

WELCOME VISITORS!

We welcome all new visitors who worshipped with us this evening.

There is material in the entrance of the church regarding ministries and events of our community. Please sign our guest book!

Receiving Holy Communion

The sacrament of Holy Communion is reserved for only baptized and/or chrismated Orthodox Christians who have properly prepared by fasting, prayer and confession. The Orthodox Church is not in sacramental communion with any other faith outside the Orthodox Christian Church. If you are not Orthodox, you are invited with everyone to receive the Antidoron (blessed bread) at the end of service. If you would like information about the Orthodox Church and becoming an Orthodox Christian, please see Father Vasileios after services.

THANK YOU!

We wish to extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who brought bay leaves, and to those who donated money towards the purchase of the many flowers we use for Holy Week and Pascha. We appreciate your generosity in giving towards celebrating this Feast!



Mark your calendars for:
YES ATX 2014

Youth Equipped to Serve will occur just after Pascha **April 25, 26, & 27, 2014.**

"I live as a citizen of the Kingdom, where all people are equally loved and valued by the Lord, therefore loved and valued by me."

All GOYA youth, make plans to join us!

REGISTRATION HAS OPENED AT yesnorthamerica.org

Philoptochos Presents "Philoptochos Giving and Growing"

Philoptochos will be hosting an event to benefit children with special needs, and to provide information about resources available to help these children.

Save the date for this special evening event scheduled for Friday, June 13th from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., at Mt. Tabor Hall.

Many non-profit groups will be there sharing information regarding their organization. The event will begin with a cocktail (Greek hors d'oeuvres, champagne, wine and/or coffee, and sweets) and information hour, followed by the highlight of the evening, *the musical operatic debut of Lainie Horwedel and Susan Holland.*

In addition, we will have a silent auction of 10 FABULOUS items!

Tickets will be \$25.00 each and we will be hosting only 160 guests.

Tickets may be purchased on Sundays beginning on Pascha Sunday; or on our website.



Resurrection Hymn

*Χριστὸς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν,
θανάτῳ θάνατον πατήσας,
καὶ τοῖς ἐν τοῖς μνήμασι,
ζοὴν χαρισάμενος.*

*Christós anésti ek nekron,
thanáto thánaton patísas,
ke tis en tis mnímasi
zoin harisámenos.*

*Christ is risen from the dead trampling down death by death,
and to those in the tombs He has granted Life.*

Megalynarion Hymn

*Ὁ ἀγγέλῳς εἶπα τῇ Κεχαριτωμένῃ,
Ἀγνῇ Παρθένῃ, χαίρε καὶ παλιν ἐρω
χαίρε, ὁ Σὸς Υἱὸς ἀνέστη,
τρίημερος ἐκ τάφου.*

*O angelos evoa tee Keharitomeni,
Agni Parthene, haire ke palin ero haire,
o Sos Yios anesti, trimeros ek taphou.*

*Φωτίζου, φωτίζου, ἡ νεὰ Ἰερουσαλημ,
ἡ γὰρ δοξὰ Κυρίου ἐπὶ σε ἀνετείλε.
Χορεύε νῦν καὶ ἀγαλλῶν Σιών
συ δε, ἀγνῇ, τερπου Θεοτοκε,
ἐν τῇ ἐγερσεὶ τοῦ Τοκοῦ Σου.*

*Fotizou, fotizou, ee nea Ierusalem,
ee gar doxa Kiriou epi se anetelee.
Horeve nin kai agallou Zion;
see de agni terpu, Theotoke,
en tee egersee tou Tokou Sou.*

*The angel cried to her who is full of grace
O Pure Virgin rejoice and again I say rejoice
for your Son has risen from the grave on the third day.*

*Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem!
For the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
Dance now and be glad, O Zion;
and do you exalt, O pure Theotokos,
in the arising of Him Whom you did bear.*

