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SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC, RIGHTEOUS TABITHA

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Archbishop Daniel, Metropolitan Antony, Metropolitan Yuriy, Anastasia [Metropolitan Yuriy's mom], Metropolitan Theodosius [OCA], Archbishop Jovan, Bishop Robert, Father George & Pani Lillian Hnatko, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Elias Warnke, Father Nestor Kowal, Father George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John & Pani Mary Anne Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Protopresbyter William Diakiw, Archpriest Dionysi Vitali, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Adam Yonitch, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Father Paisius McGrath, Father Michael Smolynech, Father Lawrence & Matushka Sophia Daniels, Father Joe Cervo, Father John Harrold [Saint Sylvester], Joshua Agosto and his family, Eva Malesnick, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Joseph Sliwinsky, Gary & Linda Mechtly, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Linda Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, George Rocknage, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Archbishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Esther Holupka, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Julie Eiler, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—young man with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann

Kuznik, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl & Margaret Reed, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Helen Bozo, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Strozh [young lady with cerebral palsy], Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Richard Dunst, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Howard Simpson, Chris, David Hiles, Jennifer, Jerry Quinn, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Sandi Anderson, Lina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, Tom Hyatt, Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko-Andy's sister, William Lemonakis, Alma Wyke, Lindsay Romanczak & family, Virginia Catherine Pynch, Susan Lucas, Neil Carter & family, James Paluh, Mickie Weikel, Evelyn Krempasky, Tammy Strunk, Loida Esbry, Darlene Chicka Deskins, Drew, Alice & Keith Philipa, Kateryna Kocelko, Nancy Heinbaugh, Mira Filipović, Lynn, Jacqueline, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Kristy, Elaine Ellenberger, Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Ron Schwartz, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, Manny "Lazarus" Lopez, Glenn & Lucas Burlack, Katie Elizabeth, Mileva, & Michael, Deirdré Straughan, Terri Paluh, Lori & Steve Lucier, Kyranna Cherpas, Pastor Bruce Nordeen, Heather Ried, Carla Perry, Linda Elliot, Dennis McDaniel, Luke Tinsley, Brent, Tricia, Katherine Gorman, Pamela Jaquette, Sherri Walewski, Marika Zeliszczuk, Donna Davis, Jackie Crimbchin, Marta Charron, Mary [Corba], Stella McKeag, Margie Sekelsky, Gary Howell, Fran Fulton, Gina Catanese, Bill Vizza, Jamie Swarm, Kevin Allen (from Ancient Faith Radio), Kathy Flaherty, Tori Reade-Henry's niece, Derick-Glen Burlack's neighbor, Michael, Nichole & Christopher, Ben Douglas, Dianne Donahue, Zachary, Natasha, Noah Willard, Jodi Hanczar, Gregory Cervo, Lisa Bruce, Martha Nezolyk, Kathy Cvetkovich, Judy, Will, Emma, Ginny, Ye-Jin, Maria, John & JoAnn, Jim & Kitty, Phil Bouse, Ralph & Beverly Stoker, Noah Willard, Nikola, Natalie, Nikola, & Nevenka Jovonovich, Julia Collier, Amy Kemerer, Thomas Smith, Tracy Slaughaupt, Louis & Teresa Bercelli, Tom Nolan, Silvia Martin, Sarah Dorning, Dena & George, Georgia, Lawanda [Evelyn's niece], Maureen Sams, John Kendall, Judi Danser, Darcy, Denis

Strittmatter, Nancy, Ian Brick, Cecilia Barnhart, Logan Magorien, Pam Grant, Debbie & Jerry Novosel, Noah Willard, Sandra Dillard, Danielle McCann, Barry [Father Jim Orr's cousin], Tim Joyce, Mike Pawlyshyn—Jeannie Stutchell's brother, Marianne Mulroy, Joe Samchuck—vocations, Albert Heckman, Brianna Stumpf, and Susan Pulcini—Father Ted Pulcini's mom. ARNOLD: Homer Paul Kline and Walter Sakol. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

Please remember in your prayers: Father Bob will have surgery on Wednesday, May 22, and will not be able to serve for at least two weeks. If you are in need of the services of an Orthodox priest, Andy Torick has the contact information for local clergy, including Father John Nosal in Greensburg and Father George Veselinovich in Monroeville. I hope to be back on track soon...God Bless you all! Christos Voskres! Christos Anesti!
Christ IS Risen!

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS: All Christians and the others in the Middle East who are suffering during this time of great tragedy and unrest. May God watch over and keep them safe! Lord have mercy!

