

WELCOME TO ALL PARISHIONERS & GUESTS WHO HAVE JOINED US TODAY!



**ST. NICHOLAS THE WONDERWORKER PARISH
ПАРАФІЯ СВ. МИКОЛАЯ ЧУДОТВОРЦЯ**



Pastor: Fr. Yuriy Vyshnevskyy

Emergency: 250.891.4507

Church: 250.384.2292 Hall: 250.384.2255

Facebook: [facebook.com/stnicholasvictoria](https://www.facebook.com/stnicholasvictoria)

1112 Caledonia Avenue, Victoria, BC V8T 1G1

Web: www.stnicholasparish.org E-mail: stnicks@telus.net

Tue-Sat DL - 9am; Sat Vespers-6pm; Sun DL - 10am

*The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of New Westminster
Bishop: Most Rev. Ken Nowakowski
www.nweparchy.ca*

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD - ВОСКРЕСІННЯ ГОСПОДНЄ

On the Great and Holy Feast of Pascha, we celebrate the life-giving Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This feast of feasts is the most significant day in the life of the Church. It is a celebration of the defeat of death, as neither death itself nor the power of the grave could hold our Savior captive. In this victory that came through the Cross, Christ broke the bondage of sin, and through faith offers us restoration, transformation, and eternal life.

*Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered,
and let those who hate Him flee from before His face.
As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish as wax melts
before the fire. So let the wicked perish at the
presence of God, and let the righteous ones rejoice.
This is the day that the Lord has made, let us exalt
and rejoice in it!!!*

(from Paschal Matins)

*Christ is Risen - Indeed
He is Risen!*



*Христос Воскрес -
Воістину Воскрес!*

WISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A HAPPY AND BLESSED EASTER!

SUNDAY HYMNS			
OPENING HYMN	Христос Воскрес! Ликуйте Нині/Rejoice! For Christ Is Risen! pg. 196-197		
COMMUNION HYMN	Согласно заспіваймо / Let Us Sing and Chant Our Praise. pg.188-190		
CLOSING HYMN	Христос воскрес! Під Небозвід/The Lord Is Risen from the Dead pg.198-199		
<i>Please join us today in singing our Sunday hymns!</i>			
SUNDAY & DAILY SCHEDULE			
EASTER SUNDAY, April 1	Service at the Tomb of Our Lord; Paschal Matins Divine Liturgy & blessing of Paska and Easter Food		8:00 AM 9:00 AM
BRIGHT MONDAY, April 2	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
BRIGHT TUESDAY, April 3	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
WEDNESDAY, April 4	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
THURSDAY, April 5	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
FRIDAY, April 6	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom		9:00 AM
SATURDAY, April 7	Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom Vespers		9:00 AM 6:00 PM
SUNDAY, April 8	Divine Liturgy - for the Parishioners of St Nicholas Parish		10:00 AM
<i>Please Note: to request a Divine Liturgy for a special intention, please see Fr. Yuriy to arrange for it!</i>			
SUNDAY EPISTLE READERS			
DATE	READING	UKRAINIAN	ENGLISH
SUNDAY, April 1	Act. 1: 1-8	Motria Koropecy	Darryl Huculak
SUNDAY, April 8	Act. 5: 12-20	Yuliya Pelekhata	Graciela Spaciuk-Schwarz
SUNDAY, April 15	Act. 6: 1-7	Glikeria Iwanuck	William Vanderven
SUNDAY, April 22	Act. 9: 32-42	Andrij Pelekhaty	Marian Chalifoux
<i>Thank you, Epistle readers, for your service in proclaiming God's Word!</i>			
2018 PARISH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE		PASTORAL MINISTRY & HOLY MYSTERIES	
CHAIRPERSON.....Alec Rossa - 250.472.3374		CONFESSIONS.....1/2 hour before Liturgy	
SECRETARY.....Richard DeMerchant - 250.893.3484		EUCCHARIST.....for the sick - any time	
TREASURER.....William Vanderven - 250.478.1458		BAPTISMS.....by appointment	
FINANCIAL SECRETARY.....David Newberry - 250.598.8197		MARRIAGES.....six months notice should be given to the parish priest, and he should be contacted before any other arrangements are made	
FUNDRAISING/HALL RENTAL.....Robert Herchak - 250.386.7872		FUNERALS.....by appointment	
MAINTENANCE.....Murray Chapman - 250.658.4769		ANOINTING.....any time	
LITURGICAL COMMITTEE...Motria Koropecy - 250.658.3051		HOSPITAL VISITS.....any time	
MEMBER AT LARGE.....Cindy Lazaruk - 778.677.9072			
<p>Bequests & Wills: Leaving a bequeath is a process of giving a donation through your will. It is simply a distribution from your estate to a charitable organization through your last will and testament. It can be as small or as large a donation as you wish. It is important that you talk to your lawyer about the process. In your kindness please remember St Nicholas the Wonderworker Ukrainian Catholic Church in your bequeath and will. If anyone wishes to make such a bequeath in their will, the following clause may be included or added to a will: "I give, devise, and bequeath to St Nicholas the Wonderworker Ukrainian Catholic Parish - 1112 Caledonia Avenue, Victoria BC, V8T 1G1, the sum of \$ _____ (or _____% of my estate), to be used for the benefit of the parish and it's pastoral activities."</p>			