Special Communion Hymn

*“Body of Christ receive, the fountain of life, taste the source of immortal life.
Soma Christu metalavete pigis athanatu gevsasthe. Alleluia.”*

Pascha Greetings

During the forty-day period from Pascha to Ascension, Orthodox Christians throughout the world greet one another with the Paschal Greeting:

English - Christ is Risen / Truly He is Risen or Indeed He is Risen

Greek - Christos Anesti / Alithos Anesti

Spanish - Christo ha resucitado / En verdad ha resucitado

Ukrainian - Khristos Voskres / Voistynu Voskres

Romanian - Hristos a Inviat / Adevarat a Inviat

Arabic - Al masi h qam / Hakan qam

Slavonic - Khrystos Voskrese / Voistyne Voskrese

Swahili - Kristo Amefufukka / Kweli amefufukka

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Break the Fast all together following the Paschal Resurrection Service !

Please join us tonight following the Resurrection Service for a “Break the Fast” potluck meal!

Please stay to help clean up afterward so that we can all get home SAFELY and to get some rest before Sunday’s service and picnic!

AGAPE SERVICE AND ANNUAL PASCHA PICNIC !

Please join us this afternoon (Sunday) at 1:00pm for the beautiful Agape Service; followed by our annual Pascha picnic lunch.

We will have delicious roasted lamb with all the trimmings, hot dogs and ice-cream for the kids, an egg hunt, music, and other fun activities for EVERYONE!

“BRIGHT WEEK STEAK DINNER” FOR ALL OF THE TGOE MEN.



All men are invited to a steak dinner on **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23RD AT 7:00PM** at Transfiguration.

There will be grilled steaks and grilled fish, potatoes, salad, dessert, soda & wine.

WE NEED A HEADCOUNT FOR THE FOOD,

IN PARTICULAR THE STEAKS;

PLEASE RSVP BY BRIGHT MONDAY (APR. 21)

TO NICK SPIROPOULOS NICKSPIROPOULOS@YAHOO.COM

REMEMBERING THE FUTURE:

Orienting Youth Ministry Toward the Coming of the Kingdom

Join us on **Thursday, April 24 at 6:00pm** for Dinner and a Retreat for Youth Ministry Workers, Sunday School Teachers, Parents & Other Interested Parties. This thought-provoking and important conversation about the real meaning of Youth Ministries will be led by Christian Gonzalez, the Youth Director for the Antiochian Diocese of Los Angeles and the West. Christian will help us explore the role and purpose of Youth Ministry in the Orthodox Church, and consider how we might orient our youth and our ministry toward the Coming Kingdom.

Register today to reserve a spot!

<http://tinyurl.com/rememberingfuture>



ORTHODOXY 101

Introduction to Orthodoxy class will continue **after Pascha on Friday, May 2 at 6:00 PM.**

This class is for anyone who is interested in learning about the Orthodox Faith

WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

SERVICES FOR THIS COMING WEEK

FEAST OF ST. GEORGE - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23

ORTHROS- 9:00AM; DIVINE LITURGY- 10:00AM

FEAST OF THE LIFE-GIVING SPRING AND OF ST. MARK

FRIDAY, APRIL 25TH

ORTHROS- 9:00AM; DIVINE LITURGY- 10:00AM

We will welcome into the Orthodox Faith and to our Church family:

Gregory and Ben Prasifka, who were Chrismated Saturday morning during the Liturgy. Greg's sponsor is Robert Lindsey, and Ben's sponsor is Marko Bjeletich.

God Grant you many years!

Thank you to Lainie Horwedel, Diana Angelo, and the AGAPE choir who will be participating in the Holy Saturday Morning Liturgy of St. Basil!

Also, thanks so much to all the parents who helped!

GOLF (Greek Orthodox Ladies Fellowship)

We encourage all ladies to join us if you are able on Tuesdays from 10 - 12pm in Mount Tabor Hall. Our next meeting will be on April 29, 2014.

