



**ST. PETER & ST. PAUL
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**
105 CLIFTON AVE
ANSONIA, CT 06401
Rectory Phone 203-734-3895
Church Hall 203-732-2414



*Leaders of the Apostles and
teachers of the world, pray to the
Master of all to grant peace to the
world and great mercy to our souls.*

Fr. Ed Cell 413-218-6404

April 9, 2023

Web Site: www.stspucc.org

Very Rev. Archpriest Edward Canon Young, Pastor

Pascha: The Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord God and Savior, Jesus Christ
Fast Free Week *We Stand for all Serves till Pentecost!*

Epistle: Acts 1: 1-8

Gospel: John 1: 1 - 17

Tone: Sheet

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE

WEEKDAYS: MONDAY–FRIDAY 10:00AM

SUNDAY: 8:30 AM (Ukr.) & 10:00 AM (Eng.)

Confessions are heard before each Divine Liturgy:

Sunday 8:00AM to 8:30AM and
9:30AM until 10:00AM

Religious Education – Saturday 10:00AM –
11:00AM

Sunday After 10:00 AM Divine Liturgy
Call Audrey Sokol 203-924-1184 for more
information.

Preservation – Please use the form in church
vestibule, mail it to the church or bring it to
Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young or
Robert Jaskilka.

Address or Name Change/New Phone Number

– Please update your records. See Michael
Wysowski, Jr. to update this info.

Returned checks are subject to a **\$35.00 fee**.

Bulletin Notices – Notices for the bulletin must
be **in writing** by Wednesday @6PM to be
included in that week's bulletin.

Parish Council meets every 3rd Wednesday
of every month @7:15pm in the church hall.

Rectory Office Hours - Thursday 1:00 to 3:00
PM or by Appointment on other days

****Please Note ****

Mass Offerings , Sorokousty

Mother's Day, Father's Day

Checks must be made out to the Fr. Edward Young
not the Church ! Thank You...

Baptism Arrangement for baptism is to be made
personally at the Parish Office. Please call rectory for an
appointment.

Marriage – Arrangements for marriage are to be
made at least **6 months prior** to the Wedding date.
Please call rectory for an appointment.

Sick Calls – To arrange for Sacraments for the elderly
and sick at home, please call Parish Office Fr. Young
at 203-734-3895, **Please advise the rectory of any
hospitalization.**

In your Estate planning – Remember Sts. Peter & Paul Church in your
will.

Stewardship - "As each one has received a gift, use it to serve
one another as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Peter 4:10). All
Catholics, should give generous support—time, money, prayers, and
personal service according to their circumstances—to parish and diocesan
programs and to the universal Church

Special Share in the Eucharist *– Bread & Wine

offered for a week, month, or year. Donations: one week - \$20.00
Donors/intentions will be listed. Robert Jaskilka,

Michael Wysowski, Jr or Fr. Edward Young

Eternal Light *– offered to light for a week \$10.00.

Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

Virgin Mary's Lamp and Sacred Heart Lamp* also available for offering!

Offered to light for a week is 10.00, each. Robert Jaskilka Michael
Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

All start on Monday to Sunday!

***Offering must be made when dates are reserved!**

A Welcome to St. Peter and St. Paul Parish to all who are worshipping with us today. If you are over twenty-one years of age and have not yet registered, have moved or will be moving, or have a new telephone number, please fill out the form below. Each household must be registered at St. Peter and St. Paul and every adult receives a set of stewardship envelopes. Registration also entails an annual dues to the parish. If a parishioner is not registered, it is difficult for church authorities to issue him or her a sponsor certificate, reference, or any other certification.



Name _____ Phone# _____ Email _____
 Address _____ City _____
 State _____ Zip _____


Kontakion, Tone 8: Although You went down into the grave, Immortal One,* You destroyed the power of hell!* You arose a mighty Victor, Christ our God,* bringing peace to Your apostles,* joy for the myrrh-bearing women;* and resurrection for the fallen! **Ikos** Before the dawn – as urgently as is in daylight – the women came with their spices to the tomb, looking for Him who existed before the sun was even created. That very Sun had come to set in a grave! They cried to each other: Bring your fragrant ointments, friends, and let us anoint that life-giving body which has been laid in a tomb. His is the body which raises the fallen Adam. Let us go! Let us hurry like the Magi; let us fall before Him in adoration. Let us offer myrrh to Him as He lays there wrapped, not in swaddling clothes, but in a shroud. Let us shed our tears and cry out to Him: Rise up, O Lord, give resurrection to the fallen!

