

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church
Celebrating 125 years witnessing to the Apostolic Faith

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Marblehead, OH 43440

V. Rev. Archpriest Peter Tomas, Rector

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*Holy Assumption Orthodox Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America,
Diocese of the Midwest*

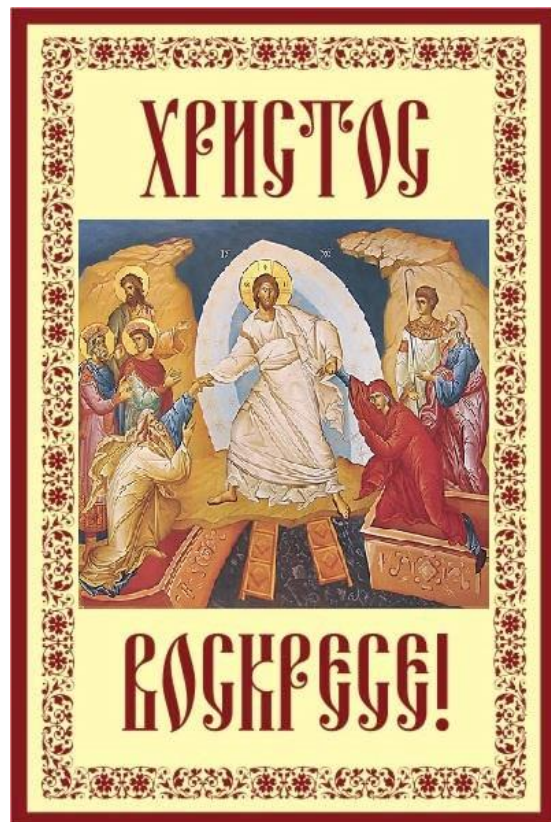
APRIL 20, 2025

GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA
RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

EPISTLE: Acts 1:1-8

In my first account, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus taught, 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."

ХРИСТЪ ИС РИСЕН!



ИДСЕД ИС ИС РИСЕН!

GOSPEL: Jn 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 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.



LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR HOLY WEEK AND PASCHA

MON. Apr 21	Bright Monday , Hieromartyr Januarius, Bishop of Benevento; Acts 1:12-17, 21-26, Jn 1:18-28
10:00 AM	DIVINE LITURGY
TUE. Apr 22	Bright Tuesday , Saint Theodore the Sykeote; Acts 2:14-21, Lk 24:12-35
10:00 AM	DIVINE LITURGY
WED. Apr 23	Bright Wednesday , Greatmartyr, Victory-bearer, and Wonderworker George; Acts 2:22-36, Jn 1:35-51
THU. Apr 24	Bright Thursday , Martyr Savva Stratelates; Acts 2:38-43, Jn 3:1-15
FRI. Apr 25	Bright Friday , Apostle and Evangelist Mark; Acts 3:1-8, Jn 2:12-22
SAT. Apr 26	Bright Saturday , Hieromartyr Basil, Bishop of Amasea; Acts 3:11-16, Jn 3:22-33
4:00 PM	VESPERS
SUN. Apr 27	2nd SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA, THOMAS SUNDAY, Tone 1
9:10 AM	Paschal Hour
9:30 AM	DIVINE LITURGY Followed by Coffee Hour and blessing of the graves at the cemetery





FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Tina Rindfleisch, 524 Woodshire Lane, E-11 Naples, FL 34105; **Basil Glovinsky**, 1007 Glendale Drive, Port Clinton, OH 43452; **Irene Vangeloff**, 454 Strouse Lane, Sandusky, OH 44870

PRAYER LIST

Parishioners & Family: Renee Haynal / Tina Rindfleisch / Sharon Shaheen (Patti Owen's sister) / Norb / Heidi Golob / Ron & Bobbie Royhab / Rodney Clevenger / Jennifer Heffernan / Tom Hileman / Pam / Jim Twarek / Ed Garrity / Patti Owens / Barbara Wroblewski / Michal Tomáš / Helena Tomášová / Ruth Sheller / Basil Glovinsky / Dale / Sophie / Carol / David Martin / Fred Soski / Chris Hannon / Irene Vangeloff / Sonja Rose / James Bargdill / Carole Conaway / Gary Conaway / Sharon Dietrich / Michael Glovinsky / Shirley Gresh / Joseph Habegger / Betty Kovach / Child Stella Miller / William Pipenur / Earl Rindfleisch / Helen Jean Rofkar / George Royhab / Marianne Royhab / Kathy Jacob / the child Bodhi Cassell / Gleice, Sophie & Chloe / Carol / Nora.

Other Requests: Nicole Williams / John Couture / Don / Ann Turinsky / Marcia / Sarah King / Catechumen Blake Shoemaker / Catechumen Nickolas Dawenport / Catechumen Joshua Paull / Catechumen Danielle Paull / Catechumen Wrenley Paull / Arimus Paull / Linkoln Paull / Catechumen Ryan Stamp / Matushka Melania / Sharyn Osborne / Christine Zahm / Amy / Bill Byrnes / Susanne / Charles Schlett / Kathy Debevits / Maxwell Chaney / Anthony / Archpriest Ján Čížmár / Archpriest David Lis / Archpriest Emilian & Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan / Donald Gresh / Mark Ludvik / Robert Piznar / Mark Masica / Valerie Ritzenthaler / William / Rick Rowe / Chris.

Military: Craig Cassell / Jake Ellithorpe / Jordon Fulton / Justin Issler / Tikhon / Nicholas / & All Military



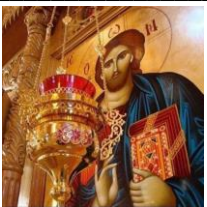
ATTENDANCE

04/12 Divine Liturgy **13** attending; **04/12** Vespers, **9** attending; **04/13** Divine Liturgy, **38** attending (13 guests); **04/14** Presanctified Liturgy, **15** attending (1 guest); **04/16** Presanctified Liturgy, **19** attending (1 guest); **04/17** Holy Thursday Vespersal Divine Liturgy, **14** attending [3 more people than previous year]; Holy Thursday Passion Gospels **17** attending (2 guests) [3 more people than previous year] **04/18** Good Friday Vespers **14** attending; Holy Saturday Matins **18** attending (1 guest) [4 more people than previous year]; **04/19** Holy Saturday Divine Liturgy **18** attending [1 more person than previous year]



READERS LIST

Sunday Apr 20 – Joe
Sunday Apr 27 – Tim
Sunday May 4 – Jake



APRIL REPOSED

Michael Elchisco (1913) No date provided; Andrew Kopchock (1914) No date provided; Anna Onyock (1916) No date provided; Dolores Martin (1974) No date provided; Herb Hobson (2004) No date provided; Charles Rose (2015) No date provided; **1-** Larry Twarek (2019); **4-** Sophia Jump (2012); **4-** Harry Flewelling (2018); **5-** Nancy Sitzler (2022); **6-** John Kotch (2022); **7-** Louis M. Benya (1976); **7-** Mitered Archpriest Basil Dziama (1969) Former Pastor; **7-** Bob Mazur (2018); **9-** Julia Guzy (2021); **11-** LaVerne Schutt (2014); **12-** Helen Tomko (1989); **14-** Paul Glovinsky (1978); **15-** Stephen Brooks (2005); **16-** Mary Wright (2005); **17-** Lois Mazurik (1999); **22-** Olga Belenky (1971); **22-** John Beadle (1988); **22-** Fred Millie (1996); **24-** Demathony Ballan (1968); **26-** Margaret Mazur (1987); **26-** Russell Kovach (1981); **28-** Ann Kovalick (2018); **29-** Olga Kollmeier (1972); **30-** Anthony Hubicki (1977)



APRIL CANDLE SPONSORS

Altar Candles: Fr. Peter and Mat. Michelle, For Health and God’s Blessings for Barbara Wroblewski, and Michal & Helena Tomáš **(\$50)**; **Chandelier:** Joe & Valerie Schutt, In loving memory of LaVerne Schutt and Violet Bargdill **(\$50)**; **Eternal Light & Icon Screen:** Jean Hileman, In Memory of William & Helen Pipenur and Robert & Elaine Hileman **(\$25)**; **Candles at the Cross:** Laura Kovach, In memory of my mom Margaret and brother-in-law Russ **(\$20)**; **Candles at St. Tikhon Icon:** Available **(\$20)**



APRIL BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

20 – Ron & Bobbie Royhab Anniversary (56)



VIGILS FOR APRIL 13

Susan Guzy 1 Special Intentions

Laura Kovach 3 For health and/or healing of infant Benny, Nichole W., Alex M., Tina R., Nick S., Mike T., Andrew K., Matushka Melania, Ron R., Betty K., Margaret M., Hannah S., Mark M., Dana M., Bodhi C., Kathie J., Jerry P., Irene V, Heidi & Wayne G., Sarah K., Brett D., and Rick H.

Prayers for Brett & Chris DeOreo
Safe travels for family and friends

Sandy Martin 1 Special Intentions

Gabe Mazurik 1 Special Intentions

Natalie Twarek 8 For health and recovery of Tina, For health and recovery of Nicole Oglesbee Williams, For health and recovery of Ann, Laura, Mike, Marcia, For the health & recovery of Matushka Melania, For the health and recovery on Basil, Ron, Rodney, Betty, Carol, Kayla, Pam, Jim, Heidi, Wayne, Health and healing for Father’s parents Michal & Helena and Matushka’s mom Barbara, and Walter, For the health of Jen, Tony, Father David, Carole, Gary, Sharon, Tina’s dad, Earl, Sonya, Margi & Joe, Jackie, MaryAnn & Bob, Bodhi, Stella, Jake, Pat, In thanksgiving



SUNDAY OFFERING

Sunday, April 13, 2025

Tithe	\$ 970.00
Donations	\$ 111.00
Candles	\$ 35.02
Vigils	\$ 115.00
Holy Day Donation	\$ 575.00
Flowers Donations	\$ 170.00
Wine Donations	\$ 70.00
Candles at the Cross	\$ 25.00
Lions Club/Diabetes (April)	\$ 50.00
Total:	\$2,121.02

May the Lord reward you for your financial and spiritual support!

UP-COMING EVENTS IN OUR PARISH – MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Apr 24th Bright Thursday - Monthly social 6:00 pm at local restaurant (*Thursday*)

Apr 27th Antipascha, Thomas Sunday, Blessing of the Graves (*Sunday*)



May 4th Holy Myrrhbearers (*Sunday*)

May 11th Paralytic – Mother’s Day (*Sunday*)



CLEANING SCHEDULE

Apr 21, Greg
Apr 28, Roddie & David
May 5, Bobbie
May 12, Natalie



CHARITY OF THE MONTH

“Lions Club/Diabetes” is the charity we donate to for the month of April.



ST. TIKHON SEMINARIANS VISIT HOLY ASSUMPTION SATURDAY MAY 3

We are happy to announce that we are hosting the Mission Choir of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk Orthodox Theological Seminary on Saturday, May 3. There will be 9:30 AM Divine Liturgy with the seminarians singing at Holy Assumption Church. Please plan to attend Divine Liturgy which will be followed by a brunch. We will have the opportunity to interact with the seminarians in the choral group, and they will have the opportunity to learn about Holy

Assumption Church. V. Rev. John Parker, Dean of the Seminary, will be visiting with Choir and serving with Father Peter; he will give a short talk about the Seminary. The Choir’s visit is in conjunction with their fundraising tour at SS. Peter and Paul Orthodox Church in Lorain. On Saturday they will return to the Lorain church for 6 PM Vespers, followed by a concert by the Choir, and a reception. St. Tikhon’s Seminary needs our support, and 100 percent of all donations will go to the Seminary (please write checks to St. Tikhon’s Seminary). The Seminary, founded in 1938, is affiliated with the Orthodox Church in America and located in a rural area in South Canaan, Pennsylvania. It is next to the Monastery of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk, the oldest Orthodox Christian Monastery in America. St. Tikhon of Moscow founded the Monastery in 1905.



***This is the day that the Lord has made;
let us be glad and rejoice in it!***

Ps. 117, 24

We wish you all a very Happy and Blessed Pascha of Our Lord!

May the Risen Christ bless you with joy and happiness!

With abundant love in the Risen Lord,

Fr. Peter and Matushka Michelle





COFFEE HOUR SPONSOR LIST

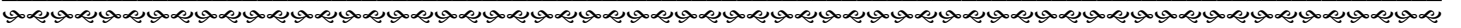
- Apr 20 - Holy Pascha – No Coffee Social
- Apr 27 - Natalia
- May 4 - Available
- May 11 - Bobbie and Mat. Michelle

Please sign up to host coffee hour. Signup sheet is located in the Social Hall



RADONITSA – BLESSING OF THE GRAVES

The Annual Blessing of the graves of our beloved deceased will take place next Sunday at our Cemetery after the Divine Liturgy and coffee hour.



2025 DONATIONS FOR PASCHAL FLOWERS, INCENSE AND WINE



The following is the list of sponsors who made donations in Memory/Good Health of their loved ones

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Dennis Bird – | Flowers - | In loving memory of Marguerite Bird |
| Tamara & Mary Blackford | Flowers - | In loving memory of Robley Blackford Jr, William Rentz, Robley Blackfor Sr. |
| Dale & Angela Bricker – | Flowers - | In loving memory of family and those at Holy Assumption |
| Susan Guzy – | Donation - | In loving memory of Guzy, Felenchak, Szoldra, Gulla family members departed. For the health of Gary, Jan, Heidi, Tina, Tony, Lou, Earl, Father Peter, Matushka Michelle, All friends and members of Holy Assumption |
| Jean Hileman – | Flowers for the Cross - | In memory of William and Helen Pipenur |
| | Palms | For blessings received |
| | Flowers - | For the health of our children and grandchildren |
| | Flowers - | In loving memory of loved ones of the Hileman & Pipenur families |
| Sandy & Dave Martin – | Flowers - | For the health of family and friends, In loving memory of family and friends |
| David & Roddie Mazurik - | Donation | |
| Sonya Rose - | Flowers - | In loving memory of Joe, In loving memory of Marguerite, Mom & Dad and Butch |
| Ron & Roberta Royhab – | Wine - | For the health of Royhab & Libb families |
| Donna Schoonmaker – | Wine | |
| Joe & Valeria Schutt - | Flowers for the Cross | |

	Flowers -	For the health of Valerie, Christi, Kira, Nick, Joe. For the health of James, Jackie, Jim, Lisa, Jon, Elizabeth, Amilia, April
Fr. P. and Mat. Michelle –	Flowers and Wine -	For the health of Michael & Helena Tomas and Barbara Wroblewski
Natalie Twarek –	Flowers for the Cross -	In loving Memory of Mom, Dad, Aunt Ella, Aunt Anna
	Flowers -	For the health of our parish family and family and friends. In loving memory of our parents, grandparents and Godparents and all of our departed family and friends
Irene Vangeloff -	Wine -	In loving memory of Ed

May Our Lord and God reward you all for your generosity and grant you His Special blessing throughout this Paschal Season!



HOLY PASCHA: The Resurrection of Our Lord

Commemorated on April 20

Pascha (Easter)

Enjoy ye all the feast of faith; receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness.
(*Sermon of Saint John Chrysostom, read at Paschal Matins*)

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the center of the Christian faith. Saint Paul says that if Christ is not raised from the dead, then our preaching and faith are in vain (I Cor. 15:14). Indeed, without the resurrection there would be no Christian preaching or faith. The disciples of Christ would have remained the broken and hopeless band which the Gospel of John describes as being in hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. They went nowhere and preached nothing until they met the risen Christ, the doors being shut (John 20: 19). Then they touched the wounds of the nails and the spear; they ate and drank with Him. The resurrection became the basis of everything they said and did (Acts 2-4): “. . . for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have” (Luke 24:39).

The resurrection reveals Jesus of Nazareth as not only the expected Messiah of Israel, but as the King and Lord of a new Jerusalem: a new heaven and a new earth.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . the holy city, new Jerusalem. And I heard a great voice from the throne saying “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. . . He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away (Rev. 21:1-4).

In His death and resurrection, Christ defeats the last enemy, death, and thereby fulfills the mandate of His Father to subject all things under His feet (I Cor. 15:24-26).

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing (Rev. 5: 12)

THE FEAST OF FEASTS

The Christian faith is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church. True celebration is always a living participation. It is not a mere attendance at services. It is communion in the power of the event being

celebrated. It is God's free gift of joy given to spiritual men as a reward for their self-denial. It is the fulfillment of spiritual and physical effort and preparation. The resurrection of Christ, being the center of the Christian faith, is the basis of the Church's liturgical life and the true model for all celebration. This is the chosen and holy day, first of sabbaths, king and lord of days, the feast of feasts, holy day of holy days. On this day we bless Christ forevermore (Irmos 8, Paschal Canon).

PREPARATION

Twelve weeks of preparation precede the "feast of feasts." A long journey which includes five pre-lenten Sundays, six weeks of Great Lent and finally Holy Week is made. The journey moves from the self-willed exile of the prodigal son to the grace-filled entrance into the new Jerusalem, coming down as a bride beautifully adorned for her husband (Rev. 21:2) Repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and study are the means by which this long journey is made.

Focusing on the veneration of the Cross at its midpoint, the lenten voyage itself reveals that the joy of the resurrection is achieved only through the Cross. "Through the cross joy has come into all the world," we sing in one paschal hymn. And in the paschal troparion, we repeat again and again that Christ has trampled down death—by death! Saint Paul writes that the name of Jesus is exalted above every name because He first emptied Himself, taking on the lowly form of a servant and being obedient even to death on the Cross (Phil. 2:5-11). The road to the celebration of the resurrection is the self-emptying crucifixion of Lent. Pascha is the passover from death to life.

Yesterday I was buried with Thee, O Christ.
Today I arise with Thee in Thy resurrection.
Yesterday I was crucified with Thee:
Glorify me with Thee, O Savior, in Thy kingdom (Ode 3, Paschal Canon).

THE PROCESSION

The divine services of the night of Pascha commence near midnight of Holy Saturday. At the Ninth Ode of the Canon of Nocturn, the priest, already vested in his brightest robes, removes the Holy Shroud from the tomb and carries it to the altar table, where it remains until the leave-taking of Pascha. The faithful stand in darkness. Then, one by one, they light their candles from the candle held by the priest and form a great procession out of the church. Choir, servers, priest and people, led by the bearers of the cross, banners, icons and Gospel book, circle the church. The bells are rung incessantly and the angelic hymn of the resurrection is chanted.

The procession comes to a stop before the principal doors of the church. Before the closed doors the priest and the people sing the troparion of Pascha, "Christ is risen from the dead..." many times. Even before entering the church the priest and people exchange the paschal greeting: "Christ is risen! Indeed, He is risen!" This segment of the paschal services is extremely important. It preserves in the experience of the Church the primitive accounts of the resurrection of Christ as recorded in the Gospels. The angel rolled away the stone from the tomb not to let a biologically revived but physically entrapped Christ walk out, but to reveal that "He is not here; for He has risen, as He said" (Matt. 28:6).

In the paschal canon we sing:
Thou didst arise, O Christ, and yet the tomb remained sealed, as at Thy birth the Virgin's womb remained unharmed; and Thou has opened for us the gates of paradise (Ode 6).

Finally, the procession of light and song in the darkness of night, and the thunderous proclamation that, indeed, Christ is risen, fulfill the words of the Evangelist John: "The light shines in darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (John 1:5).

The doors are opened and the faithful re-enter. The church is bathed in light and adorned with flowers. It is the heavenly bride and the symbol of the empty tomb:

Bearing life and more fruitful than paradise
Brighter than any royal chamber,
Thy tomb, O Christ, is the fountain of our resurrection (Paschal Hours).

MATINS

Matins commences immediately. The risen Christ is glorified in the singing of the beautiful canon of Saint John of Damascus. The paschal greeting is repeatedly exchanged. Near the end of Matins, the paschal verses are sung. They relate the entire narrative of the Lord's resurrection. They conclude with the words calling us to actualize among each other the forgiveness freely given to all by God:

This is the day of resurrection.
Let us be illumined by the feast.
Let us embrace each other.
Let us call "brothers" even those who hate us,
And forgive all by the resurrection. . .

The sermon of Saint John Chrysostom is then read by the celebrant. The sermon was originally composed as a baptismal instruction. It is retained by the Church in the paschal services because everything about the night of Pascha recalls the Sacrament of Baptism: the language and general terminology of the liturgical texts, the specific hymns, the vestment color, the use of candles and the great procession itself. Now the sermon invites us to a great reaffirmation of our baptism: to union with Christ in the receiving of Holy Communion.

If any man is devout and loves God, let him enjoy this fair and radiant triumphal feast. . . the table is fully laden; feast you all sumptuously. . . the calf is fatted, let no one go hungry away. . .

THE DIVINE LITURGY

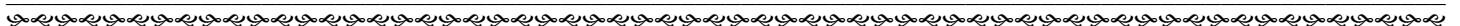
The sermon announces the imminent beginning of the Divine Liturgy. The altar table is fully laden with the divine food: the Body and Blood of the risen and glorified Christ. No one is to go away hungry. The service books are very specific in saying that only he who partakes of the Body and Blood of Christ eats the true Pascha. The Divine Liturgy, therefore, normally follows immediately after paschal Matins. Foods from which the faithful have been asked to abstain during the Lenten journey are blessed and eaten only after the Divine Liturgy.

THE DAY WITHOUT EVENING

Pascha is the inauguration of a new age. It reveals the mystery of the eighth day. It is our taste, in this age, of the new and unending day of the Kingdom of God. Something of this new and unending day is conveyed to us in the length of the paschal services, in the repetition of the paschal order for all the services of Bright Week, and in the special paschal features retained in the services for the forty days until Ascension. Forty days are, as it were, treated as one day. Together they comprise the symbol of the new time in which the Church lives and toward which she ever draws the faithful, from one degree of glory to another.

O Christ, great and most holy Pascha.
O Wisdom, Word and Power of God,
grant that we may more perfectly partake of Thee in the never-ending day of Thy kingdom
(Ninth Ode, Paschal Canon).

The V. Rev. Paul Lazor
New York, 1977





Orthodox Church in America
DIOCESE OF THE MIDWEST

Thursday, 17 April 2025
Great and Holy Thursday
№. 50

**ARCHPASTORAL GREETINGS OF
THE MOST REVEREND DANIEL
ARCHBISHOP OF CHICAGO AND THE MIDWEST**

ON THE BRIGHT AND JOYOUS FEAST OF PASCHA - 20 APRIL 2025

**Beloved Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy, Monastics, and Faithful
of the God-protected Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest:**

✠ CHRIST IS RISEN! ✠

Before the dawn Mary and the women came and found the stone rolled away from the tomb. They heard the angelic voice: "Why do you seek among the dead as a Man the One Who is everlasting Light? Behold the clothes in the grave! Go and proclaim to the world: "The Lord is risen! He has slain death, as He is the Son of God, saving the race of men!"

-Paschal Hours

"You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen!" (Mark 16:6). With these words, the heaven-sent messenger, robed in light, addressed the Holy Myrrhbearing Women who, on that first day of the week, came looking for the tomb of Jesus. In spite of the possibility of great personal harm, their love for the Lord compelled them to come to the tomb to honor His body with a proper Jewish burial. Their deep sorrow was overpowered by their love and care for their Master. On this same "first day of the week," we, too, come seeking the Lord and likewise hear and rejoice in those very words: "He is risen; He is not here."

As Orthodox Christians, we believe that Jesus is not an historic figure from the past, a person whose life and deeds are to be remembered in history books. Yes, He performed wondrous works and healed the sick and suffering and raised the dead. He was betrayed by a friend, brutally beaten and crucified. He died on a cross and was buried in a borrowed tomb. But that is where mere historical facts come to an end. The tomb could not contain Him. He is risen and the tomb is empty! We believe and confess that He lives, is present among us, and walks before us and beside us as one who is alive, as one who calls us to follow Him on the path of eternal life.

Christ is risen! At Pascha we rejoice because Christ did not remain in the tomb, his body did not see corruption (How could the Author of Life be subject to corruption?) Christ belongs to the world of the living, not to the world of the dead; we rejoice because he is the Alpha and the Omega, the

Beginning and the End, the Source and the Fulfillment of all life. He lives not only yesterday, but is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8).

Christ is risen! But somehow this great reality and wondrous mystery of Christ's Resurrection is situated so far outside our own human experience that, looking inwardly, we find ourselves discussing the same question asked by the disciples coming down from Mount Tabor: What exactly does this "rising from the dead" mean? What does it mean for us? What does it mean for all human history? In attempting to answer this line of questioning, we must begin by admitting that Christ's Resurrection is something more, something different. It is a leap into a completely new order which concerns not only ourselves personally, but the whole of human history.

Christ is risen! Because of His love for us, Jesus could allow himself to die upon a cross. We must recognize, however, that by doing so he broke the seeming finality of death, because in Him the eternal finality of life was present. His death on the cross formed a new reality with life, in such a way that life is the definitive reality.

Christ is risen! In the Gospel of John, Jesus says to his disciples "*I live, and you will also live* (John 14:19). We will live because of our union with the Risen Lord, our Savior. We live and will continue to live through having been united to the One who is life itself. Eternal life and blessed immortality is a gift to us that is ours through our relationship with Christ, the Conqueror of Death. Eternal life comes to us because we have been loved by Him who is Life. He loves us so much that He died on the cross and rose from the dead for us and for our salvation.

Christ is risen! Thus, we can sing full of joy, together with the Church, in the words of the Paschal Troparion:

"Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death. And upon those in the tombs bestowing life... And unto us He has given eternal life. Let us worship His Resurrection on the third day!"

I extend my joyous best wishes to you all, asking the Risen Lord to bless you, your families, friends, and all your loved ones with His continuing, life-giving presence in your lives.

With love in the Risen Lord,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DANIEL
Archbishop of Chicago and the Midwest