GOLF is a group meeting most weeks, led by Fr. Vasili, to read and discuss a book of the Bible, or other Orthodox material. Please don't hesitate to come even if it is on an irregular basis. We enjoy each other's company, edifying discussion, and sometimes even delicious food!

Kids are always welcome to play while we meet. Please contact Krystal Cawood to be added to our email distribution list- townsendcrafts@gmail.com

Men's Study and Fellowship

All men are encouraged to attend our next study! It will be held on

Thursday, May 1 at 7:00am at the Jim's Restaurant at Research Blvd. (183) & Burnet Rd.

The group is studying *The Prison Epistles: Philippians-Ephesians-Colossians-Philemon* by Lawrence R. Farley.

Philoptochos News CHRISTOS ANESTI!

Thank you to all of the Philoptochos ladies for the delicious meals and wonderful work they did during our journey to Paschal

SAVE THE DATE! We will have a lovely Tea (our final meeting for this year) **on Saturday, May 3- 2:00PM** at the home of Linda Robertson.

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SHOWDOWN!

All Sunday School youth, pre-K through high school, get ready for the Sunday School Showdown on

Sunday May 18 during coffee hour.

Plan to be there!

We will also be honoring our graduating seniors on this date; so graduates- turn in your information to the church office soon!

APRIL 20, 2014- GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA SCRIPTURE READINGS

EPISTLE - ACTS I: 1-8

The first account indeed I made for myself concerning all which, O Theophilos, Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He gave command to the apostles whom He chose for Himself through the Holy Spirit, to whom also He presented Himself alive after He had suffered by many proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, He ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, "which," He said, "ye heard of Me; for John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days after these." Indeed therefore, after they came together, they kept on questioning, saying, "Lord, dost Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not yours to know times or seasons which the Father Himself put in His own authority. But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the ends of the earth."

Τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον ἐποιησάμην περὶ πάντων, ὦ Θεόφιλε, ὧν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδάσκειν, ἄχρι ἧς ἡμέρας, ἐντειλάμενος τοῖς ἀποστόλοις διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου οὓς ἐξελέξατο, ἀνελήφθη· οἷς καὶ παρέστησεν ἑαυτὸν ζῶντα μετὰ τὸ παθεῖν αὐτὸν ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις, δι' ἡμερῶν τεσσαράκοντα ὀπτανόμενος αὐτοῖς, καὶ λέγων τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ. Καὶ συναλιζόμενος παρήγγειλεν αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ Ἱερουσολύμων μὴ χωρίζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ περιμένειν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πατρὸς, Ἦν ἠκούσατέ μου· ὅτι Ἰωάννης μὲν ἐβάπτισεν ὕδατι, ὑμεῖς δὲ βαπτισθήσεσθε ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ οὐ μετὰ πολλὰς ταύτας ἡμέρας. Οἱ μὲν οὖν συνεληθόντες ἐπηρώτων αὐτὸν λέγοντες, Κύριε, εἰ ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ ἀποκαθιστάνεις τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραήλ; Εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτούς, Οὐχ ὑμῶν ἐστὶν γινῶναι χρόνους ἢ καιροὺς οὓς ὁ πατὴρ ἔθετο ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ. Ἀλλὰ λήψεσθε δύναμιν, ἐπεληθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐφ' ὑμᾶς· καὶ ἔσεσθέ μοι μάρτυρες ἐν τε Ἱερουσαλὴμ, καὶ ἐν πάσῃ τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ Σαμαρείᾳ, καὶ ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light.

The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. (John bore witness to him, and cried, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, for he was before me.'") And from his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος, καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος. Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν. πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν. ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων. καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν.

Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ Θεοῦ, ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἰωάννης· οὗτος ἦλθεν εἰς μαρτυρίαν, ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός, ἵνα πάντες πιστεύσωσι δι' αὐτοῦ. οὐκ ἦν ἐκεῖνος τὸ φῶς, ἀλλ' ἵνα μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ φωτός. Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον. ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἦν, καὶ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτὸν οὐκ ἔγνω. εἰς τὰ ἴδια ἦλθε, καὶ οἱ ἴδιοι αὐτὸν οὐ παρέλαβον. ὅσοι δὲ ἔλαβον αὐτόν, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα Θεοῦ γενέσθαι, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, οἳ οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων, οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκός, οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' ἐκ Θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν.

Καὶ ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, δόξαν ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας. Ἰωάννης μαρτυρεῖ περὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ κέκραγε λέγων· οὗτος ἦν ὃν εἶπον, ὃ ὀπίσω μου ἐρχόμενος ἔμπροσθέν μου γέγονεν, ὅτι πρῶτός μου ἦν. Καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν, καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος· ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωϋσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο.

Rejoice, Jerusalem, for you now
see Christ the King coming forth
from the Tomb as the Bridegroom.
Paschal Aposticha

Beloved in the Lord,

As we once again receive the Bridegroom raised from the Tomb, let us also recall that He will return in glory at the time of His Parousia. As He returned to life and gathered His Apostles into His Church after His resurrection so, too, He is returning to gather His people into His coming Kingdom. This was the message so brightly proclaimed at the Holy Bridegroom services held at the beginning of this Holy Week.

For almost two thousand years since His glorious resurrection, His people have greeted one another on this feast saying, "Christ is risen!" This uninterrupted and unbreakable living tradition will culminate in His triumphant Second Coming.

Anticipating the arrival of that unending day, we will hold fast to the sure knowledge that He is the Eternal Bridegroom of the Church. We therefore continue to celebrate, with unwavering faith, the expectation of His glorious return at which He will gather up His Bride, the Church, and take Her with Him to His Kingdom. As that day draws closer, let us ceaselessly greet one another with the joyous declaration,

**CHRIST IS RISEN!
ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ ΑΝΕΚΤΗ!**

With Paternal Love and Joy,

Metropolitan Isaiah of Denver

power of grace and true life. Through our Lord's Crucifixion and Resurrection we are transfigured by Him and through Him from death to life. Through our communion with Him and of Him, our body that was sown in corruption, dishonor, and weakness, is raised in incorruption, glory and power (I Corinthians 15:42-43).

With jubilation we also celebrate this day as a Pascha of redemption and salvation. It is "an all-venerable Pascha, a Pascha that is Christ the Redeemer, a Pascha of the faithful, a Pascha that has opened unto us the gates of Paradise...." It is the day of the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, and it is the day of our resurrection from all that destroys unto all that transforms, renews, and sanctifies for all eternity.

In the Holy Eucharist we celebrate Christ's absolute sacrifice and His superb victory as the ultimate reality. We approach the sacred Body and Blood of the Risen Christ praying that His "divine, glorious, immaculate and life-creating Mysteries are received for purification and sanctification and as an earnest of the life and kingdom to come." (Prayer of St. John of Damascus) We proclaim today and through the Holy Mystery that today is the Day of Salvation, and as we receive Him in faith our Lord grants to us life everlasting and great mercy.

As we come together on this sacred day in our beautiful celebration of Holy Pascha, may our hearts be filled with joy, our minds at peace, and our souls renewed in the hope of His promises. On this day and throughout the year, may we be renewed and strengthened in grace by receiving the Body and Blood of the Christ in the Holy Eucharist. May I also wish to you and your families, a holy and glorious Pascha filled with the mercy and abundant blessings of Jesus Christ, the One who is risen from the dead, who has trampled down death, and who bestows life upon us all.

