

## April 28, 2019: 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, once 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 re-affirm 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.

**Fr. George Bazgan**

### **EASTER MESSAGE**

**The Board of Directors and the Ladies Auxiliary of our parish extend,  
to all members and supporters of our Church, best wishes for  
a Blessed Pascha, filled with joy and good health!**

**CHRIST IS RISEN! \* HAPPY EASTER!**

### *Church Anniversary*

**Our Church Anniversary will be celebrated on May 26, 2019, in the presence of His Eminence Metropolitan Nicolae and His Grace Bishop Ioan Casian. The stained glass windows will be blessed and our church will be elevated to the rank of Cathedral.**

**For tickets (\$75.00/person), contact Mariana Diaconu: 780-473-6711  
or 780-660-4748 (texting only).**

**No refunds after May 12.**

**The number of seats is limited.**

**PASTORAL LETTER  
AT THE FEAST OF THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD 2019**

† IOAN CASIAN

*by the mercies of God*

***Bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Diocese of Canada***

*To our beloved Clergy and Orthodox Christians,  
peace and joy from Christ the Lord,  
and from us hierarchical Blessings.*

***He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*** (Acts 1, 7 – 8)

**Most Reverend Fathers,  
Beloved Faithful,**

**Christ is risen!**

*"Today all things are filled with light: earth and heaven and the world beneath. Then let all creation celebrate the resurrection of Christ. In Him is the firm foundation of all things."*<sup>1</sup> we sing in the third ode of the Matins of Resurrection. We find ourselves in the night of joy where we contemplate the unapproachable light of the Resurrection of Christ. It is time for us Christians to celebrate the essence of our faith - the beginning of the salvation of all in Christ.

The text of the Acts of the Apostles read on this occasion speaks of the meaning of our mission as Christians. In our time and space of our history we are called to be witnesses, to be apostles, to be the messengers of those who first saw the Resurrection of Christ - the Apostles and the Myrrh-bearing women. We are called to be apostles in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the edges of our times. The priority of our mission is to receive the transforming power of the Holy Spirit rather than to know the *'years or times that the Father has placed in His dominion.'* This power makes the true and faithful Christian into a confessor to the whole world of the joy of Christ's resurrection and the salvation of all.

We can therefore ask: we understand that we are confessors of our time, but what is the message that we are bound to convey? We find an answer in the Gospel of John: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*<sup>2</sup> *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* (John 1: 1-4).

The resurrection of man's faith through Christ means the rediscovery and the reaffirmation of the fundamental truth: God is the source of everything. The central message of our mission as personal and living churches and part of the greater Church of the Christian community is that the world and man have their beginning and foundation in God. He is the One who by His word has created everything. He is the life and light of every man.

The resurrection brings with it a renewed consciousness in the Holy Spirit who considers and thinks everything from the perspective of God. Father Stăniloae says that *"through His resurrection, Christ generally establishes our faith in the continuation of life after death."*<sup>2</sup> There

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<sup>1</sup> Easter Matins ode 3

<sup>2</sup> Dumitru Stăniloae. *Culture and Spirituality. Complete Works vol 3.* Ed. Basilica: Bucharest 2012, p 73

is a resurrection of our faith and confession in the existence of God as the foundation of everything, and there is a resurrection of our understanding that makes us realize that we are created for eternity out of love of the One whose generosity cannot be measured.

Is simple faith enough on the path to salvation? St. John the evangelist tells us:

*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. ... And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. (John 1: 14,16)*

On the morning of the Resurrection, we profess as Christians that man's renewed but abstract faith is important but not sufficient for his salvation. It needed the living presence of the incarnate Son of God, the authentic leaven through grace and truth, in order that all things be fully restored and accomplished. Through this presence, the relationship of the world and man with God was restored.

How can Christ, as a true leaven, restore all things? St. Athanasius the Great discovers the fullness of Christ's accomplishment for the salvation of man in His earthly mission: ... *no one should stand up to the truth - that the Savior has risen His body and is the true Son of God, being the Word and Wisdom and Power that came out of God as from the Father and Who in the latter times took the body for the salvation of all and taught the world about the Father, overthrew death, gave them all incorruptibility by the promise of the resurrection, raising His own body as a first-fruits, and showing it as a trophy against death and its corruptibility through the sign of the Cross.*<sup>3</sup>

In the redeeming work for man's salvation, the Creator manifests full responsibility for His creation. Christ, the foundation of our restoration, teaches us and does all that is necessary for our healing and salvation: the Incarnation, the knowledge of God, the annihilation of death, and the gift of incorruptibility through the Resurrection. He is the One who dwells in us, who offers Himself to us in a participatory way through His risen body as the pillar and foundation of our resurrection. From within our humanity fully assumed by His resurrected Body radiates the light of the healing grace of our human understanding and deeds. We understand that we cannot achieve salvation without the intervention of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit; we understand that we have the responsibility to avail ourselves, by faith, to the work of the grace of God in us; we understand our responsibility in our actions towards God and towards those around us. We become true apostles, witnessing by understanding, word, and deed.