Please remember ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American service men and women—and bring them all home safely!

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 ask 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, MAY 19 OBEDNITZA DOWNSTAIRS IN THE CHURCH HALL 10:30 AM

**4TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA; SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC; RIGHTEOUS TABITHA;
TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF MARTYR ABRAMIUS OF BULGARIA;
RIGHTEOUS JOB THE LONG-SUFFERING; MARTYRS BARBARUS THE SOLDIER,
BACCHUS, CALLIMACHUS, & DIONYSIUS IN MOREA; MARTYR BARBARUS THE
FORMER ROBBER IN EPIRUS; VENERABLE JOB-ABBOT & WONDERWORKER OF
POCHAIV**

Acts 9:32-42

John 5:1-15

*Litany in Blessed Memory of All Departed Mothers, Grandmothers, Aunts,
Sisters, and Daughters, and All Departed Veterans—Fr. Bob*

**SUNDAY, MAY 26 READER SERVICE DOWNSTAIRS IN THE CHURCH HALL 10:30 AM
5TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA; SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN; VIRGIN-
MARTYR GLYCERIA AT HERACLEA & MARTYR LAODICIUS-HER JAILER; MARTYR
ALEXANDER OF ROME; SAINT PAUSICACIUS-BISHOP OF SYNNADE; SAINT
GEORGE THE CONFESSOR OF CONSTANTINOPLE, HIS WIFE, AND CHILDREN;
TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF SAINT WONDERWORKER MACARIUS-
ARCHIMANDRITE OF PINSK & KANIV**

Acts 11:19-26, 29-30

John 4:5-42

**SUNDAY, JUNE 02 READER SERVICE DOWNSTAIRS IN THE CHURCH HALL 10:30 AM
6TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA; SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN; MARTYR THALELAEUS
AT AEGAE IN CILICIA & COMPANIONS: MARTYR ALEXANDER & ASTERIUS;
MARTYR ASCLAS OF EGYPT**

Acts 16:16-34

John 9:1-38

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 19 MAY 2019

**4TH SUNDAY OF PASCHA; SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC; RIGHTEOUS
TABITHA; TRANSLATION OF THE RELICS OF MARTYR ABRAMIUS OF
BULGARIA; RIGHTEOUS JOB THE LONG-SUFFERING; MARTYRS
BARBARUS THE SOLDIER, BACCHUS, CALLIMACHUS, & DIONYSIUS
IN MOREA; MARTYR BARBARUS THE FORMER ROBBER IN EPIRUS;
VENERABLE JOB-ABBOT & WONDERWORKER OF POCHAIV**

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Христос воскрес! Воистину воскрес!

Χριστός ανέστη! Ἀληθῶς ανέστη! (Khristós Anésti! Alithós Anésti!)

Hristos a învîiat! Adevărat a învîiat!

المسيح قام! إحقا قام! (al-Masīḥ qām! Ḥaqqan qām!)

Kristo Amefufukka! Kweli Amefufukka

TROPARION—TONE 3

Let the Heavens rejoice! Let the earth be glad!
For the Lord has shown strength with His arm!
He has trampled down death by death!
He has delivered us from the depths of hell,
And has granted the world great mercy!

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

KONTAKION—TONE 3

By Thy Divine intercession, O Lord,
As Thou didst raise up the paralytic of old,
So raise up my soul, paralyzed by sins and thoughtless acts:
So that being saved I may sing to Thee:
Glory to Thy majesty, O Bountiful Christ!

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

KONTAKION—TONE 3

On this day Thou didst rise from the tomb, O Merciful One!
Leading us from the gates of death.
On this day Adam exults as Eve rejoices;
With the prophets and patriarchs
They unceasingly praise the divine majesty of Thy power!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 1

READER: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

PEOPLE: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

READER: Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous! Praise befits the just.

PEOPLE: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us as we have set our hope on Thee.

READER: Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us...

PEOPLE: As we have set our hope on Thee.

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 5

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim Thy truth from generation to generation.

Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever, and my truth will be prepared in the heavens.

THE HYMN TO THE THEOTOKOS (Replaces "It Is Truly Meet")

**The angel cried unto Mary, who was full of Grace
Hail, oh pure virgin, oh pure virgin
once again I hail Thee
Thy Son has risen from His three days in the grave,
and He has raised the dead with Him,
Oh rejoice, all ye people.**

**Oh shine with clear radiance, shine on new Jerusalem
For the glory of the Lord is shining up on you.
Rejoice! Rejoice! now and be joyful--oh Zion, and though
oh pure one and adorable birthgiver of God,
in the rising again of HIM who was born of Thee.**

COMMUNION HYMNS

Receive ye the Body of Christ; taste ye the fountain of immortality.

