

**PASCHAL MESSAGE TO ALL FAITHFUL CHILDREN
OF THE RUSSIAN TRUE ORTHODOX CHURCH
IN THE FATHERLAND AND IN THE DIASPORA**

Dear fellow archpastors in the Lord, most reverent shepherds and God-loving flock of the
Russian True Orthodox Church:

CHRIST IS RISEN!

The Holy Church proclaims this solemn truth with all its might to us today. In a powerful, unstoppable stream, it spreads throughout the universe, filling our hearts with joy, light and life-giving force.

The bright joy of Holy Pascha is that precious gift the Lord sends us on this great Feast.

“We celebrate the death of death, the destruction of Hell, a new life of eternal beginning.”

These are perhaps the brightest moments in the life of every truly believing Orthodox person, with which nothing can be compared. But this joy is only experienced most fully and profoundly by those who have a pure heart — that is why we ask the Risen Lord to make us worthy to glorify Him with a “pure heart”.

Truly joyful, great and saving for all people is the day of the Lord's Resurrection, for *the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner* (Matt. 21:42), in which the Lord offered Himself for us as a sacrifice. We eat of this sacrifice, as from the bread of life, and at all times we delight our souls with His precious blood, as if from some kind of life-giving source.

And not only do we people rejoice in the resurrected Lord, do we treat this event with the greatest reverence, but heaven also rejoices with us, for the whole Church of the firstborn in heaven, written in heaven, rejoices (Heb. 12:23). The prophet proclaims this thus: *Rejoice, heavens, for the God of Israel has mercy; sound the trumpet, you foundations of the earth, cry out, you mountains, the joy, the hills, and all the wood that is on them, for the God of Jacob delivers, and Israel will be glorified* (Is. 44:23). And again: *Rejoice, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the LORD hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted* (Is. 49:13).

All creation solemnly celebrates the day of the saving resurrection, and every breath praises the risen Lord for the sake of the overthrow of our enemies and our deliverance, and not in vain; for if there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents (Luke 15:7,10), then shouldn't it be much greater because of the destruction of sin and the resurrection of the dead?

May this joy in the Risen Lord and our Savior be with us forever! And it truly will abide with us if we are faithful to Him in our lamentable era, the era of terrible Apostasy with its horrors and deformities.... Who can calculate all the sorrows, trials, suffering that an Orthodox Christian, the faithful child of His Church, has to endure amidst the general retreat, into the realm of lies and fraud, when faith is so impoverished and morality falls?

“But we overcome all this by the power of Him who loved us,” the great evangelist of the Gospel, the foremost Apostle Paul, once triumphantly proclaimed. Let us be faithful, always and in everything, and

then we will overcome all sorrows and trials — we will overcome by the power of Him who loved us, saved us, and gave us the eternal joy of the resurrection!

Once the Lord, seeing in front of Him the unbelief and bitterness of man, sorrowfully exclaimed: *O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?* (Matt 7:17). What would He say now if He were among us and saw the current unbelief and corruption reigning in the world - all those abominations that are created by the sons and daughters of men?

Today, Satan and his fallen angel-demons continue to wage war against God and all humanity created in the image of God. In this war, as F.M. Dostoevsky said, "... the battlefield is the hearts of people." Humanity is subjected to the absolutely unacceptable by Christians norms of so-called "gender diversity", one of the goals of which is the destruction of the family and traditional values, and opponents of this nonsense face general outrage and persecution. The Christian religion is declared a relic of the past and an obstacle to the "normal" life of society. Having subjugated many people, having seduced them with the idea of "heaven on earth", Satan deliberately seeks to destroy states in which Christian principles of relationships between people are still respected, and the Christian religion is fundamental to the life of citizens. The consequences of this are obvious. The more humanity moves away from Christ, the more boldly death triumphs, the more sorrows in the world: the greater the despondency of people from the disasters that are coming to the universe.

But with all this outpouring of evil and vice that we now see on earth, there is one mighty force that is not overcome by this evil, but overcomes it, and this force is the power and Light of Christ's Resurrection.

Spiritual vigilance and trembling keeping of the Paschal Light in our souls, only the fervent prayerful repentant hope in Christ the Life-Giver, Who trampled down death by death and bestowed eternal life on the faithful, will make us worthy to become partakers in the spiritual rebirth of the world, for the Lord Who has risen and conquered death will then vanquish His enemies, and sinners will perish from the Face of God, but the righteous will rejoice while still here on earth.

And today, brightly celebrating the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, we, the children of the holy Church, glorify His Divine power and omnipotence, manifested in His most pure flesh; together we celebrate our deliverance from death and in the joy of the Resurrection of Christ we look forward to the joy of the resurrection of our own body in the age to come. Having risen from the dead, Jesus Christ brought life and resurrection to us, who believe in Him, granting an undoubted pledge through His Resurrection itself.

Before the Resurrection of Christ, humanity for the most part did not have a living hope for immortality and resurrection. In paganism, even among the best sages, the hope for life after death was rather vague, indefinite, disfigured by strange delusions. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ confirmed our hope and resolved all people's doubts about the afterlife. Now, from the light of the Resurrection of Christ, the truth of the immortality of the soul has not only become clear to everyone, but the mystery of the resurrection of bodies has also been revealed. Just as through the carnal, sinful ancestor of mankind, Adam, all people united with him being born according to the flesh were subject to the law of death, so in our spiritual ancestor Jesus, all those who are spiritually reborn by Him, united with Him by faith, live and rise again (1 Cor. 15, 20-22, 47-48).

Indeed, with such a living union, in which believers partake with Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, becoming the body of Christ (1 Cor. 10, 16-17; 12, 27; Eph. 4, 15; 1, 22-23), is it not natural for us to resurrect as members of the body, after the Head, the Head of our life and the Lord, has risen from the tomb?!

Thus, in the Resurrection of our Savior there is a firm hope, truly joyful for believers, personified in the resurrected Lord Jesus! It is so alive and true that it is no longer possible to separate the certainty in His resurrection from the certainty in our resurrection (Rom. 8:11). From this it is clear what high joy – and at the same time mysteriously sweet for Christians – so often concludes solemnly on the feast of Pascha, the greeting repeated with the Church: “Christ is Risen!”

Experiencing His sufferings with the Lord, like His faithful disciples, we also experience the joy of His Resurrection and our salvation, trying to cherish heavenly joy and purity of heart, like precious beads - a pledge of eternal future bliss in Christ.

And this joy on this holy Paschal night, like a precious gift, is sent from heaven to every believing soul. Let us join the call of St. John Chrysostom to all Christians in his immortal Paschal word - “enter into the joy of your Lord!”. And may this call of the great servant of Christ flow into our soul and heart, and may our spirit rejoice in God, our Savior!

CHRIST IS RISEN! – TRULY IS CHRIST RISEN!

**All of you children of the Church of Christ
congratulations from the bottom of my heart
with the bright Resurrection of Christ!**

+ humble Tikhon,
By the grace of God, Archbishop of Omsk and Siberia,
First Hierarch of the Russian True Orthodox Church
Pascha of the Lord, April 11/24
2022, Omsk.