The cult of the Church in its entirety is a guide and reinforcement in God. We believe, witness and fulfill all of Christ by participating in the Divine Liturgy and the Holy Mysteries, in the life of prayer and asceticism of the Church. *"The church is the kingdom of Christ the Lord - says Archimandrite Vasilachi. He founded it, and through His power, it continues through ages and eternity. In it, He is always present, and the apostles forever share the heavenly treasures to mankind."*<sup>4</sup> The Church, though present here on earth in us and among us, is at the same time the guarantee and the source of eternal life.

***Beloved brothers and sisters in the Lord,***

We are in the *Homage Year of the Romanian village (of the priests, teachers and diligent mayors)* and in the *Commemorative Year of Patriarchs Nicodim Munteanu and Iustin Moisesescu and of church books' translators* in the Romanian Patriarchate. There are two themes that urge us

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<sup>3</sup> St. Athanasius the Great. *Against the Hellenes. Treaty on the Incarnation of the Lord. Three homilies against Arians.* (translation. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae) Ed. EIBMO: Bucharest 2010, p 190

<sup>4</sup> Vasile Vasilachi. *The triple Love for God, Church and Nation.* Theological Edition *The Word of Life*: New York, p 249

to meditate on our Christian and Romanian values and on the activity of tireless churchmen working in the apostolate of authentic Christian tradition.

Father Staniloae synthesizes in a brilliant way the spiritual matrix of the Romanian village to be model and inspiration in this year dedicated to it:

*The village is a united community composed of free people. ... the active and transfigurative transparency of God, which brings together everybody without confusing them, is lived in the most accentuated way in the Divine Liturgy of Sundays and Feasts, in which all pray for all. ... The transparency of the active transcendence of God in the living experience of the Romanian village gives it, in addition to the spirit of a deep communion, that of a thinking that unites in it the understanding with the consciousness of the inexhaustible mysteries of the world and the people united with God.<sup>5</sup>*

The ethos of the Romanian village is a result of the Christian spirit that combines freedom and personal specificity with communion, the understanding of Christian life with the amazing astonishment and contemplation of the mysteries that go beyond the understanding. They meet in the Divine Liturgy, which is the most authentic expression of man's union with God. This millenary Eucharistic model remains for us a living book of God's work through the human person in society. It can guide and inspire us.

Thinking about the second theme of the year, the examples of those unknown - *priests, teachers or diligent mayors* - beside the patriarchs *Nicodim and Iustin* - and church book translators such as the *Mitropolitans Dosoftei, Veniamin Costachi and Irineu Mihălcescu*, the priests such as *Dumitru Stăniloae Dumitru Bodogae, Dumitru Fecioru, Ioan G. Coman, Petre Vintilescu, Ene Branishte, Eufrosin Poteca, Olimp Caciulă, Matei Pâslaru, Spiridon Cândea, Mihai the priest, St. Paisie Velicicovschi*, Archimandrites such as *Iuliu Scriban, Nicodim Grecianu and Vasile Vasilachi, Monk Gherontios* and others, become necessary and indispensable references in the meticulous work of spreading the Christian message through word, letter and the labor of translating and adapting the saving word to our everyday reality.

Let us become in the places where we are living luminous examples of free and open people who understand the surrounding realities and let us get prepared to proclaim and incarnate the Christian message today for the salvation of all.

On the occasion of the feast of the Lord's Resurrection, let us give thanks in an Eucharistic spirit to God for all His benefits. I also wish you to have a good health, a spirit of thanksgiving, peace and blessing in Jesus Christ our Lord!

Yours in prayer to the Risen Lord,  
† **IOAN CASIAN**

***Saint-Hubert / Montreal 2019***

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<sup>5</sup> Dumitru Stăniloae. *Reflections on the Spirituality of the Romanian People. Complete Works vol. 9.* Ed. Basilica: Bucharest 2018, p 165 - 166

## 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**

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

### **BRIGHT TUESDAY**

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

### **BRIGHT FRIDAY**

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

## *Church Directory*

In honor of our Church being elevated to Cathedral status (May 26, 2019), the Church Board is planning a Church Directory, containing color pictures of Church members and supporters who wish to participate.

A professional photographer will be at our Hall every day, beginning Tuesday, April 30 – May 4, between 2:00 - 8:30 PM and 10:00 - 4:00 PM on Saturday. Everyone is fervently requested to, please, make an appointment to have their free family picture taken (done in 15 minutes).

Those who participate will receive a free Church Directory.

Our expert, Darline Shelemey, volunteered to spearhead this very Special 2019 Directory and needs your help so no one is overlooked. Please, contact Darline as soon as possible to schedule your 15 minute appointment at your convenience, at 780 – 908 - 4806 or email: [dshelemey@hotmail.com](mailto:dshelemey@hotmail.com)

Your support is very much appreciated.

**THANK YOU ALL!**

## **MEMBERSHIP**

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



## COSMIC RESURRECTION

*The days are longer,  
The sun is stronger,  
The winter's old,  
Gone is the cold!*

*The spring is here,  
Hurrah and cheer!  
All things I like  
Come back to life.*

*Blue jays and sparrows  
Engage in quarrels;  
Through clouds like foam,  
The geese come home.*

*The soul rejoices  
In lenten choices;  
Christ enters again  
J e r u s a l e m.*

*He comes to Passion  
In humble fashion,  
His life He gives,  
The world lives!*

*Praise, all creation  
His Resurrection!  
Enjoy the season,  
For CHRIST IS RISEN!*

**Fr. George Bazgan**