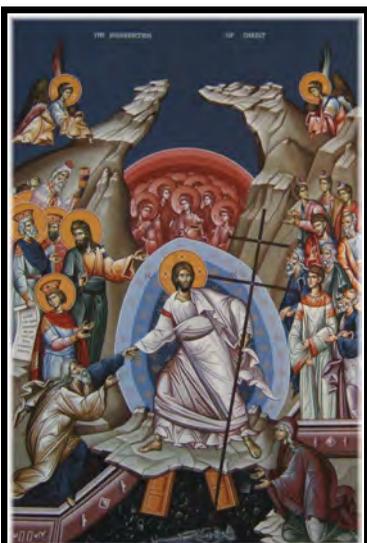


GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA
THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR



Icon of the Descent into Hades



***Jesus rose
from
the grave,
as He foretold,
and gave us
eternal life,
and a
bountiful
mercy***

Stichera, Tone 6

Christ IS Risen! Indeed He IS Risen!

My Dearest Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Хри́сто́съ воскресе́! Воистину́ воскресе́! (Old Slavonic)

Christos voskrese! Voistinu voskrese (Transliteration)

Христос воскрес! Воістину воскрес! (Ukrainian)

Chrystos voskres! Voistynu voskres! (Transliteration)

Χριστός ἀνέστη! Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη! (Greek)

Khrístós Anéstī! Alithós Anéstī! (Transliteration)

Christus resurrexit! Resurrexit vere! (Latin)

المسيح قام! بالحقيقة قام! ; المسيح قام! حقا قام!

al-Masiḥ qām! Belḥāqiqāti qām! (Transliteration)

I would greet you as I have greeted you for more than four decades with this wondrous greeting - **CHRIST IS RISEN!** It is a greeting which can alleviate the fear of death and give us truly hope for that which is to come. Of course this requires that we believe that what is being declared is true.

I would share my deepest faith with you: Life is eternal and there is life after our earthly, physical death. I truly believe that God has revealed to us the true nature of life. As I have celebrated these past holy days with you I have become ever-more convinced that the revelation God made to us through the person of Jesus is true. Because it is God's very life that brings us and sustains us in existence. **TRULY OUR LIFE IS ETERNAL.**

It is my deepest hope that as your pastor, fellow parishioner and friend you join with me in a true and deep celebration of the gift of life from God. All that we have celebrated, I believe, expresses how very much our Creator loves us. He only wants us to know the meaning and purpose of life so that we can truly take joy in it.

Thank you always for your love and your desire to join with me in worshipping our gracious and loving God. You sustain me in my priesthood! It is my hope that my priesthood sustains you in your belief and trust in our loving God.

Fr. Wayne



A WORD OF WELCOME

I would extended a word of welcome to anyone who joined me and the spiritual communities of St. Michael's and Holy Ascension to celebrate PASCHA. On behalf of these communities, I greet you in the name of the Risen Lord and hope that your visit was spiritually rewarding. Whether you came as a *first-time* visitor or as a *friend from the past*, know that we are happy you joined us and hope you will join us again. Please know you are always welcome. It is my prayer that you are filled with the joy of believing that *Christ IS risen!*

SINGING WITH JOY

You are reminded that the *PASCHA Tropar* is to be sung with "joyful enthusiasm." *It is not a funeral dirge! It is a hymn of victory!* The pace should be "quick" and upbeat. It is meant to reflect a certain "eagerness" to share the Good News of the Lord's Resurrection. Resist the temptation to drag the tempo. It is our declaration of joy! Would strangers know you're happy and excited when they hear you sing? So, sing out with joy for truly *Christ IS Risen!*



GREETINGS

I would extend PASCHA Greetings to those who receive my Bulletin in the mail or by email. If you do, it probably means that you were not here with us to celebrate PASCHA. Please know that you were in my thoughts and prayers.

*God bless each of you and grant you health and happiness!
Christ is Risen!*

The **ARTOS** . . . is the special loaf of bread we bless on PASCHA and then distribute on St. Thomas Day. This loaf reminds us that Christ, Who IS truly THE bread of life, is with us. We distribute it next Weekend.



Христос Воскрес!



