



2023 ARCHPASTORAL PASCHAL MESSAGE

UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE USA

To the beloved Clergy, Monastics and Faithful entrusted to our spiritual care in the United States of America, South America and the Diaspora, as well as all our beloved Sisters and Brothers in long-suffering Ukraine.

Dear Brothers and Concelebrants in the Vineyard of our Lord and all our Spiritual Children,

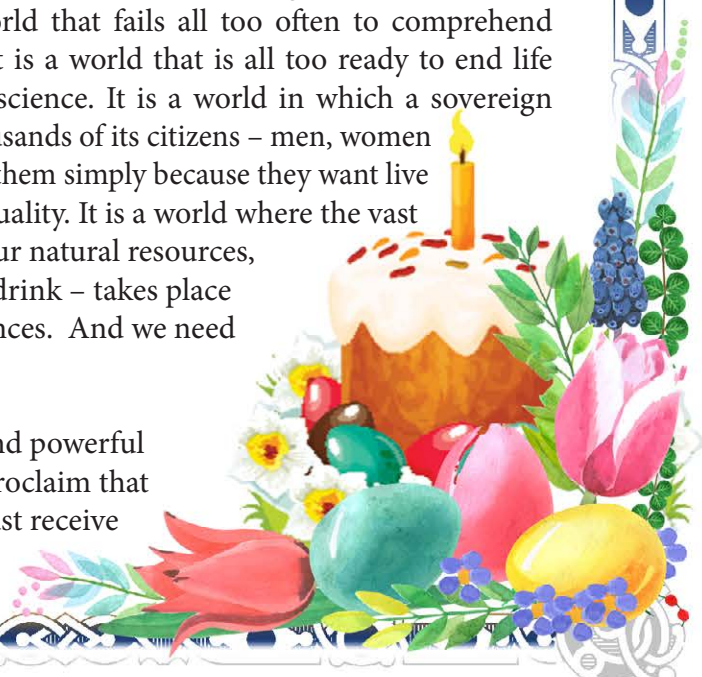
CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

“Enjoy you all the Feast of Faith: Receive you all the riches of loving-kindness. let no one grieve at his poverty, for the universal kingdom has been revealed. Let no one weep for his wickedness, 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 angered it when it tasted of His flesh.

“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. For 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.”

We live in a world today, dearly beloved, that perhaps has never before been so desperate to hear these words of St. John Chrysostom in his Paschal Sermon, read during Paschal Matins at the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a world that fails all too often to comprehend the sanctity of life from conception to natural death. It is a world that is all too ready to end life in many ways without even the slightest pangs of conscience. It is a world in which a sovereign nation like Ukraine can be invaded with hundreds of thousands of its citizens – men, women and children – murdered by godless aggressors who hate them simply because they want live freely and independently in their own culture and spirituality. It is a world where the vast and rapid consumption of God’s abundant blessings – our natural resources, ecological systems, the air we breathe and the water we drink – takes place without responsibly and fully considering the consequences. And we need not go on...

Yes, this world needs to hear the profoundly beautiful and powerful message: CHRIST IS RISEN! We all, dear ones, must proclaim that message from the depth of our hearts and souls. We must receive



that message standing before the doors of our Churches as we sing it together: CHRIST IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD, TRAMPLING DOWN DEATH BY DEATH, AND TO THOSE IN THE TOMBS BESTOWING LIFE! It is a message that we must internalize. We must allow the LIGHT that shines forth from the Empty Tomb to fill our very being, our homes, our life, our relationships and all else so that our Paschal declarations will prevail: *“Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered and let those to hate Him flee before Him...as smoke vanishes, so shall they vanish as does wax that melts before fire...Let the ungodly perish in the presence of God, but let the righteous rejoice... This is the day, which the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it!”*

Only if we, God’s children, can indeed internalize this powerful “Good News” can we hope to influence and bring sense to this world, which He has gifted to us. We must be the living proof that our Lord lives and loves us so much that “He made divine the (our) flesh that He assumed and honored it on His Throne at the Right Hand of the Father in His Glorious Ascension!” (Third Prayer before Holy Communion) We must trust His desire for us to comprehend that our words, deeds and thoughts must always be in sync with all the rest of His Creation and in accordance to His commandments. We must accomplish this as God’s people – His community – not as isolated individuals who easily falter when faced with even the slightest resistance. May we embrace one another with this message – not just once each year at PASCHA, but every day of our lives and especially when we journey into His Heavenly Kingdom during each Divine Liturgy.

Our prayers this day and always are for steadfastness in your faith – that having “clothed yourself in Christ” at your Baptism and received the fullness of the Holy Spirit at your Chrismation, you may understand that the Grace continually inspired into your life and being through all the Holy Mysteries will always enable you to be more and to accomplish more than you might have imagined possible for yourself.

May the Grace of our Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you at all times. You are in God’s Hands always and you are God’s hands in these important times. *“The Father is our Hope, the Son is our Refuge and the Holy Spirit is our Protection.”*

+ ANTONY

By the Grace of God, Metropolitan

+ JEREMIAH

By the Grace of God, Archbishop

+ DANIEL

By the Grace of God, Archbishop

*Given this 16th day of April 2023 – THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD
Metropolia Center of St. Andrew – South Bound Brook – Somerset, New Jersey*