Praise the Lord from the heavens! Praise Him in the highest!

Easter Services in Dachau, WWII

During Holy Week, the infamous Dachau Concentration Camp was liberated by American military forces on April 29, 1945. Unknown to many is the fact of the thousands of Christians that were imprisoned at Dachau. Without a church, altar, chalice, books, candles, incense, bread or wine the Orthodox faithful still celebrated Pascha on May 6, 1945. They had only one icon of the Theotokos. In a cell block several Greek, Serbian, and Russian priests and one Serbian deacon, wearing makeshift vestments made from towels of the SS guards, gathered with several hundred Greek, Serbian and Russian Orthodox prisoners to celebrate Paschal Vigil. A Russian Orthodox prisoner named Gleb Rahr wrote this moving description of the holy service:

"In the entire history of the Orthodox Church there has probably never been an Easter service like the one at Dachau in 1945. Greek and Serbian priests together with a Serbian deacon wore the makeshift vestments over

their blue and gray-striped prisoners' uniforms. Then they began to chant, changing from Greek to Slavonic, then back to Greek. The Easter Canon, the Easter Sticheria—everything was recited from memory. The Gospel—"In the beginning was the Word"—also from memory. The Homily of St. John Chrysostom also from memory. A young Greek monk from the Holy Mountain stood up in front of us and recited it with such infectious enthusiasm that we shall never forget him as long as we live. St. John Chrysostomos himself seemed to speak through him to us and to the rest of the world as well!"

Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church Gavriilo Dozic and Bishop (now a Saint) Nikolaj Velimirovic, were incarcerated at Dachau for several months. There is a Russian Orthodox chapel at the camp today, and it is well known for its icon (see above) of Christ freeing the Dachau prisoners.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
Matthew 5: 10-12

"Take pride in the title of "woman," take pride in the fact that you were born not a man, but a woman, for the Lord has given you a heart much better than that of men, a heart receptive to all that is holy, a heart soft as wax, feeling the truth of Christ.

You live not by a cold mind, as do men, but you live by the sense of the heart, for the human heart, together with the mind, is an organ of perception. And the perception of the heart is higher than that of the mind." +*Saint Luke of Simferopol*

EMPOWERED BY FAITH by Sister Vassa [Larin] (Tuesday, May 7)

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave the power/authority (ἐξουσίαν) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (Jn 1: 10-13)

When we place our trust in the Lord and "receive" His divine authority in our lives, He also en-"trusts" us with "power" or "authority." Different

from our biological birth, over which we had no "authority" (as we were not its "authors," not having chosen our biological parents or any of the other circumstances of our biological birth), our New Birth and New Life in Christ is a choice we make on a daily basis, to "receive" God as our Father and Primary Authority.

Today let me choose, once again, to be "alive" not only biologically, but to have "life abundantly" (Jn 10: 10), in Christ. Because I can. "Our Father, who art in heaven," I say this morning, together with countless other children of God both on earth and in heaven, "hallowed be Thy name" throughout my schedule today. Amen!

Prayer for every departed person

Remember, O Lord our God, Thy servant, our brother/sister, ___N___, who has reposed in the Faith and hope of life eternal, and in that Thou art good and the Lover of mankind, Who remittest sins and blottest out iniquities, do Thou loose, remit and pardon all his/her sins, voluntary and involuntary.

Deliver him/her from eternal torment and the fire of Gehenna, and grant unto him/her the communion and delight of Thine eternal good things prepared for them that love Thee.

For though he/she hath sinned, yet hath he/she not forsaken Thee, and he/she undoubtedly believed in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; and even until his/her last breath did he/she confess Thee in Orthodox fashion: God glorified in Trinity, Unity in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity.

Wherefore, be Thou merciful unto him/her and reckon his/her faith in Thee, rather than his/her deeds, and in that Thou art compassionate, grant him/her rest with Thy saints; for there is no man that liveth and doth not sin.