REMEMBER . . . Monday and Tuesday are "Splash" Days. Guys splash gals on Monday and on Tuesday the gals have their revenge. Silly? Perhaps, but a wonderful way to make our joy real. *Christ IS Risen!*



A BIG THANK YOU is extended to the Dicky. Krokosky and Skrypek families for making Willows branches available to us for last weeks celebration. Remember to burn or bury any old branches you may have.

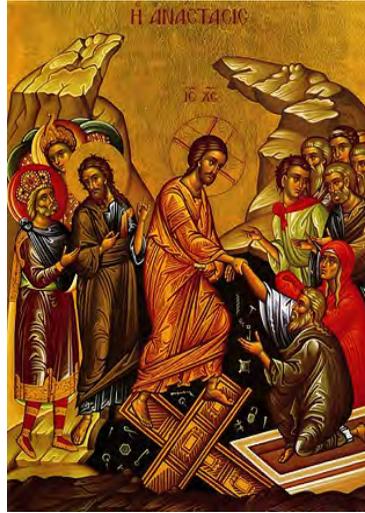
Χριστός ἀνέστη!

THE PASTORAL LETTER OF OUR AMERICAN BISHOPS

It is customary in our Tradition to hear the Prologue to the Gospel of John (Jn. 1:1-13) in various languages at the Resurrection Liturgy. The passage speaks of the preexistent and incarnate Word and Son of God that has revealed the Heavenly Father to us. One may well wonder about a possible connection between the Prologue, which does not even mention anything of the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the glorious feast we celebrate today. There is a connection. The essence of the feast of the Resurrection lies in the fact that the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Son of God, chose willingly to take on our human nature, suffer and die on the cross and then rise from the dead is the source of creation. He is alive! He is risen! Christ who is the creator and author of life cannot be bound by the ties of death. As it says in Scripture, "God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power" (Acts 2:24). Christ teaches us about Himself, "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jn. 11:25). Resurrection is His identity. This is WHO He is.

Christ is Risen!", "Indeed He is

Risen!" greetings will be heard everywhere around the world. This is the best and perhaps most ignored message around the world. It was so when it was announced for the first time on Easter morning, and continues to be the case today too. Christ is Risen! Do you believe, doubt or dismiss it? Jesus' own Apostles had a difficulty to accept the message, "when they saw Him, they worshipped, but they doubted" (Mt. 28:17). They saw Him, but still questioned the fact. How many times do we



real presence in the Eucharist when we receive Him at the Divine Liturgy?

The reason why the Apostles doubted was fear. It is the fear of being wrong about Jesus being alive after they heard and witnessed how He suffered and died on the Cross. Their fear was so powerful that it took them a while to realize the truth of the statement, – Christ is Risen, and its consequences. The outcome of Christ's Resurrection is twofold as St. Paul states, "Now since the children share in blood and flesh, he likewise shared in them, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of

(Continue on page 7)



St. Michael's Parish News

A Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in Dearborn Michigan

Coming Events

PASCHA Dinner
Next Week April 8th

Pastoral Letters

You will find the Pastoral Letters of our Bishops and Patriarch on our website. Take time to read them. The URL is on the following page. If you would like a paper copy, please contact me.



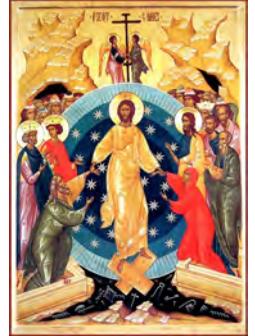
MANY THANKS

A big thank you is extended to all those who helped with the services, Steve, Len, Bob, those who sang and any others who were willing to help. Truly our worship is a community effort. Thank you. ***Christ IS Risen!***



CALLED TO HOLINESS

Perhaps the greatest call to holiness is the call to BELIEVE in what we are truly celebrating this weekend. We are celebrating the fact that our God has, through the Person of Jesus, revealed to us that human life is not only made in His image, but that it is also given the potential to grow in the likeness of Jesus, the Christ, and that this human life that we are experiencing is ETERNAL - IMMORTAL.



