



“Joy of All Who Sorrow”

No 17 April ‘10

THE PASCHAL MESSAGE OF HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP MARK

In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.(John 1: 4-5).

Christ is Risen, dear brothers and sisters!

After man had banished true life from this world through sin, it reappeared only with Christ. Until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into this earthly world there had been neither life, nor light, but only darkness and the shadow of death. The holy Evangelist John the Theologian calls Christ the Word of life (1 John. 1, 1), Who giveth life unto the world (John. 6, 33) and came so that they might have life (John. 10, 10). Christ said, 'I am the resurrection and the life' (John. 11, 25), before raising from the dead his friend Lazarus, the four-day-dead whose corpse was already corrupt. Now, through his glorious Resurrection, together with Himself the Risen Christ has raised us, who were dead through sin, and scattered the darkness with his Divine Light: now are all things filled with light, heaven and earth and the places beneath the earth... The Church calls the light of the Resurrection unapproachable, but it is unapproachable only for a time, only for those who have not yet left this earthly vale, earthly logic, earthly limitations, the all too easy earthly inclination to sin.

It is good for us to ponder on this now, when we have run the course of the Great Fast and cleansed ourselves from the deathly sins that we have committed and so become the Lord's own, become Christ's. The Word, or Logos, of life allows us mortals even here on earth to partake of His heavenly Logic, of His everlasting Life and so cast off all that is logic-less, meaningless, wordless, logos-less, that is, to cast off the devil, sin and death. From the limitations of time and space we who live by Him and through Him, having Him in us, prepare to enter into another reality, into the realm of the new being of eternal life. From the realm of created

darkness into the realm of uncreated and everlasting light. This light cannot be taken over by darkness. Thus, our souls, cleansed through repentance, also become inaccessible to the darkness of sin. Eternity is revealed to us by the Resurrection of Christ and we can freely enter into it through voluntarily rejecting sinful evil and sinful death, through love for goodness and light, love for Christ the Giver of Life.

As we live the Paschal celebration, we are of course aware that it is of short duration, passing, like everything else in this fleeting life. And after the feast the deeper we immerse ourselves in the everyday cares of this world once more, the harder it becomes to keep inside ourselves the awareness of the eternal Paschal celebration .

The Holy Scriptures warn us of the danger of flagging in our spiritual efforts, saying, 'In the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven' (Rev. 11, 13). According to the holy Fathers, the seven thousand who perished refers here to those who are attached to this present life, which is reckoned as seven days, and do not await the eighth day – the Resurrection.

In reality, we are called throughout our whole life to prepare for this very eighth day, for the age to come, for the everlasting Easter. This age to come is called a day because in it there will be no night. The sun will not incline towards the west, it will never set. And as the Angel proclaimed to St John the Theologian, there will be time no longer (Rev. 10, 6), and then the everlasting light of Christ the Giver of Light and Life will shine forth to us, as to the apostles on Mt Tabor, not for a mere instant, but for ever.

Of the Paschal celebration which is offered every day, St Theodore the Studite writes that it is 'the cleansing of sins, heartfelt contrition, tears of compunction, a clear conscience, the mortification of the earthly members from fornication, impurity, passion, evil lust, and every other vice that operates inside us'. Thus, celebrating Easter every day by mortifying passions and resurrecting virtues, we put our hope in the gift of grace which the never-setting Sun, the Risen Lord Who suffered for us, will bestow on us, the Eternal Paschal celebration in the heavens.
Truly Christ is risen!
+ Archbishop Mark

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

We were delighted that Fr Elias Jones was well enough to be with us from 1 - 4 April. This enabled us to have the full services including the Paschal Matins and Liturgy on Easter night. This was a great joy and marked another *first* for our

church.

FATHER LIVIU

Fr Liviu Barbu served here with us for about two months from the end of January. He has now started work organising a parish in Norwich. We wish him every blessing as he begins this new undertaking.

