



## **Holy Ghost Orthodox Church**

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

**ON THE MEND:** Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Metropolitan Constantine, Bishop Robert, Father Peter Natishan, Father Gerald Olszewski, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Elias Katras, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Anthony Dimitri, Father Cuthbert Jack, Father Elias Warnke, Father Deacon Dennis Lapushansky, Evelyn Burlack, Joshua Agosto and his family, Harley Katarina Rahuba, Mike Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Helen Likar, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Maria Balo, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Mildred Manolovich, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Glen Lucas Burlack, Bernie Vangrin, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Cameron [a boy in Matt's class], Faith—an 7-year-old girl with rheumatoid arthritis, Isabella Olivia Lindgren—a 4-year-old with a brain tumor, Dillon, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Nick Malec [Maxine's brother], Erin, Jeff Walewski [thyroid cancer], Carol [Lotinski] Rose, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Gary Zurasky, Michael Horvath, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Michael Miller, Jim Logue—throat cancer, Liz Stumpf, Ester Tylavsky, Ed Jamison, Theodore Nixon, Charles Johnson, Amy Forbeck, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Gloria Prymak [Liz's niece], Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, George & Mika Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Tom Marriott, Joe Farkas, Liz Obradovich, Liz, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Peter Natishan, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Brandi Thomas, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Peter & Karen Special, Amy Boe, Doris Artman, Maureen Sams, Nancy Barylak, Henry & Shirley Tkacik, Carol Kowalcheck, Martin Golofski, Joe Paouncic, Anthony Yerace, Joanne Brodrick, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier [3-year-old with cancer], Diane Waryanka, Nathan Forbeck, Joseph Baloga, Andy Torick,

Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Jean Stutchell, Bonnie Blair [Pani Gina's mother], Charles & Esther Holupka, Jill Paha, Wanda Mefford, Lynn (Bush) Gill, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Betty O'Masta, Julie Eiler, Glenn Miller, Debbie Talapasso—Slickville Postmistress, Vince Ferro, Gregory Repa, Michael Pawlyshyn, Dorothy Lednovich, Megan Zurasky, and Daria Masur. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci, Steve Sakal, Homer Paul Kline, and Steve Ostaffy. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR APRIL BABIES:** Robert Chicka on the 13<sup>th</sup>, Alexander Popichak on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Matthew Popichak on the 18<sup>th</sup>, Kim Shirley on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and John Sheliga on the 24<sup>th</sup>! May God grant them all Many Happy, Healthy, Prosperous, and Blessed Years! Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

**REMINDERS: NO KNEELING until the Kneeling Prayers of Pentecost Sunday. Instead of “Vechnaya Pam’yat” at the end of a Parastas or during a funeral service until Ascension Thursday, we sing “Christ is Risen!” Also, we do not say the prayer to the Holy Spirit “O Heavenly King” until Pentecost Sunday.**

Please remember James John Logue George Senita, & John Kirkowski assigned to Iraq, Matthew Machak, Tonia Dec, Michael Repasky, and ALL American servicemen and women in the Middle East in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American servicemen and women—and bring them all home safely!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR “BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION” AND CAMPBELL’S SOUP LABELS TO CHURCH. There is a shoebox in the basement for Alex’s Seventh Grade and Matt’s Fifth Grade collections. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP!

Love, *Alex and Matt*

**REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!**

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please call Father Bob.

**AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.**

Schedule of Services

**Sunday, April 11**  
**10:30 AM**

**Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom**

**ANTI-PASCHA—SAINT THOMAS SUNDAY**

**MARTYRS MARK-BISHOP OF ARETHUSA, CYRIL-DEACON OF HELIOPOLIS, & OTHERS WHO SUFFERED UNDER JULIAN THE APOSTATE; VENERABLE JOHN-ANCHORITE OF EGYPT; SAINT EUSTATHIUS THE CONFESSOR-BISHOP OF BITHYNIA; VENERABLE JONAH & MARK OF THE PSKOV CAVES**

Acts 5:12-20

John 20:19-31

*Litany in Blessed Memory of John Cherepko, Rose Lopushanski, Michael Brittan, Frank & Ollie Pendlyshok—Fr. Bob*

