

# The Voice



*"Their voice has gone out into all the world;*

*and their proclamation to the ends of the universe."*

PASCHA 2007

Volume IV Issue One

**Christ is Risen! / Христос Воскресе! Truly He is Risen ! / Воистину Воскресе !**

## *Paschal Troparion*

**Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life!**

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**Христос воскрес из мертвых, смертию смерть поправ, и сущим во гробех живот даровав !**

### **Slavonic Transliteration:**

*Hristoss voskrese iz myertvih, smyerteeyou smyert po prav, ee suscheem vo grobyeh zhiivot darovav!*

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**Χριστος ανεστη εκ νεκρων, θανατω θανατον πατησας, και τοις εν τοις μνημασι ζωην χαρισαμενος!**

### **Greek Transliteration:**

*Christos anesti ek nekron, thanato thanaton patisas, ke tis en tis mnimasin, zoin charisa-menos!*

**Χ Β**

## *Dear beloved brothers and sisters in the Risen Christ:*

Having completed the purifying days of the Great Fast, our Church is rejoicing, praising Christ the Life-Giver, Who is risen from the dead. Let us preserve in our hearts the good fruits of our Lenten labors, in order to celebrate the feast "not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. 5:8).

According to St. Athanasius the Great, the Lord "has achieved victory over death...and has risen us with Himself, abolishing the bonds of death and granting a blessing to replace the curse, joy to replace sadness and Paschal triumph to replace weakness and defeat."

Today we rejoice that our Savior has risen. Nothing can shake our faith in God's goodness, our hope for salvation, our love for each other. The Heavens are open wide. Through the Resurrection of Christ and by the all-powerful Grace of God, our souls are no longer overpowered by the sea of worldly cares, sorrows, fears or enmity. The light of Christ's Resurrection illumines our hearts and confirms our faith. Only in the Risen Christ do we find truth, love, peace and the meaning of life.

Each year we celebrate the Holy Pascha and become re-inspired to be better Orthodox Christians. We strive to be better husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, friends and neighbors. We pledge to God to love Him more fervently and to love our neighbor more sincerely. We promise to make our homes more and more like "little churches" where God's Grace dwells and where we teach our children to actively live their faith each and every day. For Christ is Risen and the world has changed. Christ is Risen and we are inspired to change, called to holiness and invited to partake of the never-ending fount of Life.

From the bottom of my heart, I greet all of you on this great and holy day of Christ's Resurrection. May God bless you and your families with health of soul and body, with a strengthened faith and with much spiritual joy. May you find renewed purpose in your life. And may the good news of Christ's Resurrection inspire you to exclaim in words *and* in deeds: Christ is Risen; Truly He is Risen!

**Fr. John Vass, Pastor**

## HOLY PASCHA

### The Resurrection of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ

*Enjoy ye all the feast of faith; receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness.*  
(Sermon of St John Chrysostom, read at Paschal Matins)

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is the center of the Christian faith. St Paul says that if Christ is not raised from the dead, then our preaching and faith are in vain (I Cor. 15:14). Indeed, without the resurrection there would be no Christian preaching or faith. The disciples of Christ would have remained the broken and hopeless band which the Gospel of John describes as being in hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. They went nowhere and preached nothing until they met the risen Christ, the doors being shut (John 20: 19). Then they touched the wounds of the nails and the spear; they ate and drank with Him. The Resurrection became the basis of everything they said and did (Acts 2-4): ". . . for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have" (Luke 24:39).

The Resurrection reveals Jesus of Nazareth as not only the expected Messiah of Israel, but as the King and Lord of a new Jerusalem: a new heaven and a new earth.

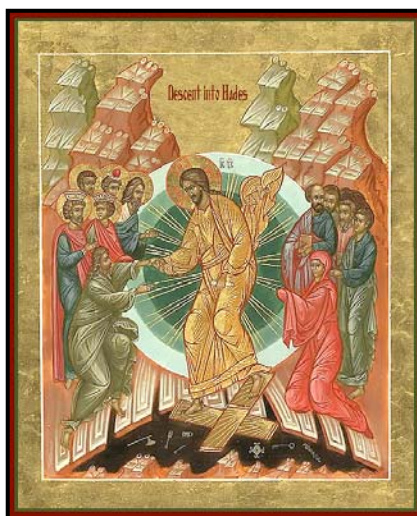
Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. . . the holy city, new Jerusalem. And I heard a great voice from the throne saying "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. . . He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away (Rev. 21:1-4).