But Thou alone art wholly without sin, and Thy truth is forever; and Thou alone art the God of mercies, and compassion, and love for mankind, and unto Thee do we ascribe glory, to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

Ninety Percent of Orthodoxy Is Just Showing Up

May 7, 2019·Fr. Stephen Freeman

Sometime back, I was asked about "being present." The question was rooted in the problem of a "wandering mind." My answer was simple and straight-forward: "You are always present. It comes with having a body." We speak of the mind "wandering," and it is a colorful metaphor, but it's

not true. The “mind” hasn’t gone anywhere else, it is simply thinking about something other than where your body is, or, it’s not “thinking” at all. Many times, the noise in our head is just an artifact of other things, including our bodies.

If we define “thinking” as a rational, intentional act in which we attend to something (whether physical or mental), then we actually think far less than we imagine ourselves to. When we dream, we do not later imagine ourselves to have been “thinking.” Dreaming is an activity of the brain but it is not thinking. Over the course of the day, much of what goes through our head is closer to dreaming than thinking. There is the noise associated with various emotional reactions. A moment of surprise will occasion a line of “thoughts” [noise]. A moment of embarrassment will do the same. Sheer boredom invites the brain to engage with something—it abhors pure emptiness.

The very process of thought itself is never as simple as the rational, intentional event that we imagine it to be. How we think includes a host of activities. It involves memory, association, imagining, projecting—and many other things. We are not computers. Human thought and the work of a computer have very little in common (despite any hoopla to the contrary).

That said, it is good to recognize the signal importance of our bodies. We are *always* where our bodies are. This is the reason that the Church gives such attention to what we do with our bodies. St. Paul goes so far as to say that our bodies are Temples. We pray with the body (with bows, prostrations and the sign of the Cross); we fast with the body; all of the sacraments are received through the body. God became flesh and was held on the Cross by His body. We continue to eat and drink His Body and Blood.

It is with all that in mind that I have said any number of times, “Ninety percent of Orthodoxy is just showing up.” There are important things that happen when we show up, but nothing can happen until we do. This is true of our worship in Church, our prayers at home, our alms to the poor. There are no intentions that replace the simple act of being there.

There are good reasons why we are sometimes not there, such as illness and the like.

We also tend to underestimate the value of simply being present. If I perceive no benefit to myself in assembling with others, we cannot begin to measure the value it very likely has to those around. I recall years when I was in the process of starting missions. In each case, twenty people could

feel like a “crowd” (sometimes even fewer was great). In the vast array of temptations that face a priest, and others, few are as devastating as the suggestion that what is taking place “is not worth it.” The bloodless sacrifice of the Divine Liturgy is always infinitely “worth” it. Nevertheless, we encourage one another with even our mere presence.

Learning to be “present” is generally no more difficult than learning to be mindful of our bodies. It is therefore of note that our services are as physical as they are. There is movement, the smell of incense, the sight of icons, the lighting and burning of candles and lamps. God has not abandoned us to bare walls of blank abstraction. The strange innovation in the West (both in certain strains of Medieval Catholicism as well as in many forms of later Protestantism) that stripped Churches of their beauty with the explanation that decoration is a distraction, is contrary to the much older tradition in which the display and veneration of icons is seen as an integral part of a prayer life.

When God gave commandments to Israel and told them to bind them to their arms and keep them before their eyes, He did not mean that they should merely keep them uppermost in their thoughts. They literally bound them on their arms and wore them on their foreheads. They set them in their doorposts. These were salutary practices—not superstitions. They are the practices of a people who understand that they were created as embodied people and not as abstractions.

I have a difficult time concentrating on anything for more than a few minutes. I have to back away and do something else and return to finish later. Writing a blog article, for example, is something that takes place in bursts of five or ten minutes off-and-on over the course of a day. Sometimes coming back to the project is painful. Anyone with ADHD will know what I’m describing. My prayers are no different. I pray best in a Liturgy because the activity is itself a prayer. I walk as a prayer. I cense as a prayer. I chant as a prayer. I cross myself and others as a prayer. Oddly, the Psalm says, “Let my prayer arise in Your sight as incense, and the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice.” Sometimes I have to say (inwardly), “Let the incense be my prayer in Your sight, and the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice,” because my thoughts are uncontrollably all over the place. My experience is that such actions draw my mind towards God. Evagrius of Ponticus said, “If you want to humble the soul, humble the body.”

Whoever first imagined that sitting still in a pew and paying attention to something constituted worship was not only wrong, but the creator of

torture as an effort towards worship. It was certainly not an idea wrought in the mind of a child. Only an ideologue could imagine such a thing—may the Lord deliver us!

