



**ST. PETER & ST. PAUL
UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**105 CLIFTON AVE
ANSONIA, CT 06401**

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Very Rev. Archpriest Edward Canon Young, Pastor

April 4, 2021

Pascha: The Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord God and Savior, Jesus Christ

Свята і Велика Неділя Пасхи. Воскресіння Господа Бога і Спаси нашого Ісуса Христа

Epistle: Acts 1:1-8 Gospel: John 1:1-17 Tone: Sheet



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.

DIVINE LITURGY SCHEDULE

WEEKDAYS: MONDAY–FRIDAY 10:00AM

SATURDAY: Not Now! 4:00PM (Vigil Sunday-Eng.)

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

Confessions are heard before each Divine Liturgy:

Saturday 3:00PM to 3:30 PM

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

**Religious Education – Saturday 10:00AM – 11:00AM
Call Alice O'Doy @203-734-3055 for more information.**

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

Address or Name Change/New Phone Number – Please update your records. See Bob Jaskilka, or 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 10AM – Noon
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. 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.

Bob Jaskilka, or Michael Wysowski, Jr. or Fr. Edward Young

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

Bob Jaskilka, or 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.

Bob Jaskilka, or 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# _____

Address _____ E-mail _____




City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(Please come down to the Basement to be properly registered after or before liturgy)

Ikos of Pascha: *The myrrh-bearing maidens anticipated the dawn and sought, as those who seek the day, their Sun, Who was before the sun and Who had once sat in the grave. And they cried to each other: Friends, come, let us anoint with spices His life-giving and buried body — the Flesh Who raised up fallen Adam, and Who now lies in the tomb. Let us go, let us hasten, and like the Magi, let us worship; and let us bring myrrh as a gift to Him, Who is wrapped, not now in swaddling clothes, but in a shroud. And let us weep and cry: Arise, O Lord, Who offers Resurrection to the fallen. Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ, let us adore the Holy Lord Jesus, the only sinless One. We worship Thy Cross, O Christ, and Thy Holy Resurrection we praise and glorify; for Thou art our God, and we know no other than Thee; we call upon Thy name. O come all you faithful, let us worship Christ's holy Resurrection. For behold, through the Cross joy has come to all the world. Ever blessing the Lord, let us praise His Resurrection. By enduring the Cross for us He destroyed death by death*

**Bread and Wine Offering - In loving memory of +Peter Symochko
by John & Helen Zanowiak & Family**

04/03	Great & Holy Saturday	9:00 AM	Liturgy of St. Basil the Great Blessing of Paschal Foods - Blahoslovennia pasok [Out Doors near the Garage] 3:00 pm (In English), 4:00 pm (in Ukrainian) Church will be closed at 8:00 PM Confessions will be heard after each of the blessings of Easter Food
04/04	Sunday <u>Resurrection of Our Lord,</u> <u>Свята Пасха –</u> <u>Воскресіння</u> <u>Христове</u>	6:30AM	NADHROBNE / НАДГРОБНЕ ПРИ ГРОБІ (Removal of the holy shroud to the altar)
		7:00AM	7:00 AM PROCESSION & RESURRECTIONAL MATINS ОБХІД ХРАМУ / ВОСКРЕСНА УТРЕНЯ
		8:00AM	8:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY / ВЕЛИКОДНІ СЛУЖБИ БОЖІ GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY <i>Blessing of the ARTOS after the Ambon Prayer.</i>
		10:00 AM	10:00 AM DIVINE LITURGY GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY
04/05	Bright Monday	10:00 AM	+Archpriest George Angelov
04/06	Bright Tuesday	10:00 AM	+Mary Elizabeth Koalchic Garahan req. by Nancy Mlyner Sherman
04/07	Bright Wednesday	10:00 AM	+Adele Comcowich
04/08	Bright Thursday		No Liturgy
04/09	Bright Friday		No Liturgy
04/10	Bright Saturday	10:00 AM	+Mary Rita Kelly Young req. by Fr. Edward Young & Family
04/11	Thomas Sunday	8:30 AM	Pro Populo (For Parishioners) - За Всix Парафіян
		10:00 AM	+Thomas Bruderman req. by Monks Family