God tells us through the Church that we should not fear that this earthly life is the only thing that is given to us. Life goes on beyond the grave. Further, the Church assures us that we don't only have one opportunity to grow in our likeness of Jesus, Who is the image of God. She also, however, encourages us to always make the most of every opportunity to grow in the likeness of Jesus since this enhances and enriches the experience of life.

Do you really TRUST that God loves you? This is the important question of the day. If you do, then you know that He loves you and only wants what is best for us. He will always be with you in going through the struggles of life. He will not recuse from the struggles of life because He knows that if He rescues you, you will not grow.

I would encourage you make your faith and belief in God both

(Continued on page 8)

UNDERSTANDING MORE ABOUT THE RESURRECTION

As many may be aware, our Eastern Church, while celebrating Christ's Resurrection from the dead, places great emphasis on its impact. The traditional Easter Icon is the "Harrowing of Hades," which highlights Christ's Descent into Hades where He destroyed Death. The teaching on Christ's descent is an inseparable part of the dogmatic tradition of the Church. It was shared by all members of the ancient church and truly reflects the New Testament and the works of the early Christian writers.

While the actual fact that the descent was not itself questioned by the representatives of church tradition, there existed various interpretations of this event. Many writers maintained that Christ freed all who were held captive in hell, others thought that only the Old Testament righteous were liberated, and another group believed that only those who came to believe in Christ and followed Him were saved. Finally, others held that Christ freed only those who had lived in faith and piety during their earthly lives. The first interpretation is most widely reflected in the liturgical texts of the Eastern Church: that Christ "emptied" hell and "not a single mortal" remained. The first and second opinions were endowed with equal authority in the Eastern Christian patristic tradition, but with the passing of the centuries the first gradually gave way to the second.



In the Western tradition after Augustine, the second and fourth views were given preference.

Christ's preaching in hell, which is mentioned in I Peter 3:18-21, has also been interpreted in different ways. Some writers allowed the possibility that those who did not believe in Christ during their lifetimes could have come to believe in him after their death. Others, mainly Western theologians, rejected this possibility. Some insisted on a literal interpretation: that Christ preached only to the unrepentant sinners from Noah's time. Others interpreted it in a wider sense: that Christ's preaching in hell reached all who were held there. Augustine and later Western writers did not consider the Petrine text to refer to the descent into Hades and did not, therefore, believe it should be understood in an allegorical sense. *(Continued on page 9)*

Continued from page 4 - Bishop's Pastoral Letter)

death, that is, the devil, and free those who through fear of death had been subject to slavery all their life" (Heb. 2:14-15).

By His Resurrection, Christ removed any uncertainty and fear about our eternity. Christ opened the gates of paradise for us anew. "Christ is risen from the dead, conquering death by death and to those in the tombs He granted life." There cannot be any fear of death since it has no real power. "Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" (1 Cor. 15:55-56). Death is defeated and we receive eternal life, which is real. This is to fulfill His promise, "I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10).

On this glorious feast of the Resurrection of Our Lord, we extend our prayers and wishes that you may not have any fears, worries and doubts in life. May joy and happiness of knowing that we are participants in Christ's Resurrection be in your hearts, families and communities! Let us celebrate Easter with a renewed and uplifted faith, hope and love of our Lord! May the risen Lord bless you abundantly!



Our Church, because of its Ukrainian heritage, has so very many traditions and customs which enrich our spiritual experience. All are meant to impress

upon us that God's message through Jesus in the Spirit is meant to help us more effectively live this present life.

We don't maintain traditions for the sake of traditions but, rather, we observe them to enhance our celebration. Why do we bless food, for example? The custom is to bless the food that we abstained from during the Great Fast! Why do we use a Holy Shroud on Good Friday, to remind us more directly of the reality of what Jesus did to show us how to live! Why do we embrace one-another on Easter and share the declaration that Christ IS Risen, to support each other in the belief that life is immortal.

Traditions are wonderful, they make more real what we celebrate. Homes without traditions are more sterile and religion just stays in our heads and doesn't fill our lives. That's why we even playfully splash one-another on the days after Easter. Easter eradicates one of our greatest fears, Death. Easter gives us HOPE and JOY.

If you don't follow any traditions around this time, why not establish some for yourself and your family.

Christ IS Risen!

