



PASCHAL EPISTLE
to all the faithful flock of the Russian True Orthodox Church
in the Fatherland and in the Diaspora

Dear brothers in the Lord, Archpastors, most reverent pastors, zealous in their struggles monastics, God-loving flock of the Russian True Orthodox Church —

CHRIST IS RISEN!

This wonderful Paschal greeting again tremblingly excites our souls, for we, as Christians, through the Resurrection of Christ, our Savior and Redeemer, become partakers of eternal life!

At the time when despondency, death and darkness reigned on earth, when the Life-giver died on the cross and horror seized those living on earth, horror before the terrible and inexorable breath of death, celebrating its victory over the Immortal, preparing eternal death for all living, Heaven already breathed the joy of eternal life. The underworld was illuminated by the light of the resurrection, and hosts of angels sang the praises of the Conqueror of death and hades!

Christ has risen, and the joy of Heaven has poured out upon the earth. The light of His divine glory has dispelled the darkness, eternal life has triumphed over death, and spiritual joy has triumphed over despondency!

He who rose from the grave has weakened evil, and pronounced the death sentence upon death.

By His Resurrection from the dead, the Lord Jesus Christ showed that His redemption and salvation of the human race has as its goal the eternal life of people in everlasting bliss and that this is the whole Christian faith.

The Resurrection of Christ is the goal of the Lord's Providence for us.

And now the Orthodox Church joyfully and jubilantly affirms on the day of Pascha the beginning of its eternal existence with God. The Resurrection in Christ accomplished the eternal and indestructible imperishable union of God and man. Christ for the Church and the Church for Christ become forever inseparable and indestructible.

God's love for man is always unchanging and its depth is revealed to us before the Shroud, which the Church carries on Great Friday. "Let all flesh keep silence..." - man has nothing to reproach God for, who took the consequences of our dislike for Him upon Himself and through this calls us to realize His Love for us, Love which, when accepted, becomes our eternal life.

It is amazing, but in love, in help, in compassion for another – our own soul is reborn and resurrected. Such is the power of love that the Lord commands us. Such is the spiritual law that He Himself fulfills, having become the Grain that fell into the ground, died for our Life, and after the resurrection brought forth “much fruit”.

This is why the resurrection of Christ is celebrated by all creation: "There is no day more glorious than the day of the Resurrection. This day restores the original goodness of the nature created by God, reveals to people the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world" - teaches us Saint John of Shanghai, who himself acquired from the suffering and resurrected Lord the great and healing gift of compassionate Love. This is why Saint John Chrysostom says: "It is not a miracle that we do great things, but a miracle that the evil one turns into the good one."

This love is not only commanded, but is now available to each of us - this contains the entire deep essence of Orthodox Christianity: "By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Especially, as the Holy Fathers write about this, it is commanded to the pastors of the Church. In compassionate love for their spiritual children, they are like the Heavenly Shepherd, for "only he who lives by Christ himself and tries to revive his neighbor by His power can serve the deep and decisive rebirth of a beloved neighbor" (M. Anthony). Having compassion for us, having died for us on the Cross and having resurrected us with Him, Christ establishes the law on which alone the Church is based, from apostolic times to this day: the law of the unity of Christians who love one another. The law of the regenerating power of the compassionate love of pastors for their children and of all believers for one another.

"Such is the Lord's Paradise. All will be in love, and from the humility of Christ all will be glad to see each other above themselves" (St. Silouan the Athonite). And such is our holy Orthodoxy in its divine, gracious essence.

The Orthodox Church is the Body of Christ. In Her (in Him!) is the fullness of the healing, reviving, saving grace of God. In Orthodoxy, and only in Orthodoxy, we find answers to all the questions of the searching human mind and suffering heart. And only Orthodoxy - genuine, real Orthodoxy, knowing and sacredly preserving the moral, spiritual laws of asceticism of the human soul (the laws of Love!) - shows the Christian a reliable path to salvation. It itself, in the person of the true, Orthodox Church of Christ, is the gracious Path of salvation (John 14:6). That is why Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) says: “There are pious people in any religion, grace-filled people - only in the Orthodox Church.”

The infallibility of Orthodoxy lies precisely in the fact that it is not one of the human teachings or religions, and not even one of the many “Christian interpretations of the Gospel,” as Protestants and “Orthodox” ecumenists teach. No, Orthodoxy is God’s revelation, it contains the Truth itself. It does not need any change or addition. It contains everything needed for salvation; all that remains for us is to reveal it and humbly accept it into our hearts and minds.