Bread and Wine Offering-


*In Loving Memory +Mary Nyscot ; +Mary Cirkot & +Stephanía Cirkot
 by Carol Stumpf*

04/08	<u>Great & Holy Saturday</u>	9:00AM	9:00 A.M. Liturgy of St. Basil the Great Blessing of Paschal Foods - Blahoslovennia pasok 3:00 pm (In English) , outdoors near Rectory Garage (If there is Inclement Weather then in the Church) 4:00 pm (in Ukrainian) outdoors near Rectory Garage (If there is Inclement Weather then in the Church) Confessions will be heard after each of the blessings of Easter Food Church will be closed at 8:00 PM
04/09	Sunday, Easter – Resurrection of Our Lord, <u>Воскресіння Христове</u>	6:30 AM 7:00 AM 8:00 AM 10:00 AM	6:30 AM NADHROBNE НАДГРОБНЕ ПРИ ГРОБІ removal of the holy shroud to the altar) 7:00 AM PROCESSION & RESURRECTIONAL MATINS 8:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY / GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY Blessing of the ARTOS after the Ambon Prayer. 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY
04/10	MONDAY	10:00 AM	+Ann Samodal req. by Anne Malinak
04/11	TUESDAY	10:00	+Julia & Michael Buryj req. by Fr. Edward Young
04/12	Wednesday		No Liturgy
04/13	Thursday		No Liturgy
04/14	Friday		No Liturgy
04/15	Saturday		No Liturgy
04/16	Sunday	8:30 AM 10:00 AM	Pro Populo (For Parishioners) - За Всіх Парафіян +Dorothy Brenia req. by Marian Sedlowski & Patty Wolniak

ETERNAL LIGHT		<i>In loving memory +Antoinette S. Jaskilka by Bobby Jaskilka</i>
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP		<i>In loving memory of +Deceased Members of the Hoc Family by Beata Gebuza & Family</i>

SACRED HEART of JESUS LAMP		In loving memory of +Deceased Members of the Gebuza Family by Beata Gebuza & Family				
BREAD & WINE OFFERING RESERVED DATES 9/4/23-9/10/23		ETERNAL LIGHT LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 4/17/23-4/23/23 4/24/23-4/30/23 5/1/23-5/7/23 5/8/23-5/14/23 6/5/23-6/11/23 6/26/23-7/2/23 8/14/23-8/20/23 9/4/23-9/10/23 10/9/23-10/15/23 11/20/23-11/26/23 12/25/23-12/31/23		BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 4/17/23-4/23/23 4/24/23-4/30/23 5/1/23-5/7/23 5/8/23-5/14/23 5/15/23-5/21/23 5/22/23-5/28/23 6/5/23-6/11/23 6/26/23-7/2/23 11/20/23-11/26/23		SACRED HEART OF JESUS LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 4/24/23-4/30/23 6/19/23-6/25/23
2023 & Past Church Dues (Blue Book) (Kollekt		During Lent & every Sunday dues current & past will be collected in the church hall after 8:30 AM & 10AM Sunday Liturgies. Please bring your dues book to the church hall <u>dues will not be collected in the rectory</u> Back on January 25, 2005 the Parish Council voted to increase the yearly dues to \$75.00 per member. , <u>Do not place dues in your weekly envelope offering !</u> Please remember - this is not our church but YOUR church! Please fulfill your responsibility to your Church!!				

Over 50 letters have been **mailed to delinquent dues members** of St. Peter & St. Paul totaling over \$27,000 - **Past Church Dues** are due during lent to support your church to pay our obligations to keep the church running such as salaries; electricity; oil ; gas; water ; and continual maintenance; repair of the church, rectory and cemetery; insurance ; chancery fees; and telephone just to name a few. As spoken of during the 2022 annual meeting, February 19, 2023.



