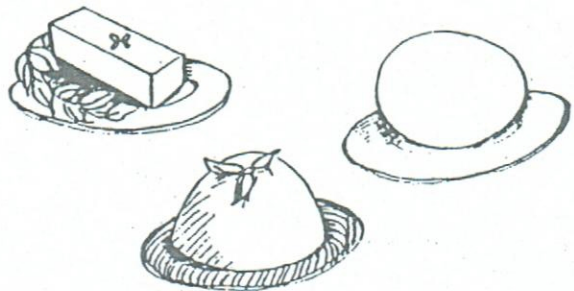
**Salt** is essential for the health of our bodies. Christ is so absolutely vital to our souls. We are to become "salt of the earth," so imbued by the values and life of Jesus Christ, our Victor, that we in turn become life-affirming "salt of the earth" for others. Seasoned by the virtues of our Lord, we take seriously our privilege of being examples of Resurrection victory.



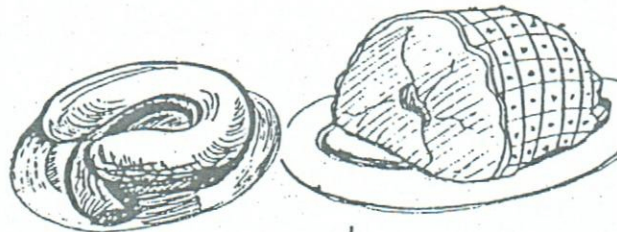
**Horseradish** is a bitter root. It is blessed to remind us of the holiness and sacredness of the Passion and suffering of Christ which leads all to eternal victory. In overcoming suffering and death, Christ teaches us we can by his grace join him in victory. Embracing the cross leads us to the victor's crown.



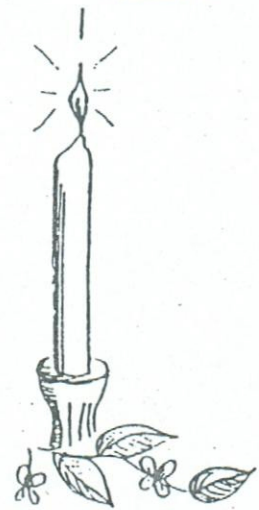
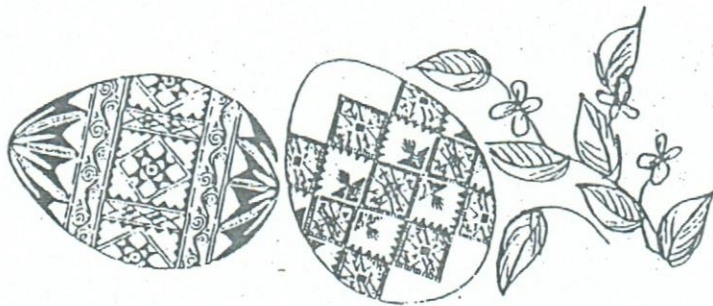
After the long period of abstaining and fasting, we joyfully return to the goodness, richness and fullness of God's creation. So the dairy products, **Cheeses** and **Butter** are restored to our use. They are of special and particular preparation for this feast day alone, thus emphasizing how special and different is this "eighth day" celebration



**Ham** and specially prepared sausage called **Kolbasa** are included because they remind us of the celebratory foods the loving Father prepared at the return of his prodigal son.



A **Candle** is always included with this blessed Paschal food because it symbolizes the Risen, the ever-living and triumphant Christ as enduring Light of the World, burning itself out, consuming itself for our sake.



**Pisanki** are symbolic of the new life imparted us in the Resurrection. With Christ's Resurrection all is made new and emphatically different. The gloom and ordinariness of our self-imposed separation and alienation from God is transformed into a soul of spiritual and bright beauty. A simple common egg is transformed into jewel-like appearance by concerned and planned effort. Something ordinary is turned into the extraordinary. Just as we are changed by the grace of Christ, so we are reminded even ordinary objects in our creation have taken on new value and meaning because of the overwhelming and encompassing victory of Christ over death! The pisanka symbolizes the difference our genuine embracing of the Resurrection truth can make in our daily living.





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.





