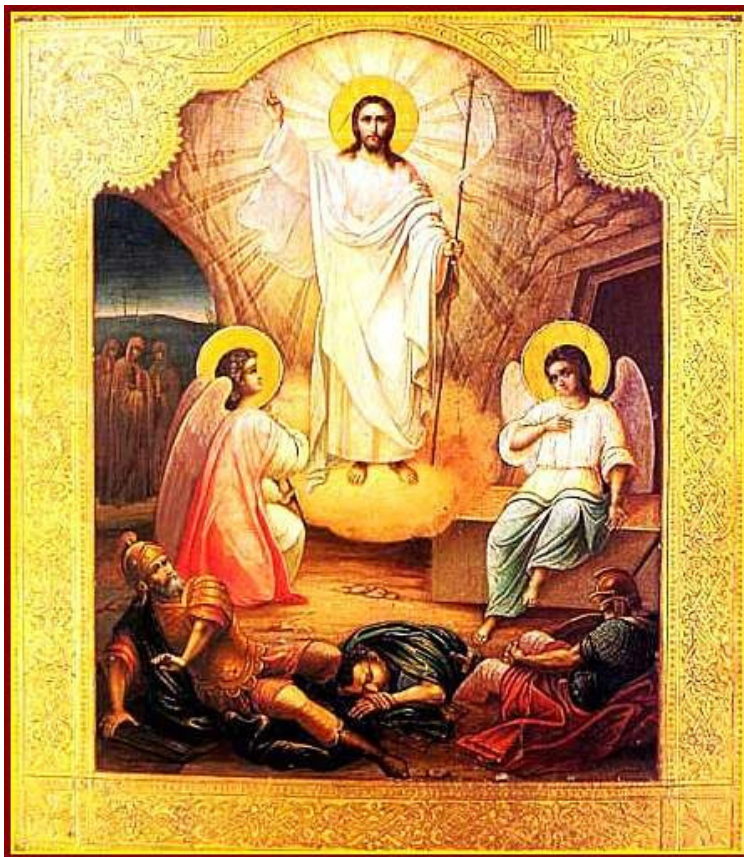


## April 20, 2014: The Lord's Resurrection (Pascha, Easter)

### Epistle: The Acts, 1:1-8:

*The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

### Gospel: John 1:1-17:



*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 nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 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, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only*

*begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'" And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

By the grace of God we have been found worthy to receive, one again, the light of Christ's resurrection in our hearts and in our souls.

On the night of the Lord's Resurrection, as well as throughout the Pascal season, Orthodox Christians sing, time and again, the hymn of Christ's victory over death and Hades: *Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death and those in the tombs bestowing life*. By so doing, they reaffirm their faith and hope in their own resurrection and victory over death and the evil forces.

As the assurance of our own resurrection, Easter is the foundation of Christianity, the "Feast of feasts" that opens the doors of Paradise and brings reconciliation between man and his Creator.

**On behalf of the Church Board and the Ladies Auxiliary, I'd like to extend to all of our parishioners and supporters a Blessed Pascha, filled with joy and happiness!**

**CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!**

**Fr. George Bazgan**

### **Donations for Easter:**

**Stan Antonie & Angelica: \$250.00**

**Diaconu Ștefan & Fania: \$90.00**

**Apostol Alex & Georgeta: \$100.00**

**Corbu Adrian & Maria: \$80.00**

**Thank you all!**

### **PASTORAL LETTER ON THE FEAST OF THE LORD'S RESURRECTION 2014**

**† NICOLAE**

**by the mercies of God**

**Archbishop of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas**

**To our Beloved Clergy and Orthodox Christians  
peace and holy joy from Christ the Risen Lord,  
and from us hierarchical blessings.**

**I await the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come (The Creed).**

**Most Reverend Fathers,  
Beloved Faithful,**

**Christ is risen!**

For 2000 years we have greeted one another on this holy morning with these words, which proclaim a great miracle, the victory of life over death, a miracle that happened at a certain time and place, but has implications beyond time and the world we know. Through this greeting we both proclaim the historical event of the Savior's Resurrection and witness to our belief that this event has value for us now and in eternity.

St. Matthew the Evangelist describes for us the first meeting with the Risen Christ as one having an historical nature: *So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me (Matt. 28:8-10)*. We know that to this encounter were added others which establish a historical truth, the fact that Christ, who received death on the Cross and was buried in a tomb, arose on the third day. The historical nature of this event is assured by the multitude of the testimonies of those who encountered Christ after He had risen from the tomb.

Father Dumitru Stăniloae explains the perspective from which this historical event should be understood: “If the persons to whom the Risen Christ appeared were historical persons, then through them could be verified, according to all the rules of the historical method, if not the manner of Christ’s Resurrection and the character of His Risen Body, at least the fact of the Resurrection” (Dogmatic Theology). The Resurrection of Christ is an event that surpasses the ordinary history of humankind through the fact that it overturns man’s advance towards death. And through the participation of persons connected to certain places, times, and circumstances, this meta-historical event touches history. If we see history as a rigorous repetition of similar kinds of phenomena, then the Resurrection of Christ marks an opening of history toward an order that is above strictly immanent causality, as Fr. Stăniloae goes on to say. “The Resurrection is the single event that proves not only that history is made in collaboration with powers that are above human powers, but also that history is destined to be raised up to a higher plane, to that of incorruptible life, a spiritualized plane where the freedom of the human spirit reigns, rather than the uniform processes of nature.” The Resurrection changed the course of human history and gave it the meaning of eternity. The Resurrection introduced into time the One outside of time, the Eternal One. Christ entered into a certain relationship with history, but historical persons were also given the ability to recognize the meta-historical fact of the Resurrection.