Therefore, a departure from the true Orthodox Church inevitably leads to a departure from Orthodoxy, and therefore, to a departure from the fullness of divine Truth, from eternal Life...

Spiritually sensitive souls of Orthodox Christians feel the breath of the Antichrist in the world, and many signs of the approaching end of world history are acquiring specific visible and recognizable forms. One of the characteristic and distinctive signs of the last times will be that many people who consider themselves believing Christians will lose the distinction between truth and falsehood in their minds. Deceivers and deceived – this is how the Apostle Paul briefly characterized their susceptibility to any deception. They will lose their taste for the truth, and with it their sense of truth, as an interest in it. After their own lusts they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they will turn away their ears from the truth, and will be turned unto fables (2 Tim. 3:13).

Let us remember that the miracles performed by the Antichrist by the action of Satan will be accompanied by the unrighteous deception of those perishing because they did not accept the love of the truth for their salvation, and for this God will send them strong delusion, so that they will believe a lie (2 Thess. 2:10-11). In other words, first deception, and then belief in a lie.

Let us recall how, in the first period after the Resurrection of Christ, the first Christian community gathered in the Jerusalem upper room – the holy apostles, who “continued with one accord in prayer and supplication.” This spiritual mood, in which the disciples of the Resurrection Lord found themselves, saved them and gave them strength and hope for the upcoming labors, despite the fact that at that time, not yet strengthened by the descent of the Holy Spirit, they were like sheep among wolves.

Faith in Christ and prayer with one accord are the powerful weapons against temptations. Christ taught them to pray, and this prayer and supplication were the best means of preparing them to receive the promised Spirit and to fulfill the great service to which they were called by Christ.

The resurrection of Christ has proven all the truths of Christianity, and in response to the Paschal greeting addressed to us we can exclaim with firm and inspired conviction: “Truly Christ is risen!”

The world around us is full of indifference, cold apathy and spiritual coarsening. As lawlessness multiplies, so does hatred in the human race, which we feel very keenly today, but for us who remain faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ, grace abounds, covering us from this evil worldly influence. For the Paschal mystery of Christ's love conquers all the hatred of the world, and death itself, and the darkness of human error and lawlessness cannot darken and extinguish the Divine light of Christ's Resurrection, which shines and will shine in the world.

How bright, how wonderful is the Feast of Christ's Resurrection! How joyfully and solemnly the Church celebrates it! Can any other celebration in the world compare with the magnificence of the Paschal service? The service of the bright Pascha night is all delight and jubilation! Here the believing soul can truly, imitating the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, exclaim: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!"

How beautiful is our Orthodox faith, with what a shining light it illuminates our life, filled with empty vanity and sinful desires. But the Resurrection of Christ has taken place, and in this lies all the strength and light of our faith – in the Resurrection of Christ!

Now all creation rejoices and is glad, and we, participants in this radiant celebration, at this light-bearing moment in the joy of Pascha, which knows no distances or obstacles, will embrace one another

and all together sing: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the graves bestowing life.

Oh, bright Paschal joy! Especially for us, Orthodox. Even our poorest house churches seem to us on this sacred, saving, radiant night of Pascha to be bright heavenly palaces. Our hearts are filled with sweet love for God, for people, for everything that exists. We want to embrace everyone and everything, the whole world.

The Church of Christ has lived for more than two thousand years, and the joy of the night of the Resurrection does not weaken - it grows, and more and more souls of the children of the victorious, earthly Church join it, and with them the souls of our relatives and friends. And this joy and trembling of our hearts on Pascha night is a gift of the Love of the Risen Christ.

Let us hasten to the great feast of faith, to be participants in this bright celebration, let us rejoice spiritually and with joy in our hearts let us offer praise to the Resurrection of Christ: “Angels in the heavens O Christ our Saviour, praise Thy Resurrection, and do Thou vouchsafe us on earth to glorify Thee with a pure heart.”

I congratulate all of you, children of the Church of Christ, with all my heart on the bright Resurrection of Christ!

**CHRIST IS RISEN!
— TRULY CHRIST IS RISEN!**

*+ 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 7 / 20, 2025,
Omsk.*