*Parastas in Blessed Memory of Martha Batch—Harry Batch & Family*

**Sunday, April 18**  
**10:30 AM**

**Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom**

**SUNDAY OF THE HOLY MYRRH-BEARING WOMEN: MARY MAGDALENE, MARY-WIFE OF CLEOPAS, SALOME, JOANNA, MARTHA & MARY, SUSANNA, AND OTHERS; JOSEPH OF ARIMATHEA AND NICODEMUS; MARTYRS AGATHOPODES-DEACON & THODULUS-READER & THOSE WITH THEM AT THESSALONICA; VENERABLE PUBLIUS-MONK OF EGYPT; VENERABLE THEONAS, SYMEON, & PHORBINUS OF EGYPT; VENERABLE THEODORA-NUN OF THESSALONICA; VENERABLE MARK THE ANCHORITE OF ATHENS; VENERABLE PLATO-ABBOT OF THE STUDIO; NEW-MARTYR GEORGE OF NEW EPHEBUS**

*Tone 2*

Acts 6:1-7

Mark 15:43-16:8

*Parastas in Blessed Memory of Andrew Kitch—Rosemary & Maxine*

**Sunday, April 25**  
**10:30 AM**

**Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom**

**SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC; VENERABLE BASIL THE CONFESSOR-BISHOP OF PARIUM; HIEROMARTYR ZENON OF VERONA; VENERABLE ISAAC THE SYRIAN-ABBOT OF SPOLETO, ITALY; MARTYRS MENAS, DAVID, AND JOHN OF PALESTINE; VIRGIN ANTHUSA OF CONSTANTINOPLE; VENERABLE ATHANASIA-ABBESS**

*Tone 3*

Acts 9:32-44

John 5:1-15

*Parastas in Blessed Memory of Hilda Holupka—Mike Holupka*

**BULLETIN INSERT FOR 11 APRIL 2010**  
**ANTI-PASCHA—SAINT THOMAS SUNDAY**  
**MARTYRS MARK-BISHOP OF ARETHUSA, CYRIL-DEACON OF**  
**HELIOPOLIS, & OTHERS WHO SUFFERED UNDER JULIAN THE**  
**APOSTATE; VENERABLE JOHN-ANCHORITE OF EGYPT; SAINT**  
**EUSTATHIUS THE CONFESSOR-BISHOP OF BITHYNIA;**  
**VENERABLE JONAH & MARK OF THE PSKOV CAVES**

**TROPARION—TONE 7**

From the sealed tomb, Thou didst shine forth, O Life!  
Through closed doors Thou didst come to Thy disciples, O Christ God!  
Renew in us, through them, an upright spirit,  
By the greatness of Thy mercy, O Resurrection of all!

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

**KONTAKION—TONE 8**

Thomas touched Thy life-giving side with an eager hand, O Christ God,  
When Thou didst come to Thy apostles through closed doors.  
He cried out with all: Thou art my Lord and my God!

**PROKEIMENON—TONE 3**

**READER:** Great is our Lord and abundant in power. His understanding is  
beyond measure.

**PEOPLE: Great is our Lord and abundant in power. His understanding is  
beyond measure.**

**READER:** Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises to our God!

**PEOPLE: Great is our Lord and abundant in power. His understanding is  
beyond measure.**

**READER:** Great is our Lord and abundant in power.

**PEOPLE: His understanding is beyond measure.**

**ALLELUIA VERSES**

Come, let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!

For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all the earth.

## **HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS [INSTEAD OF IT IS TRULY MEET...]**

**The angel cried to the Lady Full of Grace Rejoice, O Pure Virgin! Again I say: Rejoice! Your Son is risen from His three days in the tomb! With Himself He has raised all the dead! Rejoice, all ye people!**

**Shine! Shine! O New Jerusalem! The Glory of the Lord has shone on you! Exult now and be glad, O Zion! Be radiant, O Pure Theotokos, in the Resurrection of your Son!**

### **COMMUNION HYMN**

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!

None is merciful like Thee; we know that, O Lord, from the time Thou wast born and called the Son of the woman whom Thou didst create.

We proclaim her "blessed" as we pray each day: "Hail, virgin bride."

Come, let us accompany the archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, and let us greet her as mother and nourisher of our Life.