ETERNAL LIGHT		<i>In loving memory of +Barbara Lypen y Patricia & Earl Holtz & Family</i>		
BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP		<i>In loving memory of +Melania Lypen by Maria & Michael R. Telep</i>		
SACRED HEART of JESUS LAMP		<i>In loving memory of +Melania Lypen by Maria & Michael R. Telep</i>		
BREAD & WINE OFFERING RESERVED DATES 4/12/21-4/18/21 5/3/21-5/9/21 11/1/21-11/7/21	ETERNAL LIGHT LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 4/12/21-4/18/21 4/26/21-5/02/21 5/3/21-5/9/21 5/10/21-5/16/21 5/31/21-6/6/21 6/14/21-6/20/21 8/2/21-8/8/21 8/9/21-8/15/21 9/6/21-9/12-21 9/20/21-9/26/21 11/22/21-11/28/21	BLESSED VIRGIN MARY LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 4/12/21-4/18/21 4/19/21-4/25/21 4/26/21-5/02/21 5/3/21-5/9/21 5/10/21-5/16/21 5/17/21-5/23/21 8/2/21-8/8/21 8/9/21-8/15/21 8/23/21-8/29/21 9/6/21-9/12-21 11/1/21-11/7/21 11/8/21-11/14/21	SACRED HEART OF JESUS LAMP OFFERING RESERVED DATES 4/12/21-4/18/21 4/19/21-4/25/21 4/26/21-5/2/21 5/10/21-5/16/21 6/7/21-6/13/21 7/26/21-8/1/21 11/15/21-11/21/21	

2021 & Past Church Dues (Blue Book) (Kollekta)

During Lent & every Saturday & Sunday dues current & past will be collected in the church hall after the 4:00 PM Vigil and 8:30 AM & 10AM Sunday Liturgies.

Please bring your dues book to the church hall dues will not be collected in the rectory

Back on January 25, 2005 the Parish Council voted to increase the yearly dues to \$75.00 per member. This is the first increase since 1998. The number of upcoming projects that are needed to keep the church building in good repairs, such as painting, doors, walls, fixing the roof, warranted this increase.

Do not place dues in your weekly envelope offering !

Please remember - this is not our church but YOUR church!

Please fulfill your responsibility to your Church!!

Preservation Donations - In memory of +Barbara Lypen \$445.00 by

JAN	& STEFANIA	GEBUZA	M/M WALTER		SAJA
JULIA		GYBA	WASYL	& JAROSLAWA	SEMRAT
EVA		HENDRICK	AUDREY		SOKOL
MICHAEL	& JOLANTA	KOWAL JR	MICHAEL R.	& MARIA	TELEP
JAROSLAW	& LEOKADIA	KUNCIK	GLORIA		TELEP
EDWIN	& ALICE	O'DOY	MICHAEL	& LISA	WARYCHA
MICHAEL A.		PAWLYK	JOHN	& HELEN	ZANOWIAK
LUCY		PISARCZYK			

From an ancient homily for Holy Saturday

The Lord's descent into the underworld

Something strange is happening – there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh and hell trembles with fear.

He has gone to search for our first parent, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, he has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve, he who is both God and the son of Eve. The Lord approached them bearing the cross, the weapon that had won him the victory. At the sight of him Adam, the first man he had created, struck his breast in terror and cried out to everyone: "My Lord be with you all." Christ answered him: "And with your spirit." He took him by the hand and raised him up, saying: "Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. Out of love for you and for your descendants I now by my own authority command all who are held in bondage to come forth, all who are in darkness to be enlightened, all who are sleeping to arise. I order you, O sleeper, to awake. I did not create you to be held a prisoner in hell. Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead. Rise up, work of my hands, you who were created in my image. Rise, let us leave this place, for you are in me and I am in you; together we form only one person and we cannot be separated. For your sake I, your God, became your son; I, the Lord, took the form of a slave; I, whose home is above the heavens, descended to the earth and beneath the earth. For your sake, for the sake of man, I became like a man without help, free among the dead. For the sake of you, who left a garden, I was betrayed to the Jews in a garden, and I was crucified in a garden.

See on my face the spittle I received in order to restore to you the life I once breathed into you. See there the marks of the blows I received in order to refashion your warped nature in my image. On my back see the marks of the scourging I endured to remove the burden of sin that weighs upon your back. See my hands, nailed firmly to a tree, for you who once wickedly stretched out your hand to a tree.

I slept on the cross and a sword pierced my side for you who slept in paradise and brought forth Eve from your side. My side has healed the pain in yours. My sleep will rouse you from your sleep in hell. The sword that pierced me has sheathed the sword that was turned against you.