TODAY

Sunday, at 9:30 AM there will be the Recitation of the Holy Rosary of Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. One of the intentions for our prayers will be for our parish, and the needs for Ukraine. In this time of Foreign Invasion prayers are needed for we are hearing of the deaths of some many Soldiers and Civilians each day. Please Pray for USA and Ukraine in this time of Great NEED!

God Save and Protect! Боже спаси і О Хорони!



PRAYER FOR OUR NATION Lord, we pray for peace and unity in our nation today. Keep us in peace, O Christ our God, under the protection of your Holy Cross; save us from our enemies, visible and invisible, that we may glorify You with thanksgiving, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. We pray that You would inspire this nation to be a nation under God. Give us your hope. Give us your peace. Amen The Light of God ~ surround us. The Love of God ~ enfold us.

The Power of God ~ protect us. The Presence of God ~ watch over us.

The Mind of God ~ Guide us. The Law of God ~ direct us.

Wherever we are God ~ be our strength.

PRAY FOR PEACE IN UKRAINE AND THE WORLD: MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS, THROUGH THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL, SPREAD YOUR OMOPHOR ~ WE IMPORE YOUR PROTECTION OVER UKRAINE AND BEG THAT YOU INTERCEDE WITH OUR LORD TO GRANT PEACE.



PRAYER FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF UKRAINE IN TIME OF INVASION: O Lord God of powers, and God of our salvation, O God, who alone work wonders: look down with mercy and compassion on

Your humble servants, and out of love for mankind hearken and have mercy on us and on the land of Ukraine. For, behold, enemies have once more gathered together, in order to cause division and enmity. But You who know all things, understand that they have risen up righteously, and that it will be impossible to oppose their multitudes unless You show us Your help. Therefore, we who are sinful and unworthy pray unto You in repentance and with tears: Help us, O God, our Savior, and deliver the land of Ukraine for the sake of the glory of Your Name, that the enemy may not to say: "Their God has

forsaken them, and there is none to deliver and save them." But let every nation understand that You are our God, and we Your people are always protected under Your dominion.



Dear Parishioners, A recent letter from the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, Lviv, has identified many items that are needed to care for Ukrainian military personnel and civilians. Father Young suggested that our parish focus on specific items: Socks and underwear (including sport bras and undershirts) for all ages. Please bring your new/gently used items to church and place in the side pews by the Blessed Virgin Mary statue. This humanitarian drive will end on April 16. Thank you for your continued support. For any questions, contact me at shsmonks@hotmail.com. Susan

CHURCH FUND:



EASTER BREAD 2023 - PROFIT \$522.64

THANKS TO SLAVA KIT FAMILY WHO HELPED IN THE PROJECT.



**Very Rev. Archpriest Edward Canon Young with children blessing Palms and Pussy Willows;
Palm Sunday April 2, 2023**



Russian American Citizen's Club invites you to

Come see *Moses* live on stage at the Sight & Sound Theater Lancaster, PA

\$140 (non-member)

\$55-Child ticket (ages 3-12) Ticket includes:

- Round trip coach bus transportation from Shelton, CT to/from Lancaster, PA
- Buffet Lunch at the Bird-In-Hand Restaurant
- Show ticket

MAY 20, 2023

- Complimentary on bus snacks
- All taxes and gratuity

Trip Itinerary

- 6:30 AM: Board bus at municipal parking lot located at 100 Canal St E, Shelton, CT 06484
- 7 AM SHARP: Bus departs
- 12:15-1:45 PM: Buffet lunch at The Bird-In-Hand Restaurant
- 2:00 PM: Arrive at Sight & Sound Theater
- 3:00 PM: *Moses*
- Bus departs PA following the play

Contact Stephanie Dytko 203-736-7026 for more information or to purchase tickets.

★ LAST DAY TO BUY TICKETS
APRIL 10, 2023

ST. PETER & ST. PAUL PARISH FAMILY EASTER DINNER - SUNDAY APRIL 16, 2023

ALL PARISH MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE INVITED TO PARTAKE IN THE PARISH EASTER DINNER THAT WILL TAKE PLACE ON SUNDAY APRIL 16, 2023 IN THE CHURCH HALL AFTER THE 10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY.