For it is not only fitting for the general to salute the queen, but it is also possible for the humble to see her and address her.

All generations call her blessed as mother of God, and they pray:

"Hail, virgin undefiled, hail, maiden called of God, hail, virgin full of grace, who didst not know a seed time, chaste, hail, mother who knew no man, "Hail, virgin bride."

*from the Kontakion on the Annunciation by St. Romanos the Melodist, 6th century*

### **THE ANNUNCIATION (BLAGOVESCHENIE) OF OUR MOST BLESSED LADY MOTHER OF GOD AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY—March 25/April 7**

Sermon of Sainted Proklos, Patriarch of Constantinople. Our present gathering in honour of the MostHoly Virgin inspires me, brethren, to say of Her a word of praise, of benefit also for those come unto this churchly solemnity. It comprises a praise of women, a glorying of their gender, which (glory) is brought it by Her, She Who is at one same time both Mother, and Virgin. O desired and wondrous gathering! Celebrate, O nature, that wherein honor be rendered to Woman; rejoice, O human race, that wherein the Virgin be glorified. "For when sin did abound, grace did superabound" (Rom. 5: 20). The Holy Mother of God and Virgin Mary hath gathered us here, She the pure treasure of virginity, the intended paradise of Second Adam—the locus, wherein was accomplished the co-uniting of natures, wherein was affirmed the Counsel of salvific reconciliation.

Whoever is it that ever saw, whoever heard, that within a womb the Limitless God would make habitation, Whom the Heavens cannot circumscribe, Whom the womb of a Virgin limiteth not!?

He born of woman is not only God and He is not only Man: This One born made woman, being the ancient gateway of sin, into the gateway of salvation: where evil poured forth its poison, bringing on disobedience, there the Word made for Himself a living temple, bringing in thither obedience; from whence the arch-sinner Cain sprang forth, there without seed was born Christ the Redeemer of the human race. The Lover-of-Mankind did not disdain to be born of woman, since this bestowed His life. He was not subject to impurity, being settled within the womb, which He Himself arrayed free from all harm. If perchance this Mother did not remain a Virgin, then that born of Her might be a mere man, and the birth would be no wise miraculous; but since She after birth remained a Virgin, then how is He Who is born indeed -- not God? It is an inexplicable mystery, since in an inexplicable manner was born He Who without hindrance went through doors when they were locked. When confessing in Him the co-uniting of two natures, Thomas cried out: "My Lord, and my God!" (Jn. 20: 28).

The Apostle Paul says, that Christ is "to the Jews indeed scandal, and to the Gentiles yet folly" (1 Cor. 1: 23): they did not perceive the power of the mystery, since it was incomprehensible to the mind: "for had they understood, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory" (1 Cor. 2: 8). If the Word had not settled within the womb, then the flesh would not have ascended with Him onto the Divine Throne; if for God it were disdainful to enter into the womb, which He created, then the Angels too would have disdained service to mankind.

That One, Who by His nature was not subject to sufferings, through His love for us subjected Himself to many a suffering. We believe, that Christ not through some gradual ascent towards the Divine nature was made God, but being God, through His mercy He was made Man. We do not say: "a man made God"; but we confess, that God was incarnated and made Man. His Servant was chosen for Himself as Mother by That One Who, in His essence did not have mother, and Who, through Divine foresight having appeared upon the earth in the image of man, does not have here father. How one and the same is He both without father, and without mother, in accord with the words of the Apostle (Heb. 7: 3)? If He -- be only a man, then He cannot be without mother -- but actually He had a Mother. If He -- be God only, then He cannot be without Father -- but in fact He has the Father. And yet as God the Creator He has not mother, and as Man He has not father.

We can be persuaded in this by the very name of the Archangel, making annunciation to Mary: his name—is Gabriel. What does this name mean?—it means: "God and

man." Since That One about Whom he announced is God and Man, then his very name points beforehand to this miracle, so that with faith be accepted the deed of the Divine dispensation.