Rise, let us leave this place. The enemy led you out of the earthly paradise. I will not restore you to that paradise, but I will enthrone you in heaven. I forbade you the tree that was only a symbol of life, but see, I who am life itself am now one with you. I appointed cherubim to guard you as slaves are guarded, but now I make them worship you as God. The throne formed by cherubim awaits you, its bearers swift and eager. The bridal chamber is adorned, the banquet is ready, the eternal dwelling places are prepared, the treasure houses of all good things lie open. The kingdom of heaven has been prepared for you from all eternity.



Easter Sunday The Holy Pascha

A little before Daybreak on the Blessed Sabbath the Nocturne service is chanted. The celebrant goes to the tomb and removes the winding-sheet. He carries it through the royal doors and places it on the altar table where it remains for forty days until the day of Ascension. At point the Easter procession begins. The people leave the church building singing: *The angels in heaven, O Christ our Savior, sing of Thy resurrection. Make us on earth also worthy to hymn Thee with a pure heart.* The procession circles the church building and returns to the closed doors of the front of the church. This procession of the Christians on Easter morning recalls the original baptismal procession from the darkness and death of this world to the light and the life of the Kingdom of God. It is the procession of the holy Passover, from death unto life, from earth unto heaven, from this age to the age to come which will never end.

Before the closed doors of the church building, the resurrection of Christ is announced. Sometimes the Gospel is read which tells of the empty tomb. The celebrant intones the blessing to the “holy, consubstantial, life-creating and undivided Trinity.” The Easter troparion is sung for the first time, together with the verses of Psalm 68 which will begin all of the Church services during the Easter season.

Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered; let those who hate him flee from before his face!

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life (Troparion).

This is the day which the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!

The people re-enter the church building and continue the service of Easter Matins which is entirely sung.

The canon hymns of Christ’s resurrection, ascribed to Saint John of Damascus, are chanted with the troparion of the feast as the constantly recurring refrain. The building is decorated with flowers and lights. The vestments are the bright robes of the resurrection. The Easter icon stands in the center of the church showing Christ destroying the gates of hell and freeing Adam and Eve from the captivity of death. It is the image of the Victor “trampling down death by his own death.” There is the continual singing and censing of the icons and the people, with the constant proclamation of the celebrant: Christ is risen! The faithful continually respond: Indeed He is risen!

It is the day of Resurrection ! Let us be illumined for the feast! Pascha! The Pascha of the Lord! From death unto life, and from earth unto heaven has Christ our God led us! Singing the song of victory: Christ is Risen from the dead! (First Ode of the Easter Canon).

Following the canon, the paschal verses are sung, and at the conclusion of the Easter Matins, the Easter Hours are also sung. In general, nothing is simply read in the Church services of Easter: everything is fully sung with the joyful melodies of the feast.

At the end of the Hours, before the Divine Liturgy, the celebrant solemnly proclaims the famous Paschal Sermon of Saint John Chrysostom. This sermon is an invitation to all of the faithful to forget their sins and to join fully in the feast of the resurrection of Christ. Taken literally, the sermon is the formal invitation offered to all members of the Church to come and to receive Holy Communion, partaking of Christ, the Passover Lamb, whose table is now being set in the midst of the Church. In some parishes the sermon is literally obeyed, and all of the faithful receive the Eucharistic gifts of the Passover Supper of Easter night.

The Easter Divine Liturgy begins immediately with the singing once more of the festal troparion with the verses of Psalm 68. Special psalm verses also comprise the antiphons of the liturgy, through which the faithful praise and glorify the salvation of God:

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Sing of his name, give glory to His praise.

Let all the earth worship Thee and praise Thee! Let it praise Thy name, O most High!

That we may know Thy way upon the earth and Thy salvation among all nations.

Let the people thank Thee, O God! Let all the people give thanks to Thee.

The troparion is repeated over and over again. The baptismal line from Galatians replaces the Thrice-Holy Hymn. The epistle reading is the first nine verses of the Book of Acts. The gospel reading is the first seventeen verses of the Gospel of Saint John. The proclamation of the Word of God takes the faithful back again to the beginning, and announces God's creation and re-creation of the world through the living Word of God, his Son Jesus Christ.

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God . . . all things were made through him . . . In Him was life and the life was the light of men. . . .

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth . . . we have beheld His glory, glory of the only-begotten Son of the Father, and from His fullness have we all received grace upon grace (Jn 1.1–17).

The Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom continues, crowned in Holy Communion with the Passover Lamb at his banquet table in God's Kingdom. Again and again the troparion of the Resurrection is sung while the faithful partake of Him "Who was dead and is alive again" (Rev 2.8).

In the Greek Catholic Church the feast of Easter is officially called Pascha, the word which means the Passover. It is the new Passover of the new and everlasting covenant foretold by the prophets of old. It is the eternal Passover from death to life and from earth to heaven. It is the Day of the Lord proclaimed by God's holy prophets, "the day which the Lord has made" for His judgment over all creation, the day of His final and everlasting victory. It is the Day of the Kingdom of God, the day "which has no night" for "its light is the Lamb" (Rev 21.22–25).

The celebration of Easter in the Greek Catholic Church, therefore, is once again not merely an historical reenactment of the event of Christ's Resurrection as narrated in the gospels. It is not a dramatic representation of the first Easter morning. There is no "sunrise service" since the Easter Matins and the Divine Liturgy are celebrated together in the first dark hours of the first day of the week in order to give men the experience of the "new creation" of the world, and to allow them to enter mystically into the New Jerusalem which shines eternally with the glorious light of Christ, overcoming the perpetual night of evil and destroying the darkness of this mortal and sinful world:

Shine! Shine! O New Jerusalem! The glory of the Lord has shone upon you! Exult and be glad O Zion! Be radiant O Pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection of your Son!

This is one of the main Easter hymns in the Greek Catholic Church. It is inspired by Isaiah's prophecy and the final chapters of the Book of Revelation, for it is exactly the New Creation, the New Jerusalem, the Heavenly City, the Kingdom of God, the Day of the Lord, the Marriage Feast of the Lamb with His Bride which is celebrated and realized and experienced in the Holy Spirit on the Holy Day of Easter in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.

The Paschal Sermon Saint John Chrysostom

The Catechetical Sermon of St. John Chrysostom is read during Matins of Pascha.

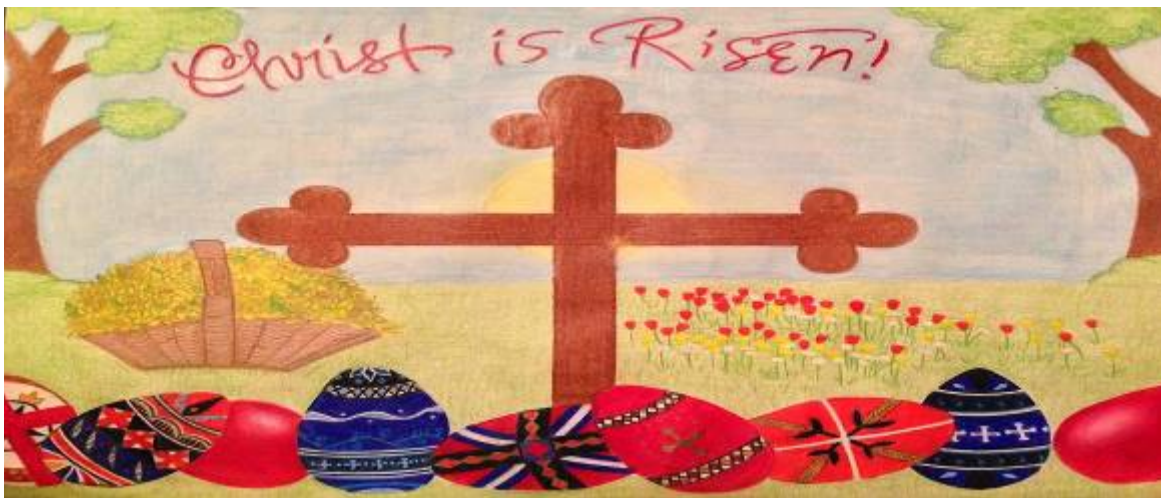
If any man be devout and love God, let him enjoy this fair and radiant triumphal feast. If any man be a wise servant, let him rejoicing enter into the joy of his Lord. If any have labored long in fasting, let him now receive his recompense. If any have wrought from the first hour, let him today receive his just reward. If any have come at the third hour, let him with thankfulness keep the feast. If any have arrived at the sixth hour, let him have no misgivings; because he shall in nowise be deprived thereof. If any have delayed until the ninth hour, let him draw near, fearing nothing. If any have tarried even until the eleventh hour, let him, also, be not alarmed at his tardiness; for the Lord, who is jealous of his honor, will accept the last even as the first; He gives rest unto him who comes at the eleventh hour, even as unto him who has wrought from the first hour.

