

Pascha 2018

To our Beloved Faithful of the Diocese of Pallini and Western Europe  
and all our Spiritual Children,

Christ is risen!

"Do not be alarmed. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here! See the place where they laid Him."

(Gospel according to St. Mark 16:6)

The Myrrh-bearing women sought to find Christ were they had left Him to rest in the tomb. However, they received the joyous news from the young man (angel) they saw in the tomb that He is risen and that He is no longer in the tomb.

We live in a world of putting things into "neat little boxes". Unfortunately, we often attempt to put our faith into some neat little box. We fail to live the resurrected Christ who is not confined to a tomb, but is risen and the joy of His resurrection and our salvation must permeate every aspect of our lives. Now everything is filled with light -- the heavens, the earth, and the underworld. If we "purify our senses, we shall behold Christ" (Ode 1, Canon of the Resurrection).

By failing to see that, for Christians, all things are now filled with the light of the Resurrection, we live a daily life that lacks true joy. We try to fill our lives with "things" and "events" that will make us happy. True joy, however, already exists. True joy is the truth of the Holy Resurrection of our Christ. For those who don't know Him, it is what is missing in their lives. For those who know Him, the goal is to keep hearing Him say "Rejoice!" as he said to the myrrh-bearing women. Yesterday, O Christ, I was buried with Thee, and today I arise with thy arising. Yesterday I was crucified with Thee. Glorify me, O Saviour, with Thee in Thy Kingdom. (Ode 3, Canon of the Resurrection).

Starting with this year's feast of the Resurrection let us ask to remain insatiable in "beholding Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, Who causes life to dawn for all." (Ode 5, Canon of the Resurrection).

St. Gregory of Nyssa in his work *The Life of Moses* sums this up saying, "This truly is the vision of God: never to be satisfied in the desire to see him. But one must always, by looking at what he can see, rekindle his desire to see more. Thus, no limit would interrupt the growth in the ascent to God, since no limit to the Good can be found nor is the increasing of the desire for the Good brought to an end because it is satisfied."

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+Philaretos

Bishop of Pallini and Western Europe