Vibrant Parish Prayer

O God, Creator of Heaven and Earth! Because of your indescribable love for us, you sent your Only-Begotten Son, Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ - The Way, The Truth, and The Life - and our Salvation. In His name, we turn to You. Strengthen our hearts and minds in Christian love and in unity of purpose as we strive to build a Vibrant Parish. Give us the grace to model our lives according to the Word of God. Instill in us the desire to pray and to celebrate the Holy Mysteries as one Christian Family in our Parish Community. Inspire us to follow Your great command to be a servant to the less fortunate among us! Grant this, O Lord, through the mercies and love for mankind of Your Only-Begotten Son with whom You are blessed, together with Your All-Holy, Good and Life-Giving Spirit, now and forever and ever. Amen!



THE VIBRANT PARISH
A PLACE TO ENCOUNTER THE LIVING CHRIST
Through the word, the Holy Mysteries & Prayer,
Serving One's Neighbor, Leadership
Fostering & Serving Unity and Missionary Spirit
(His Beatitude Sviatoslav)



Молитва Живої Парафії

Господи Ісусе Христе, Пастирю Добрий, як колись Ти пригорнув заблуканих овечок, щоб вони пізнали Твій голос і були Твоїм стадом, так і сьогодні глянь ласкаво з небесних висот на нашу парафію та зішли на неї Твого Святого Духа, щоб вона була місцем пізнання радості Доброї Новини. Скріплюй нас Твоєю присутністю та єднай нас кожночасно в молитві. Даруй нам духа служіння ближньому, щоб у нашій парафії кожний міг зустріти Тебе, милостивого Бога. Благослови наш духовний провід Твоєю мудрістю і дай, щоб ніхто з нас не шкодував ні часу, ні талантів, ні матеріальних дібр для розбудови Твого царства. Єднай нас у мирі та злагоді, щоб ми були Твоєю спільнотою любові. Всели в нас місійного духа, щоб ми стали тим світилом євангельського слова, молитви і добрих діл, що кличе кожного до участі в Божественному житті, щоб славилось, Спасе, Твоє Ім'я з безначальним Твоїм Отцем та пресвятим, благим і животворящим Твоїм Духом нині, і повсякчас, і на віки віків. Амінь.

DIVINE LITURGY PROPERS

The Divine Liturgy - An Anthology for Worship: Liturgy - pg. 270-318; propers - pg. 501
The Liturgy prescribed for today is that of St. John Chrysostom.

First Antiphon

Verse: Shout to the Lord, all the earth,* sing now to His name, give glory to His praise.

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Saviour, save us.

Verse: Say unto God, “How awesome are Your works!* Because of the greatness of Your strength Your enemies will flatter You.”

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Saviour, save us.

Verse: Let all the earth worship You and sing to You,* let it sing to Your name, O Most High!

Refrain: Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Saviour, save us.

Glory: Now: Only-begotten Son...

Third Antiphon

Verse: Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered; let those who hate Him flee from before His face.

Refrain: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs bestowing life.