In His Death and Resurrection, Christ defeats the last enemy, death, and thereby fulfills the mandate of His Father to subject all things under His feet (I Cor. 15:24-26).

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing (Rev. 5: 12)

#### THE FEAST OF FEASTS

The Christian faith is celebrated in the liturgy of the Church. True celebration is always a living participation. It is not a mere attendance at services. It is communion in the power of the event being celebrated. It is God's free gift of joy given to spiritual men as a reward for their self-denial. It is the fulfillment of spiritual and physical effort and preparation. The Resurrection of Christ, being the center of the Christian faith, is the basis of the Church's liturgical life and the true model for all celebration. *This is the chosen and holy day, first of sabbaths, king and lord of days, the feast of feasts, holy day of holy days. On this day we bless Christ forevermore* (Irmos 8, Paschal Canon).



#### THE DAY WITHOUT EVENING

Pascha is the inauguration of a new age. It reveals the mystery of the eighth day. It is our taste, in this age, of the new and unending day of the Kingdom of God. Something of this new and unending day is conveyed to us in the length of the paschal services, in the repetition of the paschal order for all the services of Bright Week, and in the special paschal features retained in the services for the forty days until Ascension. Forty days are, as it were, treated as one day. Together they comprise the symbol of the new time in which the Church lives and toward which she ever draws the faithful, from one degree of glory to another.

O Christ, great and most holy Pascha. O Wisdom, Word and Power of God, grant that we may more perfectly partake of Thee in the never-ending day of Thy kingdom (Ninth Ode, Paschal Canon).  
(Courtesy of [www.oca.org](http://www.oca.org))

## The Holy Fire in Jerusalem

Every Holy Saturday at noon in the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem occurs the **Great Miracle of the Holy Fire** that stirs, affects rejoices and gives delight and faith to those who have the honor and blessing to be there for the ceremony.

### PREPARATION

In the morning of the Holy Saturday, before the ceremony of the Holy Fire takes place officials conduct a very thorough check of the tomb and afterwards they seal it with a mixture of honey and wax that was prepared in the morning. This inspection takes place so that everyone is certain that there is nothing in the Holy Sepulchre that can cause a fire. After the tomb is sealed the authorities affix the wax with their seals.

All the other denominations that have rights in the Holy Sepulchre show great interest in this procedure. This interest is by no means accidental. If for one year the miracle of the Holy Light doesn't happen when the Greek Orthodox Patriarch performs the ceremony the other doctrines will try to undertake the precedence in the Holy Sepulchre.

### THE CEREMONY OF THE HOLY FIRE

The ceremony of the Holy Fire takes place at 12:00 noon and consists of three stages: a. The Litany, b. The entry of the Patriarch in the Holy Sepulchre and c. The prayers of the Patriarch in order for the Holy Fire to come out.

Following the tradition, at noon of the Holy Saturday the Greek Orthodox Patriarch with his escort - archpriests, priests and deacons and the Armenian Patriarch - enter the Holy Sepulchre, while the bells strike mournfully. Before the entry of the Patriarch the keeper of the Sacristy of the Holy Temple carries the vigil oil lamp, (it is put out that day in order to be ignited by the Holy Fire). From the interior entry of the Temple of Apostle Jacob the Patriarch enters in the sanctuary and sits on the Patriarchal throne. Then the representatives of the Armenians, the Arabs, the Copts and others pass

and kiss the hand of the Patriarch so that they will have the right to receive the Holy Fire.

According to tradition if they don't kiss the hand of the Orthodox Patriarch they do not have the right to receive the Holy Fire from his hands. Immediately afterwards begins the Holy Litany that is repeated three times around the Holy Sepulchre and then it stops in front of the Holy Sepulchre where the officials stand.

After the litany the Holy Sepulchre is unsealed and the Patriarch takes off his pontifical vestments and remains only with his white priest's tunic. Then the governor of Jerusalem and the police director examine the Patriarch in front of everybody so that everybody is assured that he doesn't carry anything that can ignite fire.

After this his Beatitude the Patriarch of Jerusalem takes the unlit torches and enters the Holy Ciborium with the Armenian draguman. All the lamps are extinguished and the electrical lights are turned off in the Holy Temple and the Holy Sepulchre.