KURSK IKON VISIT SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY 18 JUNE

Fr Nikolai Savchenko, Rector of the Cathedral Parish of the Dormition of the Mother of God at Harvard Road in London, will be bringing the Kursk Ikon of the Mother of God to our church in Mettingham on Friday 18 June for the veneration by the faithful. This will be an evening service but full details will be published in the May bulletin. A booklet explaining the history and significance of the ikon will be published shortly.

INTER-CHURCH QUIZ

Our church has been invited to participate in an inter-church general knowledge quiz that will take place on Friday 16 April at 7.30pm in Mettingham Village Hall. We need a team of four to represent our parish.

MULTI LINGUAL EASTER GREETINGS

Throughout Eastertide it is customary to greet other Orthodox Christians with the Easter greeting: "Christ is Risen!" with the response "He is Risen indeed!". As our Orthodox parish is multinational and multilingual, and to remind ourselves of the true universality of our Faith, it is good to hear the greeting and Easter hymn sung and shouted in many languages. Below is the Easter greeting in three languages transliterated for English pronunciation:

Greek: "CHRISTOS ANESTI!" – "ALETHOS ANESTI!"

Russian: "CHRISTOS VOSKRESE!" – "VOISTINOU VOSKRESE!"

Romanian: "HRISTOS A-INVIAT" – "ADEVARAT A-INVIAT"

SINGING IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

As part of the expression of the joy of Pascha, throughout the period of Bright Week, (immediately following Easter Sunday) according to the Church Typikon, there is to be absolutely no spoken reading in the church. Thus to replace the normal third and sixth hours that are read before the Liturgy, as well as the service of Compline and Morning and Evening Prayers, a specially composed short series of Resurrection hymns called the Paschal Hours are sung. All of which underscores a very important point: that according to Church Tradition, singing is the best medium for our Paschal praise to the Risen Christ. Why? Quite simply because song is the most joyful sound that the human voice can make, and therefore the most appropriate one for celebrating the Resurrection of Christ. This

is also why the Sunday Divine Liturgy is always a sung, choral service, as we celebrate the Resurrection *every* Sunday.

In addition to the joyfulness of Orthodox chanting, another important characteristic is its simplicity. In the Orthodox Church, music is used to enhance and give greater meaning and fervency to the God-inspired sacred hymns of the Holy Fathers and Divine Scripture. Thus the tune or harmony should never distract from the meaning of the words. That is also why there is a relative informality about singing in an Orthodox church choir compared to those of some other Christian groups. Whereas in many non-Orthodox choirs quite a high level of formal musical ability is often expected, in the Orthodox Church, choirs are on the whole far more accessible and open to the choral ability of most people, particularly those who would never consider themselves “good enough” to join an official choir. In fact, solos and individual “performances” are actively discouraged, for the Divine Liturgy is not a theatrical performance but a radiant Wedding Feast in which all are called to participate, offering all that they are as a sacrifice of praise to Christ.

The word liturgy is derived from the Greek words for **people** (“laos”) and **work** (“ergein”) so that it means literally ‘the work of the people’. The Divine Liturgy can become a liturgy in the deepest sense of the word when we, the people of God, participate in it with our hearts and voices. Whilst it has always been the case that certain changeable and complex parts of the service have been sung only by the choir, in the Ancient Church many parts of the Divine Services- such as the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, the Amens at the end of litanies, and other simple responses to the priest’s and deacon’s prayers and exclamations- were sung or recited by everyone ‘with one heart and one voice’.

THE POSTURE FOR PRAYER

In the Orthodox Church, standing is the normal posture for prayer. Kneeling or making a prostration is a strictly penitential thing and confined to weekdays in Great Lent and other specified weekdays throughout the year. Kneeling and prostrating are forbidden in Eastertide, on Sundays and festival days.

Orthodox Church of the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow*
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REGULAR SERVICES: Every Sunday 10.30am - Every evening 6pm

Extra services for festivals and saints days will be announced in the bulletin.

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Cheques for the church fund should be made payable to “*Joy of All Who Sorrow*”
Church.

The account is in HSBC Bank, 3 New Market, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9HQ
Account No 71395912 Sort Code 40-09-24