Χριστός Ἀνέστη! Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

With paternal love in the Risen Lord,

†**DEMETRIOS**

Archbishop of America

PATRIARCHAL ENCYCLICAL FOR HOLY PASCHA 2014

✠ BARTHOLOMEW

By the Mercy of God

Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch

To the Plenitude of the Church

Grace, Peace, and Mercy from Christ Risen in Glory

CHRIST IS RISEN!

Brethren and children in the Lord,

"Come, receive the light from the unwaning Light," even from the Phanar, from the Holy Center of Orthodoxy, and let us all, together and jointly, *"glorify Christ, Who is risen from the dead."*

Following His crucifixion, the emotional state of the Lord's disciples was grim because their hope that He, and they, would one day prevail with political power was dispelled by His death on the Cross. It had previously seemed to them that the triumphant entrance of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem – following the resurrection of Lazarus, and the miraculous feeding of five thousand men along with many women and children by five loaves of bread and two fish – would be a prelude to His victory over secular authority. Even the mother of two of His disciples had asked that her sons sit on either side of the Lord when He entered into His glory. All of these hopes were dissipated as mere childish dreams following the horrific execution of Jesus Christ.

But on the first day of the week (on Sunday), the Myrrh Bearers found the tomb empty, and they heard from an Angel that Jesus was risen from the dead. Shortly thereafter they beheld Him in a transfigured state, and were not allowed to touch Him. This unexpected development caused the people close to Jesus to wonder what would happen next, but they did not receive the answer right away. Instead, they were told to wait with patient endurance until they received strength from above.

Obedying this command they did wait until Pentecost, at which time the Holy Spirit came upon them and revealed to them their new mission in its fullness. This mission did not call for the liberation of one nation from slavery in bondage to another nation. Instead it called for the liberation of all humanity from enslavement to the master of evil as well as to evil itself. This was an entirely different and far greater mission than the one which they had previously imagined.

This unimaginable commission, calling them to preach a message of man's deliverance from slavery to death, took them by surprise. Yet they nevertheless undertook it with zeal, preaching the message everywhere, saving, and continuing to save, many from death. As the first among the dead, is the risen Jesus Who offers to all men the gift of resurrection and eternal life, a life that is no longer subject to corruptibility, because man in the resurrected state is like an angel of God in heaven who no longer has a fleshly body but a spiritual one.

We already experience a foretaste of this blessed resurrected state whenever we carry our fleshly garment in a way that does not taste death. The true substance of death is being distanced from God's love. But when we approach and know this love in the Person of the Lord – a knowledge which is itself eternal life – we overcome the natural death of our fleshly body and we transition to the higher life of our spiritual body.

We do not simply anticipate the resurrection of the dead as an event that will take place in the distant future, but we partake in it now, and we are jubilant and we cry out along with Saint John Chrysostom: "Death, where is your sting? Hades, where is your victory?" We are resurrected with Jesus Christ, we experience the end of time as a present reality, and we experience the present reality as the end of time. Resurrection spreads through our entire being, and it fills us with joy: the same joy that the disciples felt when they beheld the risen Lord.

We also continue the work of the Apostles. We convey to the world the message of the resurrection.

We preach through knowledge and by our own experience that death must not have a place in our life, for it offers no benefit to humanity. Those who seek to improve society by killing their fellow man do not offer any good to the living. They, rather, only proliferate death and prepare themselves to be devoured by death.

In our day it seems that the drums of death and of darkness beat frantically. Some people believe that the eradication of their fellow man is a praiseworthy and beneficial act, but they are seriously mistaken. Unfortunately the suppression and annihilation of the weak by the strong too often dominates the secular pyramid of today's reality. Often, we are shocked at the cruelty and lack of compassion exhibited by the powerful who hold the reins of the world, falsely believing that they are actually the ones who rule it.

Christ, by His death on the Cross, reversed this secular pyramid, placing His Cross on top of it. Indeed, He is crucified above the secular world, because He suffered more than any other man. There is no one in the world who has suffered as much as the *Theanthropos*, the God-Man, Christ did: *“And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth”* (Philippians 2:8-11).

