

# CHRISTOS VOSKRESE! VOISTINU VOSKRESE!

Church Slavonic

## St John's Paschal Sermon Con't

Thee in the lower regions. It was embittered, for it was abolished. It was embittered, for it was mocked. It was embittered, for it was slain. It was embittered, for it was overthrown. It was embittered, for it was fettered in chains. It took a body, and met God face to face. It took earth, and encountered Heaven. It took that which was seen, and fell upon the unseen. 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 dominion unto ages of ages. Amen

## About St. John Chrysostom:

St. John Chrysostom ("*The Golden Tongue*") was born at Antioch in about the year 347 into the family of a military-commander, spent his early years studying under the finest philosophers and rhetoricians and was ordained a deacon in the year 381 by the bishop of Antioch Saint Meletios. In 386 St. John was ordained a priest by the bishop of Antioch, Flavian.

Over time, his fame as a holy preacher grew, and in the year 397 with the demise of Archbishop Nektarios of Constantinople—successor to Sainted Gregory the Theologian—Saint John Chrysostom was summoned from Antioch for to be the new Archbishop of Constantinople.

Exiled in 404 and after a long illness because of the exile, he was transferred to Pitius in Abkhazia where he received the Holy Eucharist, and said, "Glory to God for everything!", falling asleep in the Lord on 14 September 407.

## Acts 1:1-8 (Epistle)

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

## PASCHAL GREETINGS FROM YOUR RECTOR CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

Warm Paschal greetings to you and your family on this Day of Resurrection! On Zacchaeus Sunday, seventy-eight (78) days ago we began preparing for this glorious day. Last year we could not even be together either as a Spiritual Family or with your own families. We are truly blessed to be together this year. I hope and pray that these 78 days have allowed each of us to draw a little closer with God. I hope and pray all the praying, prostrations, fasting and services touched you in a new way and helped you understand and appreciate our parish, our Orthodox Church, ourselves and our God. What is important today is

**CHRIST IS RISEN!**

Have a Blessed and Glorious Feast!

**CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!**

*With love in our Risen Savior,  
Archpriest Andrew*

# *Kristus er Opstanden; I sandhed Opstanden*

*Danish*

## **John 1:1-17 (Gospel)**

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 nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children 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 became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'" And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.



## **Archpastoral Message of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon**

Today the Myrrhbearing Women arrive at the tomb and, seeing the angel, hear from him the joyous message that the Lord has risen. When they leave the tomb, running to tell the Apostles the news, Christ Himself suddenly appears to them and greets them with a single word: "Rejoice!" (Mt 28:9).

On this bright day, as we celebrate this glorious feast of feasts, this supreme festival of festivals, the Resurrection of Christ, I in turn extend our Lord's greeting and say to you all: "Rejoice!"

Our Lord Jesus Christ has revealed Himself to us through His Death and Resurrection. He has won the victory for us over seemingly meaningless death by His all-meaningful Death, and we in turn celebrate with exceeding joy. Death no longer stings and hell has no victory, for its gates are smashed and its prisoners are freed. The Resurrection of Christ has brought eternal life to all.

Through the Resurrection, we rejoice—in spite of our sins, hardheartedness, and lack of forgiveness. For we know that God promised through Jeremiah: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer 31:34).

Through the Resurrection, we rejoice—in spite of our doubts, worries, and anxieties. For as was guaranteed to us through Zephaniah: "No one shall make them afraid... The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall see disaster no more!" (Zeph 3:13, 15).

Through the Resurrection, we rejoice—in spite of the difficulties, trials, and struggles that we have faced, and always will face, in the brief span of our earthly lives. For Christ Himself has promised: "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen!" (Mt 28:20).

My brothers and sisters in the Lord: "Rejoice!" Our sins are forgiven, our anxieties cease, and our temporary sufferings are given meaning through the Resurrection of the One who grants us eternal life. And while this eternal life is only fully manifest in the age to come, it is ours to experience joyfully even now.