And He shows mercy upon the last, and cares for the first; and to the one He gives, and upon the other He bestows gifts. And He both accepts the deeds, and welcomes the intention, and honors the acts and praises the offering. Wherefore, enter you all into the joy of your Lord; and receive your reward, both the first, and likewise the second. You rich and poor together, hold high festival. You sober and you heedless, honor the day. Rejoice today, both you who have fasted and you who have disregarded the fast. The table is full-laden; feast ye all sumptuously. The calf is fatted; let no one go hungry away.

Enjoy ye all the feast of faith: Receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness. let no one bewail his poverty, for the universal kingdom has been revealed. Let no one weep for his iniquities, for pardon has shown forth from the grave. Let no one fear death, for the Savior's death has set us free. He that was held prisoner of it has annihilated it. By descending into Hell, He made Hell captive. He embittered it when it tasted of His flesh. And Isaiah, foretelling this, did cry: Hell, said he, was embittered, when it encountered 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. 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.

CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD,* TRAMPLING DEATH BY DEATH,* AND TO THOSE IN THE TOMBS* GIVING LIFE. (3X)



EASTER PASTORAL MESSAGE OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY OF THE USA

EASTER PASTORAL OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHY OF THE U.S.A.

**TO OUR CLERGY, HIEROMONKS AND BROTHERS, RELIGIOUS SISTERS,
SEMINARIANS AND BELOVED FAITHFUL**

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

*“Let us rise at early dawn and bring to our Master a hymn instead of myrrh,
and we shall see Christ the Sun of righteousness Who enlightens the life of all”*

Ode 5, Paschal Matins

Christ is the fulfillment of Pascha. He performed the ultimate passage from death into life, and He opens and invites us to participate in this journey into new life, life with the Risen Lord. The darkness of Great Friday, the day of Christ's Passion is ultimately overshadowed by the great light and joy of Christ's resurrection.

This Lenten season we all experienced darkness. We all have been living in the shadows of deep darkness of the Covid-19 pandemic. We all struggled with extended time of darkness that has impacted each of us - our families, our communities, our church, our nation and the world. This experience gives us a deeper understanding of God's love in living through the darkness of the death of Christ that reveals to us the saving death for our salvation - the life-giving death. But Christ's death is the not the final event!

As we joyfully sing on Easter morning: “Christ is risen from the dead. By death He conquered death”. Death is overcome by life; we live with the Risen Christ! From now on Paschal joy illuminates our lives. The Risen Christ enlightens the life of all. This meaning of Christ's Resurrection, this great joy, always was, and today is the central theme of Christianity. On Easter morning what we celebrate is that Christ has overcome sin and evil and death. There is forgiveness and hope and new life even from the very rock bottom of suffering and despair.

With the darkness of the pandemic upon us it is easy for us to understand why we are terrified, afraid and uncertain. We are afraid of getting hurt. We are afraid of losing control. We are afraid of what we do not understand. The women and disciples on this early morning of Pascha were afraid as well!

This joy of Resurrection starts from a personal encounter with the Risen Christ. What does it take for Mary Magdalene's tears to give way to Easter joy? Nothing less than meeting the risen Christ. Meeting the risen Savior Himself! Even this is not so straightforward. Jesus appears to her, but Mary does not recognize Him. And then, Jesus calls her name - Mary. She turns, and now when she looks, her world is transformed. Before her there is no gardener, but the resurrected Christ, alive and free from death. Around her there is no tomb of lifeless rock, but the living Savior who calls her out of darkness into a marvelous light. After encountering the risen Jesus, Mary Magdalene obeys the Lord's command to tell the "Good News" of the resurrection to the disciples.

The risen Christ wants us to experience the joy of encountering Him and living for Christ and not for self—the joy of being liberated from the sins which trap us in self-centeredness and discover the blessing of Christ's self-giving love. No matter what may be happening in our lives, we can still experience spiritual joy through the love of God and living the way God made us to live, which is for self-giving love.

The Easter gospel is not just about new life, but new life that comes to us. Not just Christ raised from the dead, but the risen Christ meeting us and calling our names. Easter is an encounter, a call and a summons - Go and tell what you have seen and heard. Christ is alive, and more than that He has sought us out and called us by name. Whatever our doubts and our fears, whatever our failures and betrayals, whatever the wounds we try to protect – today is the new day. We are all to become witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus. We are called to bring that ray of the light of the Resurrection into the various human situations: into those happy ones, rendering them more beautiful, and into those sorrowful situations, bringing serenity and hope. Let us experience this Easter morning joy and let us radiate this joy in our lives. Let the Mercy of Christ shine in our lives and deeds!