BUFFET DINNER MENU: CHICKEN CUTLETS, MEATBALLS, ZITI, ROASTED POTATOES, MIXED VEGETABLES, GARDEN SALAD, BREAD & BUTTER, DESSERTS, COFFEE, TEA AND SODAS.

**TICKETS GO ON SALE SUNDAY MARCH 19, 2023 AFTER EACH LITURGY UNTIL SUNDAY APRIL 9, 2023.
NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR!!!**

ADULTS: \$20.00 CHILDREN: FREE TO 18

CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF THE PARISH ARE INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THE EASTER DINNER ACTIVITIES.

DONATIONS OF BAKED GOODS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

BEATA GEBUZA @ 203-988-5203

JOSEPHINE SEMBRAT @ 203-929-4813

DONNA WRIGHT @ 203-278-2374



Ukrainian Quilt and Sunflower Pillow a benefit for Ukraine!!!

A beautiful quilt with the colors of the Ukrainian flag and stitched "Peace for Ukraine" and "Support Ukraine" messages has been donated by Beth Johnsen to raise money to benefit the people of Ukraine. The quilt, along with the note from the donor organization, and the sunflower pillow donated by our parishioner Donna Wright, are on the display at the entry to the church. Tickets for this fundraiser will be sold before and after each Sunday liturgy, till April 16th. The drawing will occur on April 16th, during the Easter Dinner event.

For any questions, please contact:

Beata Gebuza @ 203-988-5203,

Josephine Sembrat @ 203-929-4813,

or Donna Wright @ 203-278-2374

FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
EPISTLE - ACTS 1: 1 - 8 GOSPEL - JOHN 1: 1 - 17 TONE OF THE FEAST



"Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed" (1 Cor. 5:7). By the shed blood of Christ, the Lamb of God, eternal death has passed over us. Now we pass with Christ through death into life everlasting. For Christ the crucified One is risen! The stone has been rolled away from the tomb, revealing that the tomb could not hold Him (Mark 16:1–8).

Christ is risen! And you, o death, are annihilated!

Christ is risen! And the evil ones are cast down!

Christ is risen! And the angels rejoice!

Christ is risen! And life is liberated!

Christ is risen! And the tomb is emptied of its dead;
for Christ having risen from the dead,
is become the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.
To Him be Glory and Power, now and forever, and from all
ages to all ages. Amen!

Christ Is Risen! Truly He Is Risen!

Χριστὸς ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη!

"It is the day of Resurrection; let us be radiant for the festival and let us embrace one another. Let us say, O brethren, even to those that hate us: Let us forgive all things on the

Resurrection; and thus let us cry: Christ is risen from the dead, by death He has trampled down death, and on those in the tombs He has bestowed life." (Doxastikon of Great and Holy Pascha)

We rejoice, because through the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, He trampled death by His death and granted eternal life to those in the tombs. When Mary Magdalene was searching for the Lord's Body and was seeking the Living among the dead, she was not happy and wept, because she did not realize that He is risen. Therefore, our true and complete joy comes when our requests are made in Christ's Name. If we search for Christ among the temporary things of this world; If we search for Christ in order to be granted earthly matters; If we search for Christ so He can establish an earthly kingdom, Then we will certainly be sad, and we will weep. Our Lord Jesus Christ did not promise His disciples that He will come and remain with them on earth, but He told them, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (Jn 14:2-3)

Let us rejoice in the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and that we are raised with Him.

Let us rejoice, because our Lord Jesus Christ conquered death, sin, the devil, and the world, and bestowed upon us a new life.

**CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, TRAMPLING DOWN DEATH BY DEATH,
AND UPON THOSE IN THE TOMBS BESTOWING LIFE!**

Yesterday I was crucified with Him; today I am glorified with Him. Yesterday I died with Him; today I am made alive with Him. Yesterday I was buried with Him; today I am raised up with Him.