### HOW THE HOLY FIRE APPEARS

Inside the Holy Sepulchre the Patriarch prays kneeling and reading the special petition requesting our Lord Jesus Christ to send His Holy Light as a gift of sanctification for the people. And in the absolute quietness at the hour when the patriarch prays a wheeze is heard and almost simultaneously blue and white lightnings of Holy Light penetrate from everywhere, as though millions of photographic flashes turn on embracing the walls and all the lamps light up miraculously. In the Holy Sepulchre the torches the Patriarch holds while he prays become ignited by the Holy Fire. The crowd bursts out in cheers while teardrops of joy and faith run from the eyes of the people.

For a few minutes the Holy Light doesn't have the attributes of fire. This happens the first minutes after the patriarch comes out of the Holy Sepulchre and gives the Light to the people. Anyone can touch the fire of the 33 candles and he doesn't burn. After 33 minutes the flame becomes normal.

"I enter the tomb and kneel in holy fear in front of the place where Christ lay after His death and where He rose again from the dead,"

narrates the Orthodox Patriarch Diodor. "I find my way through the darkness towards the inner chamber in which I fall on my knees. Here I say certain prayers that have been handed down to us through the centuries and, having said them, I wait. Sometimes I may wait a few minutes, but normally the miracle happens immediately after I have said the prayers. From the core of the very stone on which Jesus lay an indefinable light pours forth. It usually has a blue tint, but the color may change and take many different hues. It cannot be described in human terms. The light rises out of the stone as mist may rise out of a lake — it almost looks as if the stone is covered by a moist cloud, but it is light. This light each year behaves differently. Sometimes it covers just the stone, while other times it gives light to the whole sepulchre, so that people who stand outside the tomb and look into it will see it filled with light. The light does not burn — I have never had my beard burnt in all the sixteen years I have been Patriarch in Jerusalem and have received the Holy Fire. The light is of a different consistency than normal fire that burns in an oil lamp... At a certain point the light rises and forms a column in which the fire is of a different nature, so that I am able to light my candles from it. When I thus have received the flame on my candles, I go out and give the fire first to the Armenian Patriarch and then to the Coptic. Hereafter I give the flame to all people present in the Church."



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### INTERESTING FACTS

Only the Greek Orthodox Patriarch has the privilege the honor and the authority to conduct this ceremony. Attempts from the other denominations to perform this miracle were made but to no avail. Every time heterodox have tried to obtain the Holy Fire they have failed. Three such attempts are known. Two occurred in the twelfth century when priests of the Roman church tried to force out the Orthodox clergy but by their own confession these ended with God's punishment. But the most miraculous event

occurred in the year 1579, the year when God clearly testified to whom alone may be given His miracle.

"Once the Armenians (monophysites - ed.) paid the Turks, who then occupied the Holy Land, in order to obtain permission for their Patriarch to enter the Holy Sepulchre, the Orthodox Patriarch was standing sorrowfully with his flock at the exit of the church, near the left column, when the Holy Light split this column vertically and flashed near the Orthodox Patriarch.

A Muslim Muezzin, called Tounom, who saw the miraculous event from an adjacent mosque, immediately abandoned the Muslim religion and became an Orthodox Christian. This event took place in 1579 under Sultan Mourad IV, when the Patriarch of Jerusalem was Sophrony IV. (The above mentioned split column still exists. It dates from the twelfth century. The Orthodox pilgrims embrace it at the "place of the split" as they enter the church).

Turkish warriors stood on the wall of a building close to the gate and lightning-struck column. When he saw this striking miracle he cried that Christ is truly God and leaped down from a height of about ten meters. But he was not killed—the stones under him became as soft as wax and his footprints were left upon them. The Turks tried to scrape away these prints but they could not destroy them; so they remain as historical evidence.

He was burned by the Turks near the Church. His remains, gathered by the Greeks, lay in the monastery of Panagia until the 19th century shedding chrysm.

Muslims, who deny the Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ, tried to put obstacles in the way of the miracle. The Muslim historian Al Biruni wrote: "... a Muslim governor brought a copper wire instead of a wick (note: for the self lighting oil lamps), in order that it wouldn't ignite and the whole thing would fail to occur. But as the fire descended, the copper burned." This was not the only attempt. The report written by the English chronicler,



Gautier Vinisauf, describes what happened in the year 1192.