May we celebrate the Feast of the Resurrection in joy and love. From this day forward, may we never cease exulting in the Lord. Christ is risen! Indeed He is risen!

## Holy Assumption Monastery is offering more free downloads of children's books

The Holy Assumption Monastery in Calistoga, CA is offering more free downloads of their children's books in PDF format about Pascha, along with worksheets for each book. They also have a variety of other children's books and spiritual journals available on their website and on Amazon. For church discounts, please contact the bookstore manager, Sister Marie. Click on the graphics to download the materials at the monastery's website.

### Pandemic Ponderings Pascha—One Year Later by Mother Christophora [Matychak]

During the pandemic, I have often heard people refer to this as “a crazy time.” Or they say that we are living in “a crazy world” now. Others refer to the pandemic in general as “all this craziness.”

I have never felt comfortable with that word or description. I wanted to say that this is not a crazy time. The world God created is lovely and beautiful—not crazy. Maybe we are crazy. Maybe our society was already crazy before the pandemic. But I don't think that any perceived craziness will simply go away when the pandemic becomes history.

I did a search of the Bible for the word “crazy,” and it does not appear, not even once. Then I thought: Perhaps the word “mad” is used in Scripture. So I searched that word and found it only seven times in the whole Bible.

Almost always, the word “mad” referred to a person, not to the world or society. One interesting exception can be found during the destruction of Babylon in Jeremiah 51:6–7, which reads:

“Flee from the midst of Babylon; let every one save his life! Be not cut off in her punishment, for this is the time of the LORD's vengeance,

the repayment he is rendering her. Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand, making all the earth drunken; the nations drank of her wine; therefore the nations went mad.”

If people see our time, this pandemic time, as a crazy time, what do they actually mean?

Is it because we can't just go here and there, Anytime, Any place, Anywhere?

Is it because we feel that “They” have taken away “Our human rights” (If we even ever had them), Because we can't gather in groups, Or because we are required to wear masks?

Is it because plans have been curtailed, Dreams shattered, And events canceled?

Is it a crazy time because our financial resources Have weakened, Or dried up, And “secure” jobs have been lost?

Is it because people died Without saying goodbye, Without loved ones being near, Without proper funerals and burials?

Is it because even strong and healthy ones Got sick, Weakened by this unseen enemy?

Is it because we can't visit family and friends, Hug our grandkids, Gather for graduations, celebrations, and marriages?

Is it crazy because schools were closed, Bands practiced on split-screen, Clubs met online, And doctors diagnosed over video chat?

Is it crazy because churches were shuttered, Services were canceled or streamed, Communion became virtual, rather than physical, And monasteries locked their gates?

Indeed, we have much to grieve, Much to regret, Much to heal. And much to fulfill, and refill.

Yet, we discovered the Lord was not in the wind. He was not in the earthquake. He was not in the fire. But He came, a still small voice. He came to each one of us, In our own quiet solitude, In our social isolation, In the inner chamber of our hearts, In our rooms, once we had shut the door. *Con't Next Page*

*Le Christ est ressuscité; en vérité, il est ressuscité*  
French

# *Asréracht Críst! Asréracht Hé—som co dearb!*

*Old Irish*

## ***Pandemic One year later Con't***

Last year it was there, Where we were forced to flee,  
Where we met Christ, When we followed Him in our own painful isolation,  
And the abandonment of Holy Friday; Where we came to search for Him  
In the oh, so very empty tomb, Of our own hearts that Pascha night of the Pandemic.

But never were we separated from Christ; No matter how lonely we were,  
No matter how empty the tomb of our hearts, And the nave of our churches.

Yes, in the long, endless, isolated hours of Holy Week,  
And behind those locked doors of Pascha night, It was Christ Who came to us!  
It was Christ with Whom we broke bread that night. And it was Christ Who said,  
“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you!”

And eight days later, When Thomas demanded the physical proofs—  
To touch with his hands, to see with his eyes—Jesus asked, “Have you believed  
Because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe!”

