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BULLETIN OF APRIL 15, 2012
CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

SUNDAY/APRIL 15
PASCHA: BRIGHT RESURECTION
OF JESUS CHRIST
(FEAST OF FEASTS)

12:01a.m. Matins and Divine Liturgy'
Blessing of paschal foods; festal meal
12:00p.m. Vespers

BRIGHT MONDAY/APRIL 16

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy and festal meal
7:00p.m. Vespers

BRIGHT TUESDAY/APRIL 17

9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
7:00p.m. Vespers

BRIGHT WEDNESDAY/APRIL 18

9:30a.m. Akathist to Risen Jesus
7:00p.m. Vespers with Bishop Michael and faithful
of NJ Deanery in Paramus

BRIGHT THURSDAY/APRIL 19

9:30a.m. Akathist to Life-Giving Tomb

BRIGHT FRIDAY/APRIL 20

9:30a.m. Akathist to Life-Giving Spring Icon

BRIGHT SATURDAY/APRIL 21

9:30a.m. Akathist to Risen Jesus; Confession
5:30p.m. Vigil; Confession

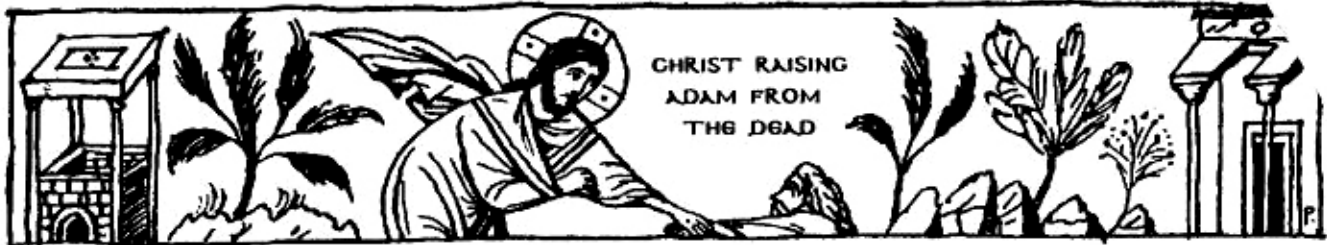
NEW SUNDAY/APRIL 22

9:10a.m. Hours; 9:30a.m. Divine Liturgy
Coffee Hour; Church School
11:45a.m. Movie: "Behind the Sun"

MONDAY/APRIL 23

6:30p.m. Paschal Memorial at Cemetery
(Rain Date; Tuesday at 6:30p.m.)





THE HOURS OF PASCHA

During Bright Week, it is customary to replace one's morning and evening prayers with the Paschal Hours. When the Hours of Pascha are sung or read in the absence of a priest, those prayers in italic are omitted.

Priest: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.

Choir: Amen.

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life. (3x)

(Tone 6) Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ, / let us worship, the holy Lord Jesus, / the only Sinless One! / We venerate Thy Cross, O Christ, / and we praise and glorify Thy Holy Resurrection; / for Thou art our God, / and we know no other than Thee; / we call on Thy name. / Come, all you faithful, / let us venerate Christ's Holy Resurrection! / For, behold, through the Cross joy has come into all the world. / Let us ever bless the Lord, / praising His Resurrection. / For by enduring the Cross for us, // He destroyed death by death!

(Tone 8) Before the dawn, Mary and the women came / and found the stone rolled away from the tomb. / They heard the angelic voice: "Why do you seek among the dead as a man / the One who is everlasting light? / Behold the clothes in the grave! Go and proclaim to the world: / The Lord is risen! He has slain death, // as He is the Son of God, saving the race of men."

(Tone 8) Thou didst descend into the tomb, O Immortal, / Thou didst destroy the power of death! / In victory didst Thou arise, O Christ God, / proclaiming "Rejoice" to the myrrhbearing women, // granting peace to Thine apostles, and bestowing resurrection on the fallen.

(Tone 8) In the tomb with the body and in hell with the soul, / in paradise with the thief and on the throne with the Father and the Spirit, // wast Thou, O boundless Christ, filling all things.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

(Tone 8) Bearing life and more fruitful than paradise, / brighter than any royal chamber: // Thy tomb, O Christ, is the fountain of our resurrection.

Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

(Tone 8) Rejoice, O holy and divine abode of the most high! / For through you, O Theotokos, joy is given to those who cry: // Blessed are you among women, O all-undefiled Lady!

Lord, have mercy. (40x)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

More honorable than the cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim: without defilement you gave birth to God the Word. True Theotokos, we magnify you.

Choir: In the name of the Lord, Father, bless.

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

Choir: Amen.

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life. (3x)

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (3x) Father, bless!

Priest: May He, who rose from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life, Christ our true God, through the prayers of His most-pure Mother, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.