"In 1187, the Saracens under the direction of Sultan Salah ad-Din took Jerusalem. In that year, the Sultan desired to be present at the celebration, even though he was not a Christian. Gautier Vinisauf tells us what happened: "On his arrival, the celestial fire descended suddenly, and the assistants were deeply moved...the Saracens... said that the fire which they had seen to come down was produced by fraudulent means. Salah ad-Din, wishing to expose the imposter, caused the lamp, which the fire from Heaven had lighted, to be extinguished, but the lamp relit immediately. He caused it to be extinguished a second time and a third time, but it relit as of itself. Thereupon, the Sultan, confounded, cried out in prophetic transport: "Yes, soon shall I die, or I shall lose Jerusalem.""

The Holy Fire symbolizes and reminds us in a miraculous way the Resurrection of Christ. It is a Godsend miracle through centuries from the light of the world, and this light is Christ for the world. Science cannot explain this great miracle and this time in its honor science never tried to explain it not even theoretically. Besides how can anyone explain a genuine miracle?

The written account of the Holy Fire (Holy Light) dates from the fourth century, but authors write about events that occurred in the first century. So Ss. John Damascene and Gregory of Nyssa narrate how the Apostle Peter saw the Holy Light in the Holy Sepulchre after Christ's Resurrection. "One can trace the miracle throughout the centuries in the many itineraries of the Holy Land." The Russian abbot Daniel, in his itinerary written in the years 1106-07, presents the "Miracle of the Holy Light" and the ceremonies that frame it in a very detailed manner. He recalls how the Patriarch goes into the Sepulchre-chapel (the Anastasis) with two candles. The Patriarch kneels in front of the stone on which Christ was laid after his death and says certain prayers, at which point the miracle occurs. Light proceeds from the core of the stone - a blue, indefinable light which after



some time kindles unlit oil lamps as well as the Patriarch's two candles. This light is "The Holy Fire", and it spreads to all people present in the Church. The ceremony surrounding "The Miracle of the Holy Fire" may be the oldest unbroken Christian ceremony in the world. From the fourth century A.D. all the way up to our own time, sources recall this awe-inspiring event. From these sources it becomes clear that the miracle has been celebrated on the same spot, on the same feast day, and in the same

liturgical frame throughout all these centuries. (Courtesy of [www.holyfire.org](http://www.holyfire.org) & [www.holylight.gr/enmain.html](http://www.holylight.gr/enmain.html))

## Children in Church

By Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky (+1988)

Every Christian mother considers it one of her primary obligations to teach her child prayer as soon as his consciousness begins to awaken - prayer that is simple and easy for him to understand. His soul must be accustomed to the warm and fervent experience of prayer at home, by his cradle, for his neighbors, his family. The child's evening prayer calms and softens his soul, he experiences the sweetness of prayer with his little heart and catches the first scent of sacred feelings.

It is harder for a child to take in the atmosphere which prevails in church. At first he just observes. He sees people concentrating and rites he does not as yet understand and hears incomprehensible words. However, the very solemnity and festivity of the church have an uplifting effect on him. When a two year old child wants to take part in church, to sing, speak or make prostrations - in this we can see his uplifted state of soul, with which he is involuntarily infected. We say this from simple observation.

But there is also something higher than our sense perceptions. Christ is invisibly present in church and He sees the child, blesses him, and receives him into the atmosphere of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Grace envelopes him as a warm

wind wafts over a blade of grass in a field, helping it to grow up slowly and gradually, to put down roots and develop. And so the mother hastens to bring her child to Christ, to His grace, regardless even of whether he has any understanding at all of this contact with the gift of grace. This especially concerns the Eucharist, the very closest union with Christ. The mother brings her infant to this mystery while he is still a baby lying in her arms. Is the mother right? Suffer the little children to come unto Me, for of such is the Kingdom of God.

Can you really say with certainty that there and then in the fields of Palestine these children had already understood Christ's teaching, had been sitting at the Teacher's feet listening to His preaching? Do not say this, for the Evangelist himself remarks that they brought unto Him also infants, that He would touch them: but when His disciples saw it, they rebuked them. In bringing their little ones, the mothers' purpose was simply that His hands should touch the children, and not that He should teach them divine knowledge.