Often throughout the history of humanity we have seemingly beheld the darkness of death prevail over the light of life, injustice prevail over justice, hatred and envy prevail over love, and the choice of infernal hatred prevail over the light of the Resurrection. Despite the apparent technological progress of human societies, and despite the declarations of human rights and religious freedom, we continue to see racial and religious hatred swelling universally and causing dangerous tensions, which seemingly only strengthen the dominion of the kingdom of death, of Hades, and of evil. Sadly, there are many people who will not tolerate diversity in their fellow man. They will not tolerate their different racial or ethnic origins, nor their differing perceptions and beliefs whether these be political, religious, or social.

History has proven that no real human progress has ever occurred without God. Not one society has ever been truly progressive or happy without freedom. True freedom, though, is acquired only by staying close to God. The history of the twentieth century tragically confirms this truth. We experienced a horror that originated in Central Europe and produced millions of victims from World Wars and racial persecutions. We also experienced the horror sown by so-called progressive forces, which committed crimes of equal magnitude and cruelty in Eastern Europe in the name of freedom. Totalitarianism has been proven to be an offspring of a humanity that denies Christ, that does not recognize diversity among men, and its natural conclusion is only suffering, destruction, and death. All of the above confirm that every attempt to reach freedom without God will doomed to end in tragedy.

The disciples despaired at the apparent triumph of death. But their hope was restored and renewed by the resurrection of the Lord. Therefore, to the apparent present dominance of similar forces of darkness, the Church today responds with the grace and power of the Risen Christ. He, Who took upon Himself the afflictions and infirmities of all men, offers the world, through His Resurrection, the certainty that death is embittered.

Resurrection and life are the gifts and the light of Jesus Christ, which “shine upon all.” Let us all honor this gift. Let us all thank the Giver of Life, Who in His flesh shines forth brightly from the tomb, and presents the light of the resurrection to the world. Let us, then, receive the light from the unwaning Light of Life. Let us receive and welcome the gift of the resurrection and cry out from the bottom of our hearts:

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs he has granted life! Hear, O all you nations and be glad!

Truly the Lord is Risen, beloved fathers, brothers and sisters!

✠ Bartholomew of Constantinople

Your fervent supplicant before God

Encyclical of Archbishop Demetrios for Holy Pascha - April 20, 2014

Holy Pascha

The Feast of Feasts

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Χριστός Ἀνέστη! Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

On this beautiful and glorious Feast of Feasts, our hearts and minds are filled with brilliant light and abundant joy in the presence of the Risen Christ. He is in our midst now and forever in all His holiness and glory, having offered Himself as a pure sacrifice for our sins. He is before us and within us as the Victor over corruption and death, offering true and abundant life through His grace. Our Lord embraces us on this day of exaltation and praise as our Redeemer, guiding us in the way of salvation and sanctifying us for eternal life.

Through faith we affirm that Christ is Risen and is among us, and we bear witness of His Resurrection and presence through our participation in the Holy Eucharist. In this Great Mystery, the pure Body and precious Blood of the Risen Lord is offered for us and to us. Through faith and our reception of the sacrament, we are joined with the One who lives! This is the essential relationship of the Feast of Pascha and the Holy Eucharist, a relationship that is the foundation of our celebration of the Divine Liturgy throughout the year.

We sing in the hymns of this holy day, “Christ...of His own good will did sacrifice Himself for all, a Pascha of purification.” This is a Pascha of purification because the One who was without sin gave Himself for us. We give thanks, we celebrate a Holy Eucharist for His pure sacrifice, and through His pure Body and precious Blood we are purified. Our souls and our bodies are cleansed by receiving the Risen Lord in the holiest of mysteries.

This day is also proclaimed as a Pascha of incorruption. “God...is become man, and suffers as a mortal; and through suffering clothes mortality with the grace of incorruption.” The fetters of death and corruption could not hold the