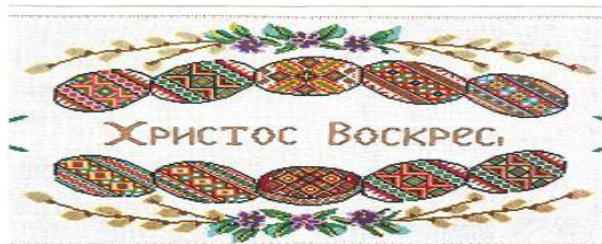
Let us offer to Him Who suffered and rose again for us ... ourselves, the possession most precious to God and most proper. Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us. Let us become Divine for His sake, since for us He became Man.

He assumed the worse that He might give us the better. He became poor that by His poverty we might become rich. He accepted the form of a servant that we might win back our freedom.

He came down that we might be lifted up. He was tempted that through Him we might conquer. He was dishonored that He might glorify us. He died that He might save us. He ascended that He might draw to Himself us, who were thrown down through the fall of sin. Let us give all, offer all, to Him who gave Himself a Ransom and Reconciliation for us.

We needed an incarnate God, a God put to death, that we might live. We were put to death together with Him that we might be cleansed. We rose again with Him because we were put to death with Him. We were glorified with Him because we rose again with Him. A few drops of Blood recreates the whole of creation! *St. Gregory the Theologian*

BRIGHT WEEK, PASCHA WEEK OR RENEWAL WEEK: This is the name used by the Eastern Orthodox and Greek Catholic Churches for the period of seven days beginning on Easter and continuing up to (but not including) the following Sunday, which is known as Thomas Sunday. The week following Easter Sunday is called “Bright Week,” and refers to the light that Jesus has brought into the world. During all of Bright Week the Holy Doors on the Iconostasis are kept open—the only time of the year when this occurs. The open doors represent the stone rolled away from the Tomb of Christ, and the Epitaphios (Slavonic: *Plashchanitza*), representing the burial cloth, is visible through them on the Holy Table (altar). The doors are closed before the Ninth Hour on the eve of Thomas Sunday. However, the Afterfeast of Pascha will continue until the eve of the Ascension. During this week the Church calls us to remember the beginning of the Lord’s ministry. We are taken back to the start of it all as if the beginning holds the seeds of the fully grown fruit of His life. On Bright Monday we are still being challenged to know God in the face of His Son, our Lord Jesus. We are still being challenged to participate in making Him known to our world as well. But the world won’t be able to see Him unless His Body, the Church, accurately reflects His image to the world. The whole world is groaning under the weight of fear and death, and the only remedy for that fear and death lies within the joyous celebration of His Life-Giving Resurrection. Bright Tuesday, in the Byzantine Rite is the third day of Bright Week and we continue to make Christ known and celebrate His Resurrection.



On Lazarus Saturday, April 1st, Fr. Albert Forlano, celebrated a Children’s Liturgy for the children of our parish. It was followed by an egg hunt, making pysanky, and a pizza luncheon. A special thanks goes out to Jolanta Kowal and all who helped her, as she worked with the children to teach them the special Ukrainian tradition of making pysanky. Thanks also to Father Ed, Janine Bell, Donna Wright and Audrey Sokol for donating special treats for the egg hunt.



PYSANKY WRITING 2023






FATHER ALBERT FORLANO VISIT WITH THE SCHOOL OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION 2023



Friday March 31 The Last Day of Lent - 2023 V. Rev. Archpriest Bohdan Tymchyshym, Rector St Basil with seminarians Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts & Sermon



<p>For your AD info, message Call 203-734-3895 or YoungE8073@aol.com</p>	<p>WAKELEE MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME John S. Zaleski Director Virginia K. Hylwa Administrator</p> <p>203.734.1490 <i>Parishioners Serving Parishioners Over 90 Yrs.</i></p> 	<p>For your AD info, message Call 203-734-3895 or YoungE8073@aol.com</p> <div>  <p>JOIN SUMA F.C.U. & Save Big! Support Locally! Bank Near & Far!</p> </div> <p>For all your financial needs - we are just a call, click or a text away</p> <p>914.220.4900 memberservice@sumafcu.org or visit our New Haven or Stamford branches. We are open!</p>  <p>www.sumafcu.org</p>
<p>Support those who advertise in our bulletin!</p>		



President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy visits Arlington National Cemetery The Connection to St. Peter & St. Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Ansonia Connecticut



President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy visits Arlington National Cemetery Tomb of the Unknown Soldier



President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy visits Arlington National Cemetery Tomb of the Unknown Soldier



Charles R. Alexander, Jr. (right), superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery, directs President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy (center) and Ukraine First Lady Olena Zelenska (left) to the gravesite of U.S. Marine Corps Gen. Samuel Jaskilka in Section 65 of Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia,



President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Ukraine First Lady Olena Zelenska visit the gravesite of U.S. Marine Corps Gen. Samuel Jaskilka in Section 65 of Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, September 1, 2021.