Our fervent prayer is that our Resurrected and Living Lord may bestow His peace and grace upon you and your loved ones, upon all our brothers and sisters scattered throughout the world!

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

+**Borys Gudziak**, Archbishop of Philadelphia, Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States

+**Paul Chomnycky, OSBM** Eparch of Stamford

+**Benedict Aleksiychuk**, Eparch of St. Nicholas in Chicago

+**Bohdan J. Danylo (author)**, Eparch of St. Josaphat in Parma

+**Andriy Rabiy**, Auxiliary Bishop of Philadelphia

Pascha 2021

EASTER PASTORAL LETTER OF HIS BEATITUDE SVIATOSLAV

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 for the Prince of life to be mastered by corruption."

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 neighbour 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.

BRIGHT WEEK: Bright Week, Pascha Week or Renewal Week (Greek: Διακαιήσιμος ἑβδομάς) is the name used by the Eastern Orthodox and Byzantine Rite 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.

During Bright Week, the entire week is considered to be one continuous day. During Bright Week, we are not obligated to fast but to celebrate the Feast. 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 clothes, 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.

The **Artos** is a loaf of leavened bread impressed before baking with a seal of an icon of the Resurrection that is blessed during the Paschal Vigil. This seal symbolizes the physical presence of the Resurrected Christ among the Apostles. This **Artos** is kept in the church during Bright Week, is found on the Tetrapod. Throughout the week, whenever anyone enters the church, he or she kisses the **Artos**, symbolically greeting the resurrected Christ.



On the following Sunday, after the Divine Liturgy, the priest says a prayer over the **Artos** and it is broken up and distributed to the faithful. Bright Week begins the liturgical season known as the Pentecostarion, the period of fifty days which begins on Pascha and continues to Pentecost and its After feast. The date of Pascha determines liturgical cycles as well as the Epistle and Gospel readings for the subsequent year.

NO KNEELING – We should not kneel or make prostrations in Church or in our private prayers at home from Pascha through Pentecost (this year, May 23). Kneeling and prostrating are postures of repentance and sorrow for our sins. The brilliant solemnity of the events that we are

celebrating takes precedence over such external manifestations of penitence. For our Lord's death and resurrection "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us ... nailing it to His cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Col. 2:14,15) Accordingly, "here is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus ..." (Rom. 8:1) We resume kneeling at appropriate times during the "Kneeling Vespers" celebrated after the Divine Liturgy for Holy Pentecost.

VOCATION CRISIS CONTINUES

Our awareness and prayer for vocations should continue even more fervently and with the commitment to keep our prayers focused on the Vocation Crisis. We ask you to continue to fully commit to deep, sincere prayer for vocations to the priesthood, the diaconate, the monastic and religious life. As a community we should strive that our prayers be raised in unity ~ unity in mind, heart and soul, praying that the will of God will send workers into His vineyard.

***** DAILY PRAYER INTENTIONS *****

MONDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate

TUESDAY'S INTENTION - Prayers for all Seminarians to sustain their Vocations

WEDNESDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Redemptorists

THURSDAY'S INTENTION - VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD

FRIDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Sisters of St. Basil the Great

SATURDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Order of St. Basil the Great

SUNDAY'S INTENTION - Increased vocations to the Missionary Sisters of the Mother of God

♦ **Daily, please add your private and personal intentions for our Church, our Hierarchy, Clergy, Religious and all who lead and serve Christ and all His faithful.**

PASCHA: The Resurrection of Christ, the Passover (Pascha) of the Lord (Easter)

Acts 1:1-8; John 1:1-17

Bright Monday

Acts 1:12-17; 21-26; John 1:18-28

Bright Tuesday

Acts 2:14-21; Luke 24:12-35

Bright Wednesday

Acts 2:22-36; John 1:35-51

Bright Thursday

Acts 2:38-43; John 3:1-15

Bright Friday

Acts 3:1-8; John 2:12-22

The Life-Giving Spring of the Most Holy

Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 10:38-42; 11:27,28

Theotokos on Friday

Bright Saturday

Acts 3:11-16; John 3:22-33

Second Sunday of Pascha: Thomas Sunday

Acts 5:12-20; John 20:19-31

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