Allowing children to have contact with spiritual grace is one of the first, basic concerns of a Christian who thinks about his children, and the task of Christian society, which is concerned about its youth. Here is the door to a correct Orthodox Christian upbringing. Enlightenment, compunction and joy, as they awaken in the infant's growing consciousness are an external indicator of the fact that the little Christian is feeling warmth from the divine source in himself. And even if he does not feel it, the invisible action of God's grace does not stop; only we do not see it, just as we do not see the effect of the sun on our own health instantly and at once. In Russian literature we have such apt examples of the disposition of children's souls during preparation for confession and communion, after confession and after communion of the Holy Mysteries.

Nevertheless, how often it is forgotten that herein lies the key to organizing religious education. How often, on seeing the inadequacy of religious education, we pick up the programs and re-work them, lay the blame on the textbooks and the teachers - and forget about the

importance of the church and the influence of the services; certainly we do not always ask ourselves the question: "But did the children go to church?"

As the child grows up, he should enter more deeply into the life of the Church. The child's mind, the youth's mind must be enlightened by the church services, learn from them, become immersed in them; the church should give him knowledge of God.

This matter is more complex. The task of religious education will be fulfilled only when we teach our children to love church.

When we, the adults, organize church services, make arrangements for them, shorten or lengthen the order of service and so on, we are accommodating ourselves to our own concepts and needs, or simply convenience, understood in adult terms. But in so far as the concepts, needs and spiritual strivings of children are not taken into account, the surroundings are often not conducive towards making children love church. This is nevertheless one of the most important means of religious education; let the children come to love the church, so that they may always attend church with a pleasant feeling and receive spiritual nourishment from it. And since parents often cannot help here, if only because not infrequently they are irreligious themselves, we are often compelled, when we think about our Orthodox children, to place this work into the hands of the Church.

*On this Great Day, Christ is called from among the dead which he had emulated. On this day he repelled death's sting, laid low the gloomy confines of hell, and granted freedom to the souls. On this day, risen from the tomb, He appeared to people for whom he had been born, had died, and been awakened from the dead, so that we, having been reborn and escaped death, might be resurrected with Him, the Resurrected One. On this bright glorious and great day, the angelic hosts, filled with joy, sing a song of victory.*

**Holy Hierarch Gregory the Theologian**

Just as we were not afraid of compelling a devotion to learning and books, or love for our national literature and history by making our children come running to class at the sound of a bell and sit at desks, and by immersing them in an atmosphere of strict discipline and compulsion; so also, one might think, we would have no reason to be afraid of using a certain amount of compulsion in the matter of attending church, whether it be part of school regime or an expression of self-discipline on the part of youth organizations - both those that are connected with school and those that are not. But certainly, if this remains just compulsion, and to such an extent that it creates a psychological repulsion in young people - this will show that the aim has not been attained, that the method has proved to be inadequate and the compulsion in vain. Let the child brought by your will express a desire to remain there through his own will. Then you will have justified your action.

And again we say: it is not only natural, psychological effects that take place in children's souls in church, but the action of grace. Our whole concern should be that the soul of the baby, child or youth should not be closed to holy impressions, but should be freely opened; and then it will no longer need effort, force or any other form of self-compulsion; it will be nourished freely and easily and joyfully.

There is one thing that must not be forgotten: human nature requires at least a minimal degree of active participation. In church this can take the form either of reading, or of singing, or of decorating and cleaning the church, or of some other activity, even if it is only indirectly connected with the services.

The indisputable importance of the church and of communal church services for the religious upbringing of children constitutes one of the arguments in favor of the Orthodox understanding of the mystery of Baptism: that is to say, an argument in favor of baptizing children at a very young age, as we do in the Orthodox Church. Baptism is the door through which one enters the Church of Christ. One who is not baptized - which means he is not a member of Christ's family - has no right to participate in the life of this family, in its spiritual gatherings and

*True life on earth indeed begins with the Resurrection of the Savior, for it does not end in death. Without the Resurrection of Christ human life is nothing else but a gradual dying which finally inevitably ends in death. Real true life is that life which does not end in death. And such a life became possible on earth only with the Resurrection of the Lord Christ the God-man. Life is real life only in God, for it is a holy life and by virtue of this an immortal life. St. Justin (Popovich)*

in its table - the Lord's table. Thus our children would be deprived of the right to be with us in church, to receive the blessing in the name of the Holy Trinity, to communicate the Body and Blood of Christ. And however we may influence them in our family at home, however much we might teach them of the direct action of heavenly grace, and at best we would arouse a thirst for faith in them - but we would still be keeping them far from the heavenly light and warmth, which comes down, regardless of our human efforts, in the Mysteries, in all the services, in holy prayers. How grossly mistaken are those religions which recognize only adult baptisms.