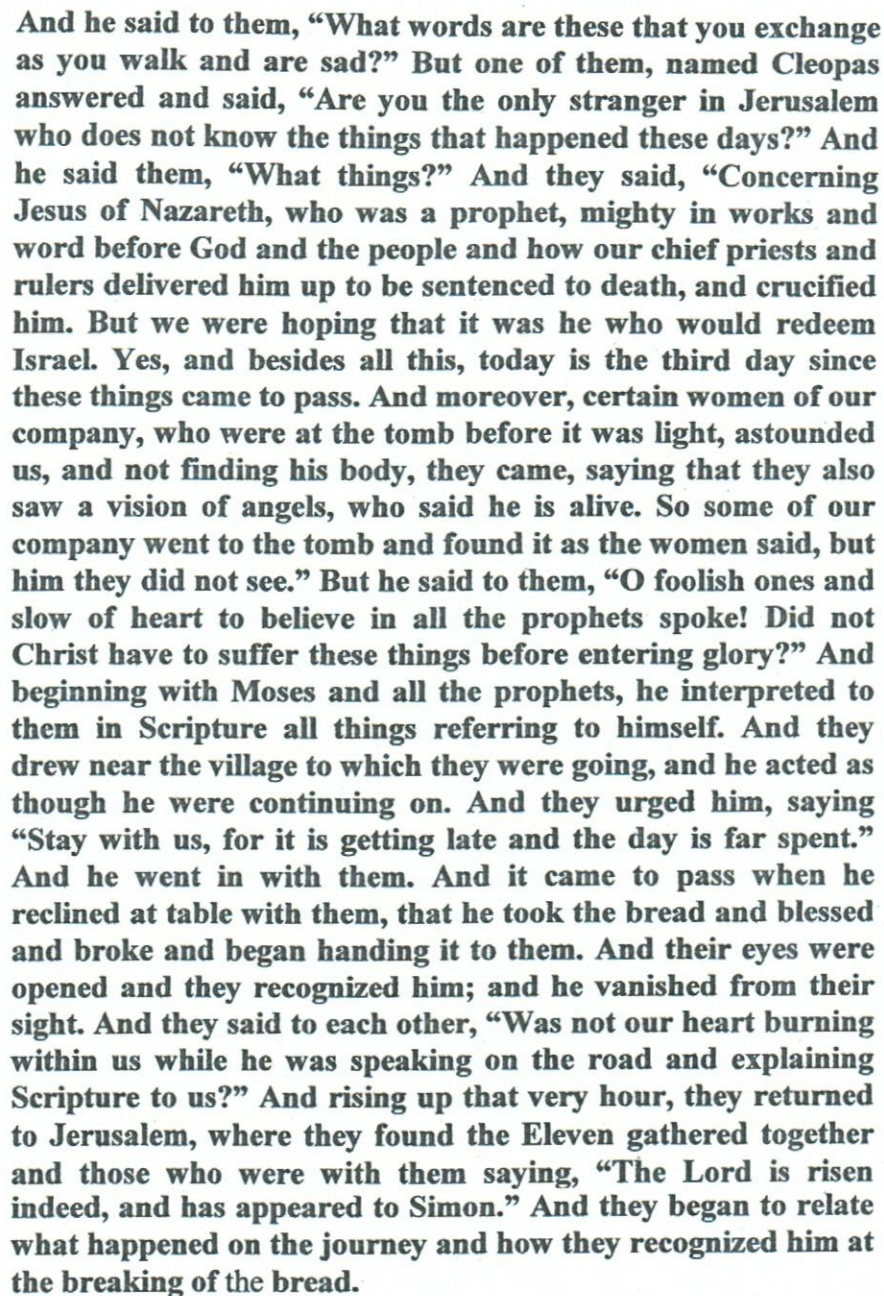
## Bright Tuesday

**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 to 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.



## THE REALITY OF THE RESURRECTION

How can we describe an event that changed the world and the course of history – an event that even changed how we measure time itself? How can we describe something that has given hope to a world of despair – something that replaced death with eternal life? It is almost impossible to put what we are feeling into our own words, so perhaps it is best if we refer to the words that our Church has handed down to us for centuries – words that were written by the famous Church Father and Hymnologist, St. John of Damascus: *“This is the Holy and Chosen Day! It is the Great and Holy Sabbath! It is the Feast of Feasts! It is the Triumph of Triumphs!”* Yes, this blessed day when we celebrate our Lord’s Resurrection is this, and much more. When the angel proclaimed for the first time at His empty tomb that *“He is risen!”* this answered the question many asked about Christ when they wondered: *“Who is this Man?”* The Resurrection proves that, indeed, He is our Lord and Savior. He is truly the Son of God, for Who else could have risen so gloriously and triumphantly from the dead? Because of the Resurrection there is always a glimmer of hope in even the most hopeless of situations. Because of the Resurrection, the Light of Christ will always guide us, even in the darkest of times. Because of the Resurrection, we will never be alone – Christ is always in our midst.

There will always be those who are skeptical about the Resurrection. From the moment the Roman soldiers told the high priests that the tomb was empty, seeds of doubt were planted, intimating that the Apostles had somehow pulled off a masterful hoax. But the same empty tomb is the greatest piece of evidence for the Resurrection. It pointedly shows an unbelieving world that something far greater awaits all of us beyond the grave. Because Christ has risen, we, too, will rise again on the last day!

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