



“JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW”

No 6 May '09

Christ is Risen!

We have lived through the days of the Lord's Passion. The Giver of Life has been crucified on the Cross, the Creator of the Universe has been given up to death and burial. The Most Meek and Humble God-Man has suffered spittings, beatings, scourgings, the Cross and death for the salvation of the world.

Who of us has been able to remain indifferent in these last few days in church, when they handed over the King of kings to Pilate, when one of the Twelve betrayed his Teacher, when the disciples and wonderworkers fell asleep at Gethsemane and fled before His sufferings, when His Most Pure Mother wept at His grave? Were we not shaken to the depths of our souls, when we heard of the treachery of the disciples Peter and Judas, of the cowardice of all His disciples - those who heard His miraculous words and witnessed His miracles? Why have we once more lived through these dreadful events together? Of course, so that we could also live through His resurrection together.

In the words of Paul the Apostle we have lived through these days, 'being made conformable unto His death...that we might attain unto the resurrection of the dead' (Phil. 3, 10-11). Starting from the Incarnation of the Son of God up until His sufferings on the Cross and His Resurrection, everything has been accomplished for the renewal of fallen man, his restoration to the dignity and glory of his first born state. Our faith is vain, if it is not crowned by salvation through the resurrection.

However, as we examine and ponder the words of Paul the Apostle, we will understand that we can only attain resurrection by one means: by 'being made conformable unto His death'. Are we capable of this? We are capable of this, if we are prepared to cultivate our souls in such a way that they hunger and thirst after Christ every day and every minute, so that an ardent yearning for the Heavenly Bridegroom may be kindled within them.

This is why we have passed together through the holy forty days of Lent, having renounced 'another law...warring against the law of our mind, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members' (Rom. 7, 23). Now we can be filled with the joy of Easter inasmuch as we accept the law of God...and none of our steps shall slide (Ps. 36, 31). The Risen Lord Himself will teach us, if we have in our mouths and hearts the words of God from which we constantly learn, drawing wisdom and love of virtue from them.

It is the long Lenten services which have taught us to abide in prayer and the singing of psalms. Now the joy of Easter inspires us to become witnesses of the glorious Resurrection of Christ. So that we do not fall from the heights of our ascent to Christ, we must labour further, completing the feat of our salvation which is now assured. Now we can acquire that blessedness, which consists in the words of the Psalmist in our 'will...in the law of the Lord and in His law do we meditate day and night' (Ps 1, 2). The soul which acts thus will not lose the joy of Easter after a week or two, as often happens to us, but it will remain with us, continually enriching us with new strength, and growing 'unto the measure of the stature' (Eph. 4, 13) of the Risen Christ the Saviour. To have the memory of God, says St Basil the Great, is more vital than to breathe, for in this way we raise ourselves up to purity. Blessing the Lord at all times, we become theologians and wonderworkers, driving out of our souls the demons of

fornication and adultery, calumny and lies, condemnation and pretension.

Resting on the power of the Risen Christ, we shall constantly cleanse our souls and our bodies will be radiant, for 'Pascha is purifying and from the grave the lovely sun of righteousness shines forth on us once more'. Christ like the sun of righteousness shines forth life on us all. Not wishing to return to our former spiritual death, may this Easter be for us a step towards everything new and new heights in the spiritual development of our life. The Lord Himself teaches and guides us: 'I strive to make the resurrection my own, because Jesus Christ has made me his own' (Phil. 3, 12).

Truly He is Risen!

+ Archbishop Mark of Berlin, Germany & Great Britain
Pascha 2009

PROGRESS WITH THE CHURCH

In February, when the building work began in earnest, the ground was damp and soft. The whole building site quickly became a sea of mud. Then we entered a dry spell and have had virtually no April showers at all. This had the advantage of allowing the gardeners to establish paths to and around the church with a base of hoggin (gravel) and a surface of shingle, thereby making access easier.

On the Thursday in Holy Week (16 April) the builders were working inside the building until 3pm. Then with incredible speed, we moved in the minimum of furniture and were ready for the service to begin at 5.30 as scheduled. Since then we have had time to put up more ikons and lamps. The next step is to arrange carpeting because the floor is quite clattery at the moment. This is emphasised by the fact that the church has excellent acoustics so that every sound is magnified, even unwanted sounds like the clatter of feet. Nicholas and Mirona Meade delivered the font which is a fine piece of copper-work. Our friend Muriel Bol-Clarke, who has just returned from an Easter visit to Romania, delivered to us a large framed and glazed ikon of the Mother of God. This was a gift to our church from friends in Romania. The ikon, measuring 22" (56cm) x 28" (71cm) is a version of the Kazanski ikon.

The making of the Royal Doors is now in hand. The cost, excluding the cost of the iconography, is £800 and if anyone would like to contribute towards this, we would be grateful. Cheques should be made payable to "*Joy of All Who Sorrow*" Church - this is the name on the church's account. When the construction of the doors is complete, the panels will go to St Seraphim's Studio in Little Walsingham for the ikons to be painted.

Thanks are due to all who brought oil for the church lamps, flowers to decorate the church, food for the Easter party and all who have sent donations and other gifts. May God bless you all.

SERVICES IN THE CHURCH

Every Sunday there will be a service at 10.30am. This will be either Hours and Liturgy or Hours and Typica.

Every Friday at 6pm we sing the Akathist to the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow*. At this service we commemorate, by name, all our relations, friends, benefactors and all for whom prayers have been asked - the sick, the suffering, the bereaved etc

In addition to the above, we will be having a special service to honour our national patron saint:

Tuesday 5 May at 7pm - Compline with the Akathist in honour of St George followed by the reading of the Life of St George.

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CHURCH WEBSITE

Following the launch of the parish's website last month, we have already received a great deal of positive feedback including a special mention on the national diocesan website (<http://www.rocor.org.uk>). At the moment we have just a single page microsite but our web designer,

Justin Reynolds of Lucent Web design studio, is working hard on a full version of the site that will give more information about the parish and its services, the opportunity of downloading the bulletin on-line and receiving news updates electronically, photo-galleries of the church as well as a wide ranging resource directory with lots of articles, web-links and liturgical texts.

BOOKSTALL

Now that we have the full use of the interior of the church, we will establish a bookstall in the narthex (porch) with prayer books, booklets about the faith, ikon cards, ikons and other small devotional items. The proceeds from this will go to the church fund. Of course, a fuller range of books will still be available from St George Orthodox Information Service and will continue to be advertised in *Orthodox News*.

REPLY SLIP to

“Joy of All Who Sorrow” Church, The White House, Low Rd, Mettingham, Suffolk NR35 1TP
Telephone 01986 896708
E-mail churchmettingham@aol.com

Please add the following names to the intercessions list for commemoration before the ikon of the Mother of God *Joy of All Who Sorrow* and light a candle for all who are listed here. (Remember, only first names are required - no surnames)

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Please send a copy of this bulletin to the following who may be interested
Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss.....

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“Joy of All Who Sorrow” Church, The White House, Low Rd, Mettingham, Suffolk NR35 1TP -
01986 896708 - e-mail churchmettingham@aol.com
www.joyofallwhosorrow.org.uk