Verse: As smoke vanishes, let them vanish, as wax melts before the fire.

Refrain: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs bestowing life.

Verse: So let the sinners perish before the face of God, but let the righteous be glad.

Refrain: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs bestowing life.

Entrance: In the churches bless God, the Lord from the fountains of Israel.

Troparion: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and to those in the tombs bestowing life.

Glory: Now: Kontakion, Tone 8: Though You descended into a tomb, O Immortal One,* yet You destroyed the power of Hades;* and You rose as victor, O Christ God,* calling to the myrrhbearing women: Rejoice!* and giving peace to Your Apostles:* You, who grant resurrection to the fallen.

Instead of “Holy God” we sing: All you who have been baptized into Christ, you have put on Christ! Alleluia.

Prokeimenon, Tone 8: This is the day which the Lord has made,* let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Verse: Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever.

Epistle - Act 1:1-8 - A reading from the book of Acts: In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the

kingdom of God. While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for "the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." When they had gathered together they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He answered them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Alleluia, Tone 4: *Verse:* When You rise, You will have compassion on Sion. *Verse:* The Lord looked down from heaven to earth to hear the groans of the prisoners, to set free the sons of those put to death.

Gospel - John 1:1-18 - In the beginning was the Word: the Word was in God's presence, and the Word was God. He was present to God in the Beginning. Through him all things came into being, and apart from him nothing came to be. Whatever came to be in him, found life, life for the light of all. The light shines on in darkness, a darkness that did not overcome it. There was a man named John sent by God, that through him all might believe- but only to testify to the light, for he himself was not the light. The real light which gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and through him the world was made, yet the world did not know who he was. To his own he came, yet his own did not accept him. Any who did accept him he empowered to become children of God. These are they who believe in his name – who were begotten not by blood, nor by carnal desire, nor by man's willing it, but by God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we have seen his glory: the glory of an only Son coming from the Father, filled with enduring love. John testified to him by proclaiming: "This is he ahead of me, for he was before me." Of his fullness we have all had a share – love following upon love. For while the law was given through Moses, this enduring love came through Jesus Christ.

Instead of "It is truly..." we sing: The Angel cried out to the One full of Grace: O chaste Virgin, rejoice! And again I say, Rejoice! Your Son has risen from the tomb on the third day, and raised the dead. Let all people rejoice! Shine, shine, O new Jerusalem! for the glory of the Lord has risen upon you! Exult now and be glad, O Sion! And you, O chaste Mother of God, take delight in the resurrection of your Son.

Communion Hymn: Receive the Body of Christ;* taste the fountain of immortality.*Alleluia, alleluia,* alleluia.

Instead of "Blessed is He" we sing: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and to those in the tombs giving life (Ix).

Instead of "We have seen the true light" we sing: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and to those in the tombs giving life (Ix).

Instead of “Let our mouths be filled” we sing: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and to those in the tombs giving life (3x).

Instead of “Blessed be the name of the Lord” we sing: Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death, and to those in the tombs giving life (3x).



Перший Антифон

Стих: Воскликніте Господеві, вся земле! Співайте ж імені його, віддайте славу хвалі його.

Приспів: Молитвами Богородиці, Спасе, спаси нас.

Стих: Скажіте Богові: Як страшні діла твої, задля великої сили твоєї підлещуються тобі вороги твої.

Приспів: Молитвами Богородиці, Спасе, спаси нас.

Стих: Вся земля нехай поклониться тобі і співає тобі, нехай же співає імені твоєму, Всевишній.

Приспів: Молитвами Богородиці, Спасе, спаси нас.

Слава: І нині: Єдинородний Сину...

Третій Антифон

Стих: Нехай воскресне Бог і розбіжаться вороги його, і нехай тікають від лица його ті, що ненавидять його.

Тропар: Христос воскрес із мертвих, смертю смерть подолав, і тим, що в гробах, життя дарував.

Стих: Як іще зає дим, нехай іщезнуть, як тане віск від лица вогню.

Тропар: Христос воскрес із мертвих, смертю смерть подолав, і тим, що в гробах, життя дарував.

Стих: Так нехай погібнуть грішники від лица Божого, а праведники нехай возвеселяться.