As others walked and discussed All that had happened in those days,  
He, Jesus, walked with them. He listened to their grief. He felt their trauma.  
It was He Who broke the bread and opened their eyes, So that their hearts burned!

A crazy world? No. Not with the Lord.

He asks us, “Have you anything to eat?” Yes, we have seen, and we have tasted,  
How good the Lord is!

We are not alone. We have not been alone! He has opened our eyes to see His face.  
He is among us, in us, and with us.

Yes, indeed, Christ is among us! He is and ever shall be!

And let us follow Him again this year, On whatever road He leads,  
And whatever path He demands. As in each year that has already passed,  
Let us follow Him, To His Passion, and to His Holy Third-day Resurrection!

“And unto us He has given eternal life. Let us worship His Resurrection on the third day!”

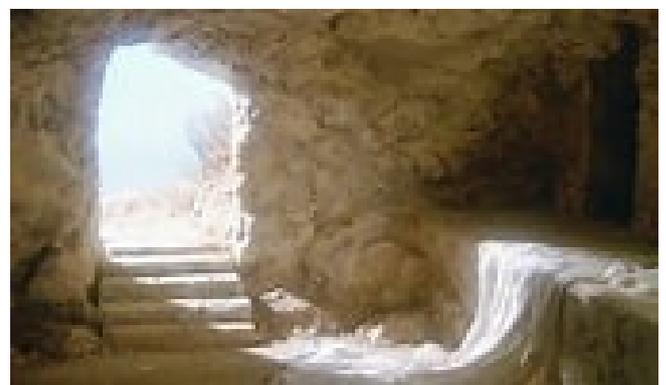
## **Department of Evangelization Releases Free Brochures for Download**

The Department of Evangelism of the Orthodox Church in America has made the first three of 45 printable brochures available for free download. The original pamphlets were designed by the late Archpriest John Matusiak and sold in paper format through a now-retired OCA sales channel.

The trifold pamphlets have been completely redesigned for simplicity and flexibility in PDF format. The text has been lightly updated for readability. A PDF text field has been included on the back section of the pamphlet for parishes and other ministries to include important contact information using the freely available Adobe Acrobat Reader or other PDF program.

The remainder of the pamphlets in the series will be updated through Q2 of 2021. The Project Lead for this effort is Melissa Graff.

You can support the ongoing projects of the Departments of the OCA by considering a gift to the Stewards of the OCA. Your financial support is crucial to the success of these endeavors! For questions about the work of the Departments, contact Fr Thomas Soroka at [tsoroka@oca.org](mailto:tsoroka@oca.org).



**THE EMPTY TOMB**

# Cristo ha resucitado! En verdad ha resucitado!

Spanish

## Weekly Reflections by Archbishop Paul For the Prayers of Parents Make Firm the Foundation of Households

Title taken from the Orthodox Marriage Service  
By Phyllis Meshel Onest, M.Div.

The prayers and hymns of the Orthodox Church are ancient and revered, but also replete with references from the Scriptures and the historical life of the Church.

Let's take a closer look at the Marriage Service, particularly the second prayer before the crowning of the Bride and Groom. After the celebrant/priest speaks their names, he asks the Lord to bless the couple in ways He did for very special people.

For example he asks that they be: Blessed as Abraham and Sara, Joachim and Anna, and Zacharias and Elizabeth; Preserved like Noah in the Ark and Jonah in the sea beast; allowed to experience Joy like St. Helena when she found the Cross of Christ; and Remembered and Crowned like the 40 Holy Martyrs.

The prayer continues — “Remember also, Lord our God, the parents who have brought them up, for the prayers of parents make firm the foundations of households.” It amazed me that in the middle of this prayer, the Church acknowledges the power of the parents' prayers. Looking at this from a different perspective, the Church hopes that the parents are praying for their children.