To save people would be impossible for a mere man, since every man has need in the Saviour: "for all—says Saint Paul—have sinned, and come short the Glory of God" (Rom. 3: 23). Since sin subjects the sinner to the power of the devil, and the devil subjects him to death, then our condition did become extremely hapless: there was no sort of way to be delivered from death. There were sent physicians, i.e. the prophets, but they could only the more clearly point out the malady. What did they do? When they saw, that the illness was beyond human skill, they summoned from Heaven the Physician; one of them said "Lord, bend the heavens, and come down" (Ps. 143 [144]: 5); others cried out: "Heal me, O Lord, and I shalt be healed" (Jer. 17: 14); "restore Thine power, and come yet to save us" (Ps. 79 [80]: 3). And yet others: "For if God truly be settled with man upon the earth" (3 [1] Kings 8: 27); "speedily send before Thine tender mercy, O Lord, for we are brought very low" (Ps. 78 [79]: 8). Others said: "O woe to me, my soul! For the pious art perished from the earth, and of the upright amongst men there is none" (Mich. 7: 2). "O God, in help attend to me, O Lord, shield me with Thine help" (Ps. 69 [70]: 1). "If there be delay, endure it, for He that cometh shalt come, and not tarry" (Hab. 2: 3). "Perishing like a lost sheep: seek out Thine servant, who doth hope on Thee" (Ps. 118 [119]: 176). "For God wilt come, our God, and wilt not keep silence" (Ps. 49 [50]: 3). That One, Who by nature is Lord, did not disdain human nature, enslaved by the sinister power of the devil, the merciful God would not accede for it to be forever under the power of the devil, the Ever-Existing One came and gave in ransom His Blood; for the redemption of the race of man from death He gave up His Body, which He had accepted of the Virgin, He delivered the world from the curse of the law, annihilating death by His death. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law", -- exclaims Saint Paul (Gal. 3: 13).

Thus know, that our Redeemer is not simply a mere man, since all the human race was enslaved to sin. But He likewise is not God only, non-partaking of human nature. He had body, since if He had not clothed Himself in me, He then likewise should not have saved me. But, having settled within the womb of the Virgin, He clothed Himself in my fate, and within this womb He perfected a miraculous change: He bestowed the Spirit and received a body, That One only indeed (dwelling) with the Virgin and (born) of the Virgin.

And so, Who is He, made manifest to us? The Prophet David doth point it out for thee in these words: "Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord" (Ps. 117 [118]: 26). But tell us even more clearly, O prophet, Who is He? The Lord is the God of Hosts, says the prophet: "God is the Lord, and hath revealed Himself unto us" (Ps. 117

[118]: 27). "The Word was made flesh" (Jn. 1: 14): there were co-united the two natures, and the union remained without mingling.

He came to save, but had also to suffer. What has the one in common with the other? A mere man cannot save; and God in only His nature cannot suffer. By what means was done the one and the other? Wherein that He, Emmanuel, being God, was made also Man; both this, that what He was, He saved by, -- and this, that what He was made, He suffered as. Wherefore, when the Church beheld, that the Jewish throng had crowned Him with thorns, bewailing the violence of the throng, -- it said: "Daughters of Zion, go forth and behold the crown, of which is crowned He of His mother" (Sng. 3: 11). He wore the crown of thorns and destroyed the judgement to suffering from the thorns. He Only is That One both in the bosom of the Father and in the womb of the Virgin; He Only is That One -- in the arms of His Mother and in the wings of the winds (Ps. 103 [104]: 3); He, to Whom the Angels bowed down in worship, at that same time reclined at table with publicans. Upon Him the Seraphim dared not to gaze, and at the same time Pilate pronounced sentence upon Him. He -- is That One and Same, Whom the servant did smite and before whom did tremble all creation. He was nailed to the Cross and ascended to the Throne of Glory, -- He was placed in the tomb and He stretched out the heavens like a skin (Ps. 103 [104]: 2), -- He was numbered amidst the dead and He emptied hell; here upon the earth, they cursed at Him as a transgressor, -- there in Heaven, they exclaimed Him glory as the All-Holy. What an incomprehensible mystery! I see the miracles, and I confess, that He -- is God; I see the sufferings, and I cannot deny, that He -- is Man. Emmanuel opened up the doors of nature, as man, and preserved unharmed the seal of virginity, as God: He emerged from the womb thus as He entered through the announcing; the same wondrously was He both born and conceived: without passion He entered, and without impairment He emerged, as concerning this doth say the Prophet Ezekiel: "He returned me back the way of the gates of the outer sanctuaries, looking upon the east: and these had been shut. And saith the Lord to me: son of man, these gates shalt be closed, and not open, and no one go through them: for the Lord God of Israel, He Only, shalt enter and come forth, and they wilt be shut" (Ez. 44: 1-2). Here it clearly indicates the Holy Virgin and Mother of God Mary. Let cease all contention, and let the Holy Scripture enlighten our reason, so that we too receive the Heavenly Kingdom unto all eternity. Amen.