We also, 2000 years after the event of the Resurrection, can experience this change that was introduced into history. That which we proclaim to one another is not only an historical event, but is the new reality of our life in history.

St. Paul the Apostle tells us that we have also risen with Christ: “God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:4-7). We have risen with Christ and we live a new life. Christ’s Resurrection is a source of divine life for us in our earthly life, a source of power, of cleansing, and of growth in communion with God and our fellow man. “Let us cleanse our senses that we may behold Christ shining like lightening with the unapproachable light of Resurrection,” says a verse from the Paschal Vigil. We also meet the risen Christ in the Holy Eucharist, and this encounter brings about our change, our transition to the new life.

In a prayer after communion the priest says, “O Great and most holy Pascha, O Christ, Wisdom, Word, and Power of God, grant us to partake of You more perfectly in the unwaning day of Your kingdom.” The perfect and complete encounter with Christ will take place at the end of the ages, in the eternal Kingdom of God. Confessing the historical fact of the Resurrection, living with the Risen Christ during the time of our earthly life, Christians pray at the same time, in the Our Father, that the Kingdom may come, and they witness in the Creed to the expectation of the universal resurrection and eternal life. The history in which the event of the Lord’s Resurrection took place will be fulfilled at the Second Coming of Christ. History is not the realm of perfection, but of movement toward perfection. It is the realm of incomplete revelation, says Fr. Stăniloae. St. Paul tells us that “the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God” (1 Thes. 4:16), and that this event will take place “in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet (1 Cor. 15:52). History will have an end that will mark the unending day of the Kingdom of God.

Most Reverend Fathers, Beloved Faithful,

Confessing the Lord’s Resurrection as an historical fact that will be revealed in its fullness at the second coming of Christ, it is fitting that we perceive the meaning of history and of the world in which we live. Our history is one of turmoil, of “false prophets, increasing wickedness, and cooling love” (Mt. 24:11-12). But Christ Himself teaches us to persevere in patience and in fulfilling our mission, for this is how we will be saved. We proclaim the God who descended into history, the God-man who triumphed over death and rose again, and we are still filled with hope. For hope does not come from man, nor from the world, but from the Victor over death and the Giver of eternal life. With this hope it is fitting that we should always proclaim that Christ is risen!

I embrace you in Christ, the Risen Lord, and I wish you a Joyful Feast with health, peace, and joy in your families and parishes!

*Your brother in prayer to God,*

† NICOLAE

## HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SCHEDULE

### **PALM SUNDAY**

Blessing of Palms, Divine Liturgy ..... 10:00 A. M.

### **HOLY MONDAY**

Matins of the Holy Tuesday ..... 7:00 P. M.

### **HOLY TUESDAY**

Matins of the Holy Wednesday ..... 7:00 P. M.

### **HOLY WEDNESDAY**

Sacrament of the Holy Unction ..... 7:00 P. M.

### **HOLY THURSDAY**

Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great ..... 10:00 A. M.

Service of the Holy Passion (12 Gospels) ..... 7:00 P. M.

### **GOOD FRIDAY**

Taking down from the Cross (Vespers) ..... 3:00 P. M.

Lamentation Service ..... 7:00 P. M.

### **GREAT SATURDAY**

Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great ..... 10:00 A. M.

### **HOLY PASCHA (EASTER)**

Resurrection Service and Divine Liturgy ..... 12:00 (midnight)

Blessing of the Easter baskets ..... 3:00 A. M.

*The traditional Easter fellowship will follow the blessing of the Easter baskets.*

### **EASTER SUNDAY**

Vespers Service ..... 1:00 P. M.

### **BRIGHT MONDAY and TUESDAY**

Divine Liturgy ..... 10:00 AM.

### **BRIGHT WEDNESDAY**

Divine Liturgy at St. George Greek Orthodox Church ..... 10:00 AM.

### **BRIGHT FRIDAY**

Divine Liturgy ..... 10:00 AM.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The Board of Directors extends a warm appeal to all supporters of our parish, asking them **to pay their membership before Easter.**

This way we can ensure that we have the necessary funds to fulfill our financial obligations during the Summer months and for the rest of the year as well.

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH!**

## **On Mixed Marriages**

Living in a pluralistic society, such as ours, has its share of advantages and challenges as well, especially for the young people.

When it comes to mixed marriages, the Orthodox parents and their children need to know what the position of the Church is. Based on the teaching of the Orthodox Church, mixed marriages must meet the following conditions:

1. The non-Orthodox party must be a Christian. This means that that person must have been or must be baptized (before the wedding service) in one of the other two Christian denominations: Catholic or Protestant. Of course, it would be ideally that such a person be baptized in the Orthodox Church.

**Therefore, an Orthodox person cannot marry a non-Christian in the Orthodox Church.**

2. The wedding service must take place in an Orthodox Church and be officiated by an Orthodox priest. Just because the wedding takes place in an Orthodox church does not mean that the non-Orthodox party becomes Orthodox. This is done only as a favor to the Orthodox party.

3. The children resulted from this union must be baptized and raised/educated in the Orthodox Church.

**Should an Orthodox person enter a marriage union with a non-Christian, such a person must understand that by so doing they have forfeited their right/possibility to receive Communion and be a Godparent at a Christening or a Wedding.**

For further details, please talk to the priest.

Fr. George Bazgan