I have one of my grandchildren in the congregation (three-years old). He is like his father who is like me. Out of the corner of my eye on a Sunday, I often see his father carrying him across the Church from one icon to the next. I know what he is doing. He is rightly indulging his son's need for movement and teaching him to love the ones made present to us in their holy icons. As time moves along, he will acquire an ability to be still (well, a bit more). His father sat patiently through interminable services on Mt. Athos two years ago, which is far more than *his* father could do!

I delight that they show up—as well as everybody else. Ninety percent of the time, I try to be there as well.

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News Release

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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,

Χριστὸς Ἀνέστη! Christ is Risen!

Following the Apostolic injunction of *speaking the truth in love* (Ephesians 4:15), I have today the great honor to communicate with you in a spirit of truth and love, in order to share with you some important items related to the life and progress in Christ of our holy Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America.

By the blessing of God, twenty years ago, I received the singular honor of being elected Archbishop of America by our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Holy and Sacred Synod of our Ecumenical Patriarchate.

On September 18, 1999, in my enthronement address I emphasized the necessity of cultivating three very important areas. First, the cultivation and growth of our Orthodox faith which our Ecumenical Patriarchate has preserved intact and immaculate. Second, the establishment of a spirit and action of love, charity, and care for the human being, without any

limitation, discrimination or reservation. And third, the promotion of unbreakable unity, concord, and unanimity of our ecclesiastical body, and of our Greek Orthodox Community in general, remembering what the Lord prayed to His Father, *that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be one in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me* (John 17:21).

For twenty years, through an intense effort to cover the multifaceted spiritual, educational and cultural needs of our Archdiocese, I have tried, in cooperation with the grace of God to remain faithful to the aforementioned aims of Faith, Love, and Unity. In addition, major themes related to the important diptych of Orthodoxy and Hellenism such as the religious freedom of our Ecumenical Patriarchate, the tragedy of the foreign occupation of Cyprus, and the Macedonian issue, have also been areas of our concern and action. All of the above have been realized through strong and substantive cooperation with the distinguished and beloved brother hierarchs, pious priests, deacons, monks, and nuns, the dedicated lay people of the major organizations of the holy Archdiocese and the Omogenia, and with the impressive contribution and help of the more than 500 parishes in America. An integral part of this twenty-year effort has been the unfailing care and support in every way of our Ecumenical Patriarchate.

It must be earnestly noted that such an undertaking extending over a twenty-year period has gone through various challenges, unpredictable difficulties, unjust attacks and actions by various people, something that has been happening to the Church from its inception to our own times. In every case, I have remembered daily what St. Paul said that, *a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many opponents* (1 Corinthians 16:9), and also the text from the Book of Revelation, *Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut* (Revelation 3:8). Glory and honor and thanksgiving belong to the almighty and merciful God, Who did not allow for us to be crushed, but on the contrary, He granted us the gift of having among us inspiring examples of many faithful clergy and laity who remained strong and dedicated to God in spite of all difficulties.

Such a long and intense undertaking certainly was not free from human mistakes and possible wrong actions. I express my sincere sorrow for all of them, accompanied by the assurance that any mistakes and wrong actions were not the result of bad intent, indifference or selfishness. If I have caused pain to any, I ask for forgiveness; while from my heart I offer forgiveness to anyone who caused pain to me.

And now, having the very great blessing of reaching the twentieth year of my diakonia as Archbishop, and by the grace of God running the course of the 92nd year of my long life, and keeping in mind the Biblical counsel from the Book of Ecclesiastes that, *There is a time for everything under heaven* (Ecclesiastes 3:1), I thought it appropriate and timely to place at the disposal and discretion of our Ecumenical Patriarch and the Holy and Sacred Synod of our Ecumenical Patriarchate my resignation. At the same time, I am praying that my successor in the holy throne of the Archbishop of America will receive in abundance the grace and power of the Crucified and Risen Lord, so that he will be able to realize important and sacred work in America; and specifically, in continuing and completing the construction of the historic Church and National Shrine of St. Nicholas in New York, and for the building up of our Hellenic College and Holy Cross Greek School of Theology in Brookline, MA.

In my new status, I will have the opportunity to dedicate ample time to prayer: prayer not only for you, my beloved brothers and sisters and for the holy Archdiocese of America, but also for the Omogenia, for our Ecumenical Patriarchate, and for all people finding themselves under difficulties, torments and tragic conditions.

As I bring to a close now and look back over the long span of my theological and ecclesiastical diakonia in the United States, I offer glory and praise and thanksgiving to God for the honor and love you have displayed abundantly to my person. And in all humility, but also in clear conscience, I repeat the beautiful confession of St. Paul, *I have fought the good fight, I have completed the course, I have kept the faith* (2 Timothy 4:7).