The holy maidens Faith, Hope and Love, and the holy young bride Perpetua, who became martyrs, are witnesses to the fact that adolescence is an age prepared even for the highest active participation in Christ's Church. The baby in his mother's arms in church who cried out, "Ambrose for bishop!" and by his exclamation determined the choice of the renowned Ambrose of Milan for the episcopal cathedra - this baby is a defender of children's rights to an active participation in Christ's Church.

And so let us take some trouble over our children: first let us give them the chance to take more part in church - and in a wider and more elevated form than just giving the censer to the priest; and secondly, let us adapt ourselves somewhat to our children when praying together with them. Let the children be conscious that they are members of Christ's family. Let the children come to love church! (Courtesy of a reprint from *Orthodox America*, November, 1982. Fr. Michael was born November 7/19, 1888. He graduated from the Kiev Theological Academy in 1912. He is the author of *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, translated by Fr. Seraphim Rose.)

**Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh (+2003)  
Sermon at Pascha, 1972**

**Christ is risen!**

When Christ first rose from the tomb and appeared to His disciples and the myrrh-bearing women, He greeted them with the word "Rejoice!". And then later when He appeared to the Apostles His first words were "Peace be unto you!"; peace, because their confusion was very great - the Lord had died. It seemed as though all hope had perished for the victory of God over human wickedness, for the victory of good over evil. It would seem that life itself had been slain and light had faded. All that remained for the disciples who had believed in Christ, in life, in love, was to go on existing, for they could no longer live. Having tasted eternal life they were now condemned to expect cruel persecution and death at the hands of Christ's enemies. "Peace be unto you", proclaimed Christ. "I have arisen, I am alive, I am with you, and henceforth nothing - neither death nor persecution - will ever separate us or deprive you of eternal life, the victory of God". And then, having convinced them of His physical resurrection, having restored their peace and an unshakable certainty of faith, Christ uttered words which may in the present age sound menacing and frightening to many, "As the Father sent Me, so I send you". Only a few hours after Christ's death on the cross, not long after the fearful night in Gethsemane, the betrayal by Judas when Christ had been taken by His enemies, condemned to death, led out beyond the city walls and died on the cross, these words sounded menacing. And it was only faith, the conquering certainty that Christ had risen, that God had conquered, that the Church had become an invincible force that transformed these words into words of hope and triumphant God-speed.

And the disciples went out to preach; nothing could stop them. Twelve men confronted the Roman Empire. Twelve defenseless men,

twelve men without legal rights were out to preach the simplest message, that divine love had entered the world and that they were willing to give their lives for the sake of this love, in order that others might believe and come to life, and that a new life might begin for others through their death. [I Cor. IV :9-13]

Death was indeed granted them; there is not a single apostle except St. John the Divine who did not die a martyr's death. Death was granted them, and persecution and suffering and a cross (II Cor. VI: 3-14).

But faith, faith in Christ, in God Incarnate, faith in Christ crucified and risen, faith in Christ who brought unquenchable love into the world, has triumphed. "Our faith which has conquered the world is the victory."

This preaching changed the attitude of man to man; every person became precious in the eyes of another. The destiny of the world was widened and deepened; it burst the bounds of earth and united earth to heaven...

So let us also stand up for this faith. Let us proclaim it fearlessly, let us teach it to our children, let us bring them to the sacraments of the Church which, even before they can understand it, unite them with God and plant eternal life in them.

All of us, sooner or later, will stand before the judgment of God and will have to answer whether we were able to love the whole world - believers and unbelievers, the good and the bad - with the sacrificial, crucified, all-conquering love with which God loves us. May the Lord give us invincible courage, triumphant faith, joyful love in order that the kingdom for which God became man should be established, that we should truly become godly, that our earth should indeed become heaven where love, triumphant love lives and reigns. **Christ is Risen!**

*X B*

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