**PATRIARCHAL PROCLAMATION FOR PASCHA**

**B A R T H O L O M E W**

*By the Grace of God, Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome  
and Ecumenical Patriarch,*

*To all the Faithful of the Church:*

*Grace, mercy, and peace from Christ the Savior Risen in Glory*

\* \* \* \* \*



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

### **Christ is Risen!**

Once again, the sacred day of Pascha has dawned in full delight and splendor, dispersing joy, comfort, gladness and assurance of life to all faithful, despite the heavy atmosphere that prevails in our world on account of the multidimensional crisis with all its familiar painful consequences for our daily life.

Christ has risen from the tomb as divinely human; and humanity has risen with Him! The tyranny of death belongs to the past. The hopelessness of hades' captivity has irrevocably gone. The only powerful Giver of life, having through His Incarnation voluntarily assumed all of the misfortune of our nature and all that it entails, namely death, has already "brought death to hades by the lightning of divinity," granting us life – and "life in abundance." (John 10.10)

This abundance of life, which was granted to us by the Risen Lord, is ceaselessly slandered and assaulted by the devil – indeed, these actions are the source of his very name – although he is now weakened, completely powerless, and entirely ridiculous. The devil slanders Life by means of the hubris that still prevails in the world against God, humanity and the creation. The devil assaults Life by means of the sinful tendency that exists within us like "old rust," using this to entrap us either into tangible sin or delusional belief. Hubris is the offspring of that "rust", while both comprise the sinister couple responsible for disrupting relationships within ourselves, with others, as well as with God and the whole creation. Accordingly, it is imperative that we purify ourselves of this rust with great attentiveness and carefulness in order that the profuse life-giving light of the Risen Christ may shine in our mind, soul and body, so that it may in turn dispel the darkness of hubris and pour the "abundance" of life to all the world.

This cannot be achieved by philosophy, science, technology, art, or any ideology; it can only be achieved through faith in what God has condescended for us human beings through His Passion, Crucifixion and Burial, descending to the depths of hades and rising from the dead as the divine-human Jesus Christ. It is also expressed in the sacramental life of the Church as well as through laborious and systematic spiritual struggle. The Church, as the Body of Christ, unceasingly and to the ages experiences the miracle of the Resurrection; through its sacred Mysteries, its Theology and its practical teachings, it offers us the possibility of participating in that miracle, of sharing in the victory over death, of becoming children shaped by the light of the Resurrection and truly "partakers of divine nature." (2 Peter 1.4), just as in the life of every Saint in the past and present. The thorny weeds of passions growing within the depths of our heart, polluted by the rust of "the old self" (Eph. 4.22) must definitely be transformed as soon as possible in Christ, through Christ and for the sake of Christ and His living images that surround us – namely, our fellow human beings – into a bouquet of virtues, holiness, and righteousness. Hence, the sacred hymnographer chants in timely manner: "Let us put on the robe of righteousness, which is whiter than snow, and let us rejoice today in the day of the Pascha; for Christ, the sun of righteousness that

rises from the dead, has showered upon us the light of incorruption." The white garment of righteousness was given to us symbolically on the day of our Baptism; and we are invited to cleanse it continually through constant repentance, control of desires, patience in life's pain, and relentless effort to fulfill the commandments of God, and especially the supreme commandment of love. In this way, we are able to participate in the cross-bearing self-emptying of Christ, in order that the Paschal gladness, radiant light, and joyful salvation may enter our life and world.

We address this from the Phanar, where we experience the suffering of Holy Friday and the light of the Resurrection, as we express to you the affection of the Mother Church, wholeheartedly wishing for all the saving gift and Paschal blessing of the Lord of Life, who rose from the dead.