Schedule of Services

Sunday April 1 - The Great Day - PASCHA- Velikden
8:00 AM - Resurrection Matins Followed by Divine Liturgy
Blessing of Food Immediately After the Liturgy

BRIGHT WEEK

Bright Monday, April 2 - Venerable Father Titus, Wonderworker
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Bright Tuesday, April 3 - Venerable Father Nicetas, Confessor
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Bright Wednesday, April 4 - Venerable Fathers Joseph & George
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Bright Thursday, April 5 - Theodulus & Agathopodus, Martyrs
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Bright Friday, April 6 - Methodius, Apostle to the Slavs
8:00 AM - Special Intention

Bright Saturday, April 7 - Venerable Father George
No Service Scheduled

Sunday April 8 - The Anti-Pasch - St. Thomas Day
10:00 AM - Parish Family
Parish PASCHA Dinner - Svichanne - Immediately after Liturgy

(Continued from page 5 - Called to Holiness)

real and true today - perhaps today is
the best time to start since Pascha is
all about new beginnings.



Remember, you are the only one who can make the things that we celebrate REAL for you. It is all a matter of how you think about these things. We don't just remember some past historical event which was marvelous but quite distant from us. We celebrate something we feel and believe is true about life. This is true holiness when we can take the events in the life of Jesus and make them applicable to our present life. If we truly believe what we celebrate, then there is no possible way that we cannot be excited and happy on THIS GREAT DAY - PASCHA!

<http://www.stmichaelarchangel.org>
[Facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelugccdbn)

St. Michael the Archangel
Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church
6340 Chase Road
Dearborn, MI 48126

Rev. Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Pastor

Rectory: (313) 582-1424
Cell: (313) 580-4412
WRuchgy@gmail.com

LITURGY SCHEDULE

Sundays @ 10:00 AM
Ukrainian & English

Weekdays @ 8:00 AM
English

SACRAMENTS

Penance
By Appointment

Baptism & Matrimony
*In most instances membership
required for six months*

Funerals
*Membership of an immediate
family member required*

Parish Life Council

Bob & Corinne Boyko
734.451.1893

John & Janet Dicky
313.563.5509

Daria Drobny
313.791-0292

Robert Krokosky
248.431.9554

Leo & Mary LaDouceur
313.278.7378

Gordon Malaniak
734.564.9817

Leonard Mier
313.584-6795

Greg & Esther Petrovich
734.453-4354

Rafic Vawter
313.624.9867

UNDERSTANDING MORE ABOUT THE RESURRECTION

(Continued from page 6 - Descent into Hades)

This view does not correspond to any early or Eastern Christian understandings of the passage.

What is universally endorsed is the teaching that Christ mortified death and destroyed hell. This is, however, understood in different ways. The Eastern liturgical texts and many of the fathers speak of a total destruction of death and hell. Others are more specific, saying that death and hell continue to exist but only inasmuch as people's evil wills encourage its existence. In the Western tradition the view that Christ's death harmed hell but did not mortify it came into dominance.

The salvific significance of the descent into Hades has truly been evaluated in a variety of ways. In the West, some maintained that the descent into Hades was a "one-time" event that had significance only for those who were in hell when it happened. Certain Western writers even considered that the "memory" of Christ's descent into Hades was not retained there. This is a perception that is entirely foreign to the Eastern tradition, in which the descent is seen as an event of universal significance. A great number of Eastern authors perceived Christ's descent into Hades as an event of universal significance, and some extended its saving action not only to past generations but also to



all those who followed. The idea that all the dead received the opportunity to be saved is quite widespread among Eastern Christian writers, and it was only in the West where some authors labeled it heretical.

During this Pentecostarion Period, I will continue to share ideas about this very important point - Christ's Descent into Hades since it is at the center of our Church's belief with regard to Christ's Descent into Hades. I think all would agree, if they listen closely to the prayers that we use during our liturgical celebrations, that Christ's Descent into Hades and the impact that this singular event has had on human history, is important to consider and not dismiss.

Hopefully my efforts will cause my readers to "think about" what they truly believe. What was the impact of Christ's Descent into Hades where He conquered Death by death and granted life to humankind!