This same prayer includes another great blessing for the couple. The celebrant offers prayers for their children and grandchildren, asking that they fill their parents' home with great joy — “that they may see their children's children, ... may they shine like beacons in heaven.” Think about it, before we were born, before we were conceived, prayers have been said for us.

Getting back to parents' prayers for children, when do they start? It may begin with asking the intercession of St. Anna, the mother of the Theotokos, or the Lord Himself for a child

because of difficulty conceiving. Once that happens, think about how many different prayers expectant parents can pray.

First, they can offer prayers of thanksgiving to God, the Giver of Life. Then, throughout the pregnancy it is appropriate and good to light candles and offer prayers for the physical well being of the mother and the health and safe delivery of the unborn child.

A very important part of our spiritual life as Orthodox Christians is receiving the Eucharist. As preparation for their new role as parents, the couple can receive this together if they are both Orthodox Christians, or singularly if only one is Orthodox. They both can come to Liturgy to pray.

There is no doubt that the prayers for our children will change over the years, but regardless of how old we are, we need to ask our Lord:

\*To help us be the best parents and spouses we can be.

\*To guide and protect our family.

\*To guide and protect our children's friends and their enemies.

\*To give our children the strength to ward off temptation

While they are in school, we need to ask our Lord to grant our children's teachers love, patience and kindness. As Orthodox Christians, we can call upon the children's Patron Saints to watch over, guide and protect them, as well.

We can be Informed Parents by keeping current about the physical, emotional and spiritual development, plus the social concerns (media, morals, heroes, music, etc.) of children by reading reliable information.

Developing and then nurturing open and natural communication with our children is of utmost concern. We need God's guidance to nurture these relationships, and depending on the ages of our children, the wisdom to be a good listener without giving our opinion, to ask before offering an opinion, to offer an opinion **Con't Next Page**

# *Chrystus zmartwychwstal; prawdziwie zmartwychwstal*

*Polish*

## *Archbishop Reflection Con't*

when asked, and to say the appropriate words. An active liturgical life can help us develop the strength we need.

Our awareness will guide our parenting and direct the concerns of our prayers.

Son and Daughters-in-Law – When do parents begin thinking about their children getting married? What about our future sons or daughters-in-law? Is there anything we can do?

Four concerns come to mind as the mother of daughters.

- 1) Will their husbands be men of Faith?
- 2) Will their young husbands have learned how to love their future wives?
- 3) Will they lovingly accept my daughters' shortcomings?
- 4) Will they agree to “work out” the inevitable problems or will they quickly “give up”?

Before my daughters were teenagers and dating, a friend with sons of similar age shared that she had begun praying for her future daughters-in-law. This is something we all can do. I began to pray to the Lord to protect and guide my future sons-in-law as they mature and become the faithful and responsible men who will love and complement my daughters. I added praying for “boyfriends,” too, since these young men would be in their lives (and mine) along the way.

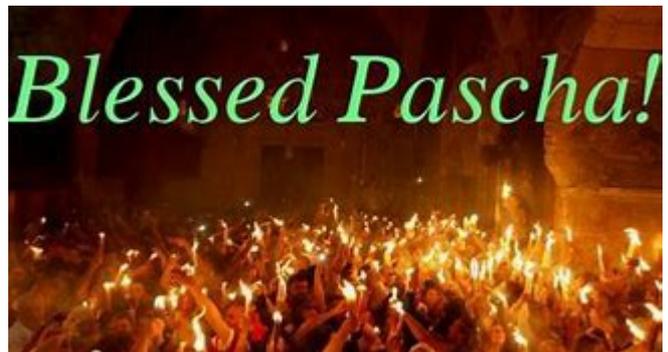
We all hope that our children become mature, understanding and loving adults. We want them prepared for the responsibilities as well as the joys of marriage. We can help in two ways. We can pray, asking the Lord to guide them and us and lest we forget, we need to be good examples.

Even though marriages in the Orthodox Church are not exempt from difficulties, separations and divorces, we Orthodox Christians continue to teach that God gave marriage between a man and a woman as a gift to humanity, and Jesus blessed marriage at

the wedding in Cana.