*Holy Pascha 2010*  
*Fervent supplicant for all before the Lord,*  
*+Bartholomew of Constantinople*

### **Holy Pascha—The Feast of Feasts**

*For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6)*

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen! Χριστός Ἀνέστη!

In the joy and light of the glorious Resurrection of our Lord we gather on this Holy and Great Feast of Pascha to celebrate the life-giving presence and power of Christ. On this day, we give the highest praise to God for His love. On this feast, our thankfulness is unceasing, as we contemplate our restoration from death to life. Today, we offer the brightest witness throughout the world as we proclaim our faith in our Savior. On this day, our hearts are enlivened with the victory of the ages. Christ is risen. Death has been defeated, and we will live forever in blessed communion with God.

On this Feast of Feasts we recognize that the Resurrection of Christ and our salvation is absolutely the work of God. In His great love for us, He fulfilled His divine promise of redemption. This love brought us into existence. His love endured even through

our disobedience. In this great love, He established a means by which we would be reconciled to Him, the bondage of sin and death would be broken, and we could have and experience life as He intended it to be. This we could not accomplish on our own. It is God, and God alone who commands the light to shine out of the darkness, who in the midst of death, brings life.

The beautiful and unwaning light of Pascha shines in our hearts, illuminating our souls with the power of the Resurrection and giving us a glimpse of our eternal salvation. God in His great wisdom directs this light into our hearts, our souls, our very being, permeating our entire person with truth and grace. This light resonates with who we are and what we were created to be. In the light of Pascha we know that we were not made for sin and death. We have been created for a blessed and unending life. We have been formed in His image for genuine and loving relationships with God and one another. This is not knowledge that comes from great intellectual quests or that can be acquired with wealth or status. It is a divine knowledge offered to all, and on this day we are all called to come and receive this light so that we might forever be illumined in truth and transformed in love.

This transformation and the joy that comes through *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God* (2 Corinthians 4:6) is very real and powerful to us because Christ is in our midst. All of this has and continues to be accomplished through Him. Through His Incarnation He shared in our humanity, and through His power as the Son of God He overcame sin and death. It is His glory that shines in our hearts revealing the purpose and potential of our lives. In His face we see what we are called to be. We see the deep and enduring love of God. We see the willing sacrifice for our redemption. We see a tender invitation to return to communion with God. In our painful experience of the wounded world in which we live, of conditions of blinding darkness and utter confusion that surrounds our contemporary humanity, we see our Risen Lord in triumphant honor and glory, calling all to come to Him and receive the light of life. On this day we celebrate that wonderful knowledge of His glory: Christ is in our midst, and He always shall be.

May this light of divine truth that shines in our hearts be ever brighter on this great and glorious Feast of Pascha. May our joy be so immense and the love that we share so complete that each and every person and all of creation will hear our hymn and know that Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

With paternal love in Christ,

†DEMETRIOS  
Archbishop of America

The Konevets Quartet, a professional group from St Petersburg, Russia, will sing a concert of Russian church and folk music on Wednesday, April 28th, beginning at 7:00 PM at Saint Mark Church, 326 Munson Ave, McKees Rocks, PA. Also appearing will be the Tsar Lazar Serbian Male Chorus of Pittsburgh. Tickets are \$20 for adults / \$10 for students and can be purchased at the door. Proceeds benefit the St Mark Project of St Nicholas Orthodox Church of McKees Rocks, providing housing for the elderly. Write [info@stnicholas-oca.org](mailto:info@stnicholas-oca.org) for more information.

**A Blessed Pascha from the Orthodox Christian Mission Center**

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen! We, the staff, board, and missionaries of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center (OCMC) pray that the light, hope, and salvation that we have longed for over the course of our Lenten Journey fills your heart with joy. In Christ's triumphant Resurrection we have become partakers of eternal life. Join us in committing to share this gift with all of our brothers and sisters around the world so that we may, as one family and with one voice, celebrate the great feast of Pascha.

**REMINDERS: NO KNEELING until the Kneeling Prayers of Pentecost Sunday. Instead of "Vechnaya Pam'yat" at the end of a Parastas or during a funeral service *until Ascension Thursday*, we sing "Christ is Risen!" Also, we do not say the prayer to the Holy Spirit "O Heavenly King" until Pentecost Sunday.**