Тропар: Христос воскрес із мертвих, смертю смерть подолав, і тим, що в гробах, життя дарував.

Вхідне: В церквах благословіть Бога, Господа, ви – з джерел ізраїлевих.

Тропар: Христос воскрес із мертвих, смертю смерть подолав, і тим, що в гробах, життя дарував.

Слава: І нині: Кондак, глас 8: Хоч і у гріб зійшов ти, Безсмертний,* та адову зруйнував ти силу,* і воскрес еси як переможець, Христе Боже,* жінкам-мироносицям звістивши: Радуйтеся,* і своїм апостолам мир даруєш,* падшим подаєш воскресіння.

Замість “Трисвятого” співаємо: Ви, що в Христа хрестилися, у Христа зодягнулися. Аلیلія!

Прокімен, глас 8: Це день, що його створив Господь,* возрадуємося і возвеселімся в нім.
Стих: Сповідуйтеся Господеві, бо він благий, бо на віки милість його.

Апостол - Дія. 1:1-8 - Діяння Святих Апостолів читання: Першу книгу я написав, о Теофіле, про все, що Ісус робив та що навчав від початку аж до дня, коли вознісся, давши Святим Духом накази апостолам, яких собі вибрав. Він показував їм себе також у численних доказах живим після своєї муки, з'являючись сорок день їм і розповідаючи про Боже Царство. Тоді ж саме, як споживав хліб-сіль із ними, він наказав їм Єрусалиму не кидати, але чекати обітниць Отця, що її ви від мене чули; бо Йоан христив водою, ви ж будете хрищені по кількох цих днях Святим Духом. Отож, зійшовшись, вони питали його: «Господи, чи цього часу знову відбудуєш Ізраїлеві царство?» Він відповів їм: «Не ваша справа знати час і пору, що їх Отець призначив у своїй владі. Та ви приймете силу Святого Духа, що на вас зійде, і будете моїми свідками в Єрусалимі, у всій Юдеї та Самарії й аж до краю землі.»

Аلیلія, глас 4: *Стих:* Ти, воскресши, помилуєш Сіона. *Стих:* Господь з неба на землю споглянув.

Євангеліє - Івана 1:1-18 - В началі було Слово, і Слово було в Бога, і Слово було Бог. З Богом воно було споконвіку. Ним постало все, і ніщо, що постало, не постало без нього. У ньому було життя, і життя було світло людей. І Світло світить у темряві, і темрява його не поїняла. Був чоловік, посланий Богом, якому ім'я Іван. Прийшов він свідком, щоб свідчити про Світло, щоб усі через нього увірували. Не був він Світло, був лише, щоб свідчити про Світло. Справжнє Світло було те, що просвічує кожну людину. Воно прийшло у цей світ. Було у світі, і світ постав через нього, і світ не пізнав його. Прийшло до своїх, і свої його не прийняли. Котрі ж його прийняли, тим дало змогу дітьми Божими стати – тим, що вірують в ім'я його, які не з крові, ні не з тілесного бажання, ні з похоті чоловічої, але від Бога народилися. І Слово стало тілом, і оселилося між нами, і ми бачили його славу – славу Єдинородного від Отця, повного благодаті та істини. Іван свідчить про нього і проголошує, кажучи: Ось той, про кого я говорив: Той, що йде за мною, існував передо мною, був раніш за мене. З його повноти ми всі прийняли – благодать за благодать. Закон був даний Мойсеєм, благодать же та істина прийшла через Ісуса Христа.

Замість “Достойно” співаємо: Ангел сповіщав Благодатній: Чистая Діво, радуйся. І знову кажу: Радуйся. Твій Син воскрес тридневний із гробу, і мертвих воздвигнув він; люди,

веселіться. Світися, світися, новий Єрусалиме, слава бо Господня на тобі возсіяла. Радій нині і веселися, Сіоне. А ти, Чистая, красуйся, Богородице, востанням рождення твого.

Причасний: Тіло Христове прийміть, джерела безсмертного споживіть. Алілуя (3х).

Замість “Благословен, хто йде в ім’я Господнє” співаємо: Христос воскрес із мертвих, смертю смерть подолав, і тим, що в гробах, життя дарував (1х).