President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Ukraine First Lady Olena Zelenska visit the gravesite of U.S. Marine Corps Gen. Samuel Jaskilka in Section 65 of Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, September 1, 2021



President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Ukraine First Lady Olena Zelenska walk through Section 65 of Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, September 1, 2021

Most Reverend Archbishops and Bishops, Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers,
Venerable Brothers and Sisters in Monastic and Religious Life,
Dearly Beloved Laity in Christ of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church

Christ is Risen!

Bearing torches let us meet the bridegroom, Christ, As He comes forth from His tomb, And let us greet, with joyful song, the saving Pascha of God. Ode 5, Paschal Canon

Beloved in Christ!

Today the heart is jubilant, the soul rejoices, feet rush to church, arms stretch out to the Lord, resounding song comes from our mouths, for this day is truly the feast of feasts and solemnity of solemnities: “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs bestowing life!” As smoke which is blown away by the wind, and as wax which disappears in fire (see. Ps 67:2-3), so today all our anguish, worries, doubts, and fears dissipate and lose their power over us: “This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it” (Ps 117:24).

Let us meet... Christ, as He comes forth from His tomb...

We go to encounter the One, who emerges from the grave, having undergone horrific torture, suffering, and death. In rising, Christ passes from death to life. He emerges from the confines of a limited and narrow tomb, with the entrance closed by a stone and signed with a seal. Christ passes by the guard, placed there at Pilate’s command. The glorified body of the Saviour cannot be held, neither by time, nor by the space of earthly human existence, as we pray in the Anaphora of the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great: “He loosed the pangs of death, rising on the third day and making a way for all flesh to the resurrection of the dead – for it was not possible

Christ opened a new Pascha of God, for not Moses, but the God-Man leads humankind – not from Egyptian captivity, but from death to life, and from earth to the heavens. The paschal matins service depicts this paschal movement, this exodus of the New Covenant as that of a Bridegroom emerging from the wedding chamber., This image is familiar to us! Already, during Passion Week, the Church prepared us for the coming of Christ the Bridegroom: “O faithful, let us be on fire with love for the Bridegroom, and with lamps burning, let us go out to meet Him. May the light of our virtues shine brightly, and may our faith be radiant. With the wise virgins, let us prepare to enter the banquet hall of the Lord; for the divine Spouse offers us the crown of immortality.” (Great Tuesday, Matins, Lenten Sessional Hymns). And lo, the grave is transformed into a chamber, with Christ’s Resurrection funeral services are transformed into the joy of encountering the Bridegroom, who

dispels sorrow, fulfills the time of expectation, and invites us to the paschal feast of the Heavenly Kingdom. With Christ’s Resurrection, we become partakers of eternal life—not observers, but real participants in the life of God’s children.

Bearing torches let us meet the Bridegroom!

This past year we have lived as if in a tomb “behind the locked doors” of quarantine restrictions that periodically intensified. Our churches and monasteries in some parts of the world were truly inaccessible to worshipping faithful, out of concern for the safety and health of both clergy and religious, as well as the laity. However, today Paschal Matins help us accept these restrictions as a form of expectation—of the exodus and of the risen Bridegroom-Christ, whose arrival is awaited vigilantly in the night by the wedding guests (see Mt 25:1-13). And here we sense that this time is approaching. The Bridegroom draws near, announcing to us that the exodus has begun. The light of hope shines through, that with God’s help we will be able to emerge from this global “incarceration,” to return from the virtual world to the expanse of our churches and communities, in order to pray together “with one heart and one voice” in God’s assembly. But for this to happen, is it especially important that the torch of the Resurrection—the light of faith, hope, and love—not be extinguished.