Now that we know that the prayers of parents have great impact on the lives of their children's marriage and home life, and the different prayer, if we have not started praying for our children's (grandchildren or godchildren) future spouses, today is a good day to begin. The next time you attend a wedding, listen for this prayer in its entirety and for all the blessings that we hope God will grant the bride and groom as they begin a new household.

Taken from: <https://www.goarch.org/-/for-the-prayers-of-parents-make-firm-the-foundation-of-households>



## 2021 PASCHAL MESSAGE FROM HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP PAUL

The women, bearing spices, ran in tears to the tomb, while the soldiers kept their watch over You, the King of all. They said to each other: Who will roll away the stone for us? The Angel of Great Counsel is risen, trampling down death. Glory to You, Almighty Lord. (Octoechos Sessional Hymn at Resurrection Matins Tone 7)

The goal of the Great Fast is to get us to the point where the stone in our hearts is rolled away so we are able to behold the Empty Tomb and receive the Good News that Christ is risen! Our weeping over His death and burial is transformed into tears of joy and victory!

Yet there is so much that has happened in the last year that has led many of us to experience distress, anger, despair, and for some, a loss of faith. Yet on this day of the Lord's Pascha, these stones of distress, anger, despair, and loss of faith are rolled away. These stones that have prevented us from beholding the Empty Tomb have been defeated.

What is the message of the Empty Tomb? Bear with me as I seek to answer this question. In the 1980s there was a big deal made about a sealed vault of the mobster Al Capone that was said to have valuable items in it. Geraldo Rivera, the journalist, was actively campaigning to have this vault opened. There was a two-hour special scheduled to actually open the vault. There was a lot of hype and publicity about it. There was great excitement about it. Many of us bought into this. We looked forward to watching this event on TV. The whole thing was a bust. When the supposed vault was opened, there was nothing in there. This vault of the fallen world, when opened, offered no good news.

Yet, for us Orthodox Christians, the worldly proof of the Resurrection lies in our witness to the Empty Tomb. Why is this not a disappointment for us, but points to His victory over death? Contrary to the Capone vault, we know a crucified, dead body was placed in a tomb with soldiers set over it to guard the tomb. Yet He was not there when the stone was rolled away. What does this mean?

To answer this we need to understand the

significance of the Lord's appearances to his followers after the Resurrection. There was something mystical about them. Mary didn't recognize Him at the Tomb when he spoke to her; she thought Him to be gardener. But when He called her "Mary," she recognized Him and called him "Teacher." When He revealed Himself to His Disciples, they were meeting behind closed doors. He suddenly appeared to them while the doors remained shut. It wasn't an apparition or ghost they saw, as they were able to handle and touch Him. Thomas specifically did this and proclaimed Him as "My Lord, and my God!"

Finally, in the wonderful account in Luke 24 on the road to Emmaus we witness another appearance of our Lord to two of His Disciples. He walked with them for several hours, yet they did not recognize Him. They engaged in a conversation about the events of our Lord's death and the Empty Tomb. They then persuaded this unknown person to stay with them longer. When he ate with them, He broke the bread, and "their eyes were opened and they recognized Him; and He vanished out of their sight" (Luke 24:31). They later remarked to others, "He was known to them in the breaking of the bread" (Luke 24:35).

The Empty Tomb is important because it is proof that we come to know the Crucified Risen Lord in another reality, in the sacramental life of the Church. It is at every Liturgy that we, just as the disciples, meet behind closed doors, and the Crucified Risen Lord reveals Himself to us in the breaking of the bread.

May we ever more come to grow in the understanding that the stones of the disappointment we have encountered in the last year—stones which we may think have robbed of us of our faith, brought us despair, and anger—are deceptions. Those deceptions are not there. Let us proclaim with the angels, "He is not here, He is risen!" The stone has been rolled away!

With love in Christ,

+PAUL

Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!