Замість “Ми бачили світло істинне” співаємо: Христос воскрес із мертвих, смертю смерть подолав, і тим, що в гробах, життя дарував (1х).

Замість “Нехай сповняться” співаємо: Христос воскрес із мертвих, смертю смерть подолав, і тим, що в гробах, життя дарував (3х).

Замість “Будь ім’я Господнє” співаємо: Христос воскрес із мертвих, смертю смерть подолав, і тим, що в гробах, життя дарував (3х).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

◆ **NEXT SUNDAY - СПІЛЬНЕ СВЯЧЕНЕ / SPILNE SVYACHENE:** Thomas Sunday, April 8 following 10am Divine Liturgy we will be having our annual Спільне Свячене / Spilne Svyachene (*parish Easter brunch*). We invite all parishioners, and friends of St. Nicholas parish who have helped with food preparation for our Easter Food Fair, to join us for this festive brunch. Please contact Robert Herchak to coordinate.

◆ **KNEELING DURING EASTER SEASON** – a reminder that traditionally from Easter Sunday until Pentecost we do not kneel during the Divine Liturgy. As a sign of our redemption and final resurrection, we offer our prayers to God while standing.

◆ **PRAYER REQUEST:** Please keep in your prayers GORD HRYHORYSHEN, CORNELL BABIE and other members of our parish, our family and friends who are ailing, in hospitals, nursing homes and those who are not able to join actively in their community.

◆ **AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED)** - We are seeking donations, or sponsors, who would be willing to help St. Nicholas Parish purchase an **Automated external defibrillator (AED)**. Did you know that sudden cardiac arrest is a major public health problem and effects an estimated 500 000 people every year? Sudden cardiac arrest is a condition in which the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating. Using an automated external defibrillator or AED on a person who is having sudden cardiac arrest may save the person's life. AEDs are designed to be simple to use in any location. AED is a small, lightweight, and portable electronic device that delivers an electric shock through the chest wall of a person whose heart has stopped beating. We would like to have our own AED on site so that we can

be prepared if we someone should need to be treated for sudden cardiac arrest. Our goal is to raise \$1500.00 to purchase 1 AED for the parish. Please share and contribute what you can. Help us achieve our goal for providing this important life saving tool for our parishioners and guests.

- ◆ **ST. NICHOLAS BOOK STORE:** The Divine Liturgy An Anthology of Worship - **\$25**; “Christ Our Pascha” Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church/“Христос Наша Пасха” Катехизм Української Католицької Церкви - **\$25**; “Sing to Our God” hymn book - **\$15**; Молитовник “Прийдіте Поклонімся” - **\$10**.
 - ◆ **TRAVELING ICON:** Anyone interested in gracing their home with Christ The Teacher Icon can call Darlene DeMerchant at 250.727.3837.
 - ◆ **PARISH CALENDAR OF BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES:** If you would like to be included in our Parish Calendar of Birthday and Anniversary celebrations, please put date in our calendar located at the church vestibule. Each week, we will list the names in our parish bulletin so we can celebrate these happy occasions together!
 - ◆ **JOIN OUR CHOIR:** Do you enjoy singing? Please consider joining our St Nicholas Parish Choir and remember that we ALWAYS looking for new members! Contact Motria Koropecky for details at 250.658.3051.
 - ◆ **CATECHISM ANNOUNCEMENT:** *"And they were bringing to Him also the infants, in order that He may be touching them; but after the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them to Himself and said, Let alone the little children to come to Me, and cease hindering them; for of such is the kingdom of God."* We are happy to welcome all children to our St. Nicholas The Wonderworker catechism program. Weekly classes are scheduled Sunday morning during Divine Liturgy. We want your children to learn more about their Catholic faith, sacred scripture, feast days, and religious practices and customs of the Ukrainian Catholic church. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Marian Chalifoux at 250.507.1005.
 - ◆ **THRIFTY’S PRE-PAID FOOD CARDS** - We all have to buy groceries. Why not have 6% of it returned back to the church at no extra charge! Cards are available in \$100, \$200, and \$500 denominations. Talk to Alec after today’s liturgy