

Archpastoral Paschal Message

**Dearest Beloved Fathers, Brethren and Sisters in the Resurrected Lord,
Christ is risen! Christos Anesty! Hristos Voskrese!**

Today is Pascha of the Lord! „This is the day, which the Lord has made!

Let us rejoice and be glad in it!’ (117:24)

The Resurrected Lord went down beneath the grave to Hades, where He toppled Satan’s throne and destroyed the breeding-ground of all the wicked plots against the human race. From this grave the Lord rose to the highest heavens, opening up a new path- to the city of the living. He destroyed hell in His might and, in His might, glorified His body and rose from the grave – in His own might, that is indivisible from that of the Father and the Holy Spirit. Meek as a Lamb, the gentle Lord went to suffering and death, and mighty as God He endured the suffering and conquered death. His Resurrection is a real event, and is at the same time the prophecy and the image of our resurrection- „for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible” (1 Corinthians 15:52).

There are some who will ask: how can it be said that the risen Lord has conquered death, when men still die? They who come into this world through their mother’s womb will leave it through death and the grave. This is the rule. Only, death for us who die in Christ is no longer a dark abyss, but is birth into new life and return to our homeland. The grave is for us, no longer an eternal darkness but a gateway at which God’s resplendent angels await us.

There are others who will ask: how can it be said that the risen Lord has conquered sin, when men still sin? The Lord has indeed conquered sin. He conquered it by His sinless conception and birth, then by His pure and His sinless life on earth; then by His suffering on the Cross, being righteous and finally He crowned this conquest by His glorious Resurrection. He became the medicine, the appropriate and infallible medicine, against sin. He who is Infected by sin can only be healed by Christ. He who wants not to sin can only with Christ’s help makes this desire a reality.

Blessed are they who have tested and experienced this mystery in their lives. They can be called the sons of light and children of grace. When they pass from this life, they will, as it were, leave hospital, being no longer sick men.

So, come then, all you my beloved Fathers, Brethren and Sisters, who seek health strength, beauty and joy. Lo, the risen Lord is the rich Source of them all. He awaits you with compassion and yearning, desiring that no one be lost.

CHRIST IS RISEN!

+ Metropolitan JOSEPH