EVEN MORE ABOUT THE RESURRECTION

Without the Resurrection, there is nothing! Truly. Unless Christ be risen from the dead, unless the tomb of the Lord were found “empty”, the Christian *kerygma* - message would indeed be useless. As St. Paul puts it: “If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain” (I Corinthians 15:17).

But why do the saints speak about the Resurrection in such uncompromising terms? Quite simply, because if the Resurrection of Christ is merely a beautiful metaphor, “then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished”, and “we are of all men most miserable” (I Corinthians 15:18-19), for nothing but death and corruption - nothing but non-being - awaits us.

Christians, however, *know* that Christ is risen; and they know that His Resurrection signifies our resurrection, and so together with St. Paul they affirm that “now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive (I Corinthians 15:20-22). The Resurrection of Christ, the New Adam, then, is a foreshowing of our own resurrection, of our intended place in the Kingdom of Heaven.

However, within the mystery of Christ’s glorious Resurrection is also contained the mystery of the way in which we have been called to share in the very Life of God, the Holy Trinity; and it is here that we arrive at the fundamental doctrine of the Church concerning the resurrection of the body.

Put simply, the whole of our humanity - body as well as soul and spirit - has been called



to live eternally with God. This is the significance of the salvific work of Christ: that by His Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension, Christ has raised human nature to the right hand of God the Father, to the level of Divine Being.

Significantly, the only human person, the only human hypostasis thus far to have achieved this blessed state is, of course, the Most Holy Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, through whom the Son and Word of God became flesh.

This is our faith. Do you believe this to be true? If you do, what does it mean!



THE EASTERN HERALD

СХІДНЬЙ ВІСНИК

The Weekly Newsletter of Very Reverend Canon Wayne J. Ruchgy, Ph.D.
Vol. 64 No 13 Pascha - Easter - The Great Day - Velikden March 31-April 1, 2018



An Easter Tradition

All are reminded again that from PASCHA until Pentecost our tradition is

TO STAND IN PRAYER

We are even encouraged to stand *in private prayer*. Sitting is permitted when tired or elderly. *It is not more pious to kneel!* This tradition reminds us that we are the children of God and thus privileged, because we are His heirs, to stand in His presence.



A BIG THANK YOU ... is truly extended to each and every person who took the time to remember me at PASCHA. Please know your thoughtfulness is appreciated and cherished. Thank you for making me a part of your life. I pray that each of you may be blessed with health and happiness.

A WORD OF THANKS ... is extended to all who generously donated for PASCHA flowers, allowing our worship space to be so beautifully decorated. Please know that your generosity has brought great joy to me and to many others.

A WORD OF GRATITUDE . . . is extended to all those who helped with the singing during this sacred time. Your efforts are truly appreciated. Singing is a way to become truly involved in our worship and to praise God.

A SPECIAL THANKS ... is offered to any and all who helped in any way to make our Great and Holy Week Services prayerful. *Thank You!*

Χριστός ἀνέστη!



BRIGHT WEEK . . . is the eight days that follow PASCHA. The last day, St. Thomas's Day, is the Anti-Pasch. Each day of this week is a celebration of PASCHA. During ordinary time, PASCHA is celebrated every weekend. This tradition is a direct carryover of the Jewish Passover which is celebrated for eight days. During the period from PASCHA to Pentecost Sunday is counted as the first, not last, day of the week.



Great and Holy Pascha

It is the Pasch; the Pasch of the Lord.
O You, who are truly all in all!
The joy, the honor, the food and the
delight of every creature;
through You the shadows of death
have fled away,
and life is given to all,
the gates of heaven are flung open.

God becomes man
and man is raised up to the likeness of God.
O divine Pasch!
O Pasch, light of new splendor.

The lamps of our souls will no more burn out.
The flame of grace,
divine and spiritual,

burns in the body and soul,
nourished by the resurrection of Christ.

We beg you, O Christ, Lord God,
eternal king of the spiritual world,
stretch out your protecting hands
over your holy Church
and over your holy people;
defend them, keep them, preserve them.

Raise up your standard over us
and grant that we may sing with Moses
the song of victory,
for yours is the glory and the power
for all eternity! Amen

St. Hippolytus of Rome