Orthodox Church in America ~ Diocese of New York and New Jersey

**ARCHPASTORAL LETTER ON
The Feast of the Glorious Resurrection: Holy PASCHA
Sunday, April 15, 2012**

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Dearly Beloved in our Risen Savior:

“... he saw and believed” (John 20:8)

Without a doubt, the horrors of His Trial, Passion, Crucifixion and Death took their toll not only on Our Lord but also on the people around Him. All but one of Jesus’ closest disciples fled out of fear; they were scattered without their Shepherd. The pious women who had followed Him throughout His ministry were filled with sorrow, agony on their faces and tears in their eyes. And the countless people whom Jesus had helped and healed -- the blind, the deaf, the dumb and the lame, the lepers and the greatest of sinners -- were nowhere to be found; they had abandoned their Healer and Savior. Even to this day, the same is true. In the words of Saint Paul, “the Crucified Christ is a stumbling block to the Jews and folly to the Gentiles” (1 Corinthians 1:23).

So profound were the events of Great and Holy Friday, that even when Our Lord did what He said He would do -- “... and on the third day I will rise again” (Matthew 27:63) -- still, the horror and sorrow of the Crucifixion prevented people from seeing and believing the joy of the Resurrection on that first Pascha. Mary Magdalene could not see beyond her tears that the One in the Garden was Christ Himself; He had to speak to her personally, He had to call her by name, “Mary,” before she could believe. Peter and the other Apostles were so terrified that they could not accept the witness of Mary Magdalene; Christ had to come through the locked doors of the Upper Room where they were hiding before they could believe. And Thomas, the champion of doubters, would not take for true the words of his closest friends; he demanded to put his fingers into the nail prints in Jesus’ hands and put his hand into His spear-scarred side before he would believe.

There was, however, one notable exception to this pattern of doubt -- one icon of unflinching faith in the Risen Christ. It was the Beloved Disciple, Saint John the Theologian. When Mary Magdalene had first come to him and Peter on that radiant Pascha morning to tell them what she had experienced, they ran to the Tomb to “check out” her story. John, being younger, reached the Tomb ahead of Peter, but

waited for him before going in. The Scripture says that Peter went in and saw the linen cloths lying there, and the napkin which had been on the Lord’s head, but he did not know what to make of them. The Beloved Disciple, Saint John, however, went in after Peter, and in the words of the Gospel, “... he saw and believed” (John 20: 8). What did John see that made him believe? Only the Empty Tomb.

This story, as simple as it is, is one which reflects the purest of faith. For three years this young man had been taught the Word of God from the Greatest of all Teachers. During that time, he had become so close to the Lord, that the Bible calls him “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” And, on many an occasion, John had heard the same prophecy Jesus had told the other Eleven -- namely, that He would

be betrayed into the hands of sinful men, and they would crucify Him, but He would rise on the third day. And so, that first Pascha when he came to the Empty tomb, in his mind John remembered, in his heart he was stirred, and in his soul he was convinced that Christ had risen from the dead even as He had said. For this disciple, the Empty Tomb was enough! “... *He saw and believed.*”

So profound was his faith in the Resurrected Christ that it forever changed his life. The youngest of the Twelve would be guided by the Spirit to become the most brilliant of all, to write the most spiritual and deeply theological piece of all of Scripture -- the fourth book of the Gospels -- and to become known as “John the Theologian.” The boy who was once called one of the “sons of Thunder” would so love being united with the Savior that he would record for us the discourse of Jesus on the Holy Eucharist that enables us to become one with Christ our Savior. The apostle who once coveted a place of honor at the right or left of the Lord would humbly share with the world all of the details of his discipleship in the Fourth Gospel, so that we all “might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing [we might] have life in His Name” (John 20:30).

Our Church presents Saint John to us as a model for our faith. Because we cannot see the Risen Christ in person as did the Eleven when He came through the doors that were locked ... because He is not here on earth now to speak to us as He did with Mary Magdalene then, calling her by name ... the Church, as our loving Mother, reads to us the words of the Scriptural witness in our divine services ... so that we would know what the Beloved Disciple knew ... and She offers us the replica of the Empty Tomb at midnight on Pascha ... to confirm our faith as it did for Saint John. She wants us to “believe” even as he did. And the reward that will be ours for our John-like faith will be what the Lord Himself promised: “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe” (John 20:29).

The Church wants us to become like the Beloved Disciple was after Pascha: to live richly in our spiritual life, communicating with the Lord every day in prayer, as John did in person; to grow in God’s Word, by reading what Saint John and the others wrote in the Scripture; to come intimately close to the Lord in the Eucharist, as we are directed in the discourse in John’s Gospel; to live a lifestyle of moral purity and service to Christ, as did the only one of the Twelve to live to a ripe old age and die a natural death, the very last of the apostolic witnesses on earth; and, yes, to forever be reminded in our minds, be stirred in our hearts and be convinced in our souls of that good news of greatest joy: “Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!”

May Saint John indeed be an example for us all and a role model as well. May we cultivate, by imitating his life, a personal relationship with the Risen Christ that will endear us to Him such that each of us becomes “a beloved disciple” as well. And, may we experience, today and always, the great joy that John the Theologian experienced -- who, though he had only the Empty Tomb for evidence, yet “... he saw and believed.”

May the Risen Christ, Who loved and blessed John the Theologian, love and bless you as well ... this great day of Pascha and always.

With love in the Resurrected Lord,

+ M I C H A E L
Bishop of New York and the
Diocese of New York and New Jersey