



ARCHPASTORAL MESSAGE OF HIS BEATITUDE METROPOLITAN TIKHON PASCHA 2016

To the Venerable Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy, Monastics, Distinguished Stewards, and the entire family of the Orthodox Church in America:

CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

I greet you, my beloved brothers and sisters, with the great joy of the bright Feast of Christ's Resurrection. Today we arise at the rising of the sun to "bring unto the Lord a hymn instead of myrrh," and to behold Christ, "the Sun of Righteousness, Who causes light to dawn for all" (Paschal Canon).

Today, we awake with joy to a new and divine reality. Today, our life continues with the same hope in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ that we had yesterday, but with renewed spirit and purpose, inspired by the life given to us by the Lord, Who came to us in the flesh, was lifted upon the cross, descended into the grave, was raised on the third day, and ascended into heaven so that we might have that life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

We know that, just as the servants in the Gospel were called to account for the use of their talents, so each of us has received talents in this life for which we must give account. Whether it is the gift of being kind, loving, caring and patient, or being a good and faithful parent, child or sibling, these talents blossom more fully through the death and resurrection of Christ by giving us the opportunity to reclaim the gift of eternal life even in our earthly struggles.

In recent years we have heard it said that lives matter. While this is not a new concept for those who today are celebrating the triumph of life over death, we need to remind ourselves that the life which Christ offers us today is offered to all of humanity. It is also a gift that holds us accountable. What matters most is how we use the abundance of life given to us through the Cross and Resurrection, and whether we choose to simply live or to live an abundant life overflowing with love, mercy and compassion.

Today we are filled with joy both serene and overwhelming. At the same time, we face the awesome responsibility of sharing this great joy and this abundance of life with the world around us. Through the Cross, our cup overflows with life (Psalm 23:5), enough life to share with all of those around us; enough love to fill up all those who are alone and afraid; enough mercy and peace to bring a measure of joy to those suffering.

I sincerely wish that all of you will convey this Paschal joy to your children, your neighbors, to all those in your families and communities, and also to those who do not as yet know that Pascha in the Orthodox Church is the "Feast of feasts, the Triumph of triumphs, wherein let us bless Christ forevermore."

With my archpastoral blessing and love in the Risen Lord,

†TIKHON
Archbishop of Washington
Metropolitan of All America and Canada