You and your noble families have my continuous and warmest prayers for abundant grace from God, for joyful progress and fulfillment in all aspects of your lives and endeavors, and for your fully enjoying the magnificent biblical blessing, *The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace* (Numbers 6:24-26).

With paternal love and highest esteem in Christ, our Crucified and Risen Lord and God,

† D E M E T R I O S, Archbishop of America

The Light

The Light of Christ Illumines all!
Christ's Light remains forever bright.
Christ's Light enriches all our lives.

The Light of Christ illumines all!
Christ's Light shines beyond the dark.
Christ's Light puts hope in our minds.
The Light of Christ illumines all!
Christ's Light fills our hearts with joy.
Christ's Light purifies our sinful souls.
The Light of Christ illumines all!
Christ's Light cleanses personal sins.
Christ's Light leads to virtues in life.
The Light of Christ illumines all!
Christ's Light reveals death's limits.
Christ's Light points to life eternal.
The Light of Christ illumines all!
Christ's Light guides our long journey.
Christ's Light directs our daily steps.
The Light of Christ illumines all!
Christ's Light clears the narrow path.
Christ's Light is our greatest guide.
The Light of Christ illumines all!

*Thomas Thursday, Holy Hieromartyr Basil of Amasea. Hidden Valley, Pa.
Father Rodney Torbic*

Pascha John 1:1-17

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made 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 bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (KJV)

**Hristos Voskrese! Vaistinu Voskrese!
Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!**

Christ is Risen and all things have become new. The world becomes new when believers experience Christ's Resurrection. When Christ's Resurrection permeates the heart, mind and soul, believers become new in Christ.

Christ is beyond believers' ability to fully comprehend. Christ exceeds believers' understanding of time and space. Christ is in our midst. Christ is love manifested.

Christ Resurrected is here to fill hearts and minds with love and joy. Christ Resurrected is hope incarnate. Christ Resurrected is the indomitable light shining the path to eternal life.

The Empty Tomb proclaims and verifies Christ's Resurrection. The Empty Tomb silences the message that Christ is dead. The Empty Tomb awaits seekers desiring to know and to draw closer to Christ.

Hunger for Christ exists within each person. The hunger may not always be identifiable but becomes known when life is felt not to be complete. Experiencing Christ in life brings completeness, joy and peace.

Christ's Resurrection is the culmination of centuries of history. Christ's Resurrection has impacted and shaped succeeding centuries. Christ's Resurrection is definitive.

The arrival of Pascha each year is long awaited. Believers seriously making the journey to Pascha grow and change along the way. Christ is all encompassing and more.

Christ is life for the believer. Christ is the reason for the journey to Pascha. Christ is the desire of every thought and the basis for every action. Going deep within the self, believers fathom the meaning of the Resurrection.

Christ on the Cross is love to the degree never having been known. Christ's love is inexhaustible. Christ loves touches every person of every century.

Christ's love is known to each person wanting to know.

Pascha this year is new as Pascha is new each year. Christ's Resurrection and time are according to God. The Resurrection exists for believers to learn from, experience and become different and better.

Invest in Pascha as the greatest investment. Invest in Pascha with certainty and greatest confidence. Yield the self to the Resurrected Christ. Become new in the Resurrected Christ.

Know that Christ suffered, was scourged and crucified in love for each person without exception. Know that crucifying Christ was a futile effort by the perpetrators.

Christ died. He did not stay dead forever. Christ rose from the grave. He had shown He had power over death. Christ raised the son of the widow of Nain. (Lk.7:11-15) He called Lazarus from the tomb after having been dead four days. (Jn.11:38-44)

Death is forever viewed differently because of Christ. Christ's actions over death including His Resurrection show the limitations of death and the limitless life in Christ.

The Paschal celebration continues until the Feast of Christ's Ascension. Paschal joy fills churches around the world. Paschal joy fills believers' hearts and homes.

Let thanks to Christ be never-ending. May the desire for Christ be never-ending. Pascha is a passing from the old into the new life in Christ. The Resurrected Christ enables each believer to be new in Him.

Christ's Resurrection is a certainty as certain as the sun rising each morning. Christ brightens each day and each life of believers welcoming Him into their hearts, minds and souls.

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen! Take the life-changing and world-changing message to heart. Be different and better in Christ in ways Christ will rejoice and welcome. Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Pascha 2019. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic

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.