In going out to meet the risen Christ this paschal night we carry our torches of faith! Even in circumstances of strict quarantine we’ve learned to practice our faith, to differentiate between its substance and its forms of expression. We may have had to change our practices and customs, but we did not weaken our relationship of faith with our Lord God, a faith that filled our life with light through

prayer and daily reflection on the Word of God, through participation in the Divine Liturgy in a different way, through a heartfelt desire to receive the Body and Blood of our Savior. The torch of faith in us did not go out.

We carry today the torches of our hope! Drawing strength from our faith, we have fostered expectations that we will overcome and survive these complex times. Christian hope gave us strength to continue living, to adapt to a culture of preserving a healthy life in these new circumstances. We shone our torches of faith and hope in the resurrection even as we mourned our dead. When the world became disoriented and lost its bearings, the torch of Christian hope helped us find an exit-exodus, move towards an encounter with the Bridegroom, who today joyfully and victoriously emerges from the tomb!

We are encountering the risen Christ, carrying our torches of love in action—of God and neighbor. As the wise virgins of the Gospel parable (see Mt 25:1-13), this pandemic night of waiting for the coming of the Bridegroom filled our lamps with works of mercy and service to our neighbor. We understood that we will find our way out of these complex circumstances of life only if we create authentic and vibrant Christian communities, built on mutual assistance and sacrificial service to one another. The torch of love for neighbor in us did not die out, and on this paschal night it allows us to go out to meet the risen Christ!

And let us greet, with joyful song, the saving Pascha of God.

We joyfully praise Christ, who emerges from the tomb, as a spring bird, who, with the thaw, begins to sing louder and more cheerfully, and does not cease, even when it senses that the branch on which it is perched is swaying—for it knows that it has wings of faith, hope, and love! Let us gaze upon the body of Christ, covered in wounds from brutal scourging, without breath or life. A body crucified and buried, it would seem, irrevocably and forever. And yet, the Spirit of God revives this broken human body, which in the brightness of Divine glory comes out to meet us and lay a path for us to eternity. This is the salvation of which we sing today: “O Son of God, who are the giver of life to the whole world, for this the whole world glorifies You.”

Therefore, if we are under the impression that humanity has become like a body tortured unto death by the pandemic—and our people suffer this evil in the midst of the horrors of war, which continue now for the eighth year—let us gaze towards the Bridegroom, who emerges from the tomb fully alive and surrounded by light, and let us not doubt even for a moment, that a light-filled resurrection also awaits us, that we too are true partakers of the Resurrection which we celebrate today by the power and action of the Holy Spirit!

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ! On this bright, joyful day I greet all of you with the Pascha of our Lord. Especially in this Year of St. Joseph the Betrothed I greet all our husbands-fathers. My wish for you is that you be a light of faith, hope, and love for your families, models and icons of God's love, fidelity, courage, creativity, industriousness, patience, openness

—for your beloved spouses and children. Christ is the only icon of God the Father, but children, as they grow up, develop an image of Him on the basis of their family experience and the example of their dad.

I greet those who in this pandemic feel lonely and abandoned. Remember: when you pray, the risen Lord is always with you, and by the power of Christian prayer you are united with the entire community of His Church. You are not alone!

I greet all the sick and frail, as well as medical professionals and your family and friends, who care for you. On this feast of victory over death I ask you: cherish the gift of life, and embrace bodily suffering as sacrifice in prayer, for this is “a spiritual fragrance” pleasing to the Lord.

To our soldiers and to those who remain in occupied territories and in Crimea, I send you my sincere paschal greeting and assure you of my prayers, that the risen Lord strengthen you and keep you alive and healthy. I embrace with a fatherly love all the clergy, religious, and faithful in Ukraine and throughout the world, and sincerely wish you all a blessed Easter feast, a tasty sharing of our traditional blessed egg, and a Paschal joy that is full of light.

The grace of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Christ is risen! – Truly, He is risen! + SVIATOSLAV Given in Kyiv at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ, on the day of our Venerable Father and Confessor Theophanes of Sigriana Our Holy Father Gregory the Dialogist, Pope of Rome and Blessed Priest-Martyr Omelian Kovch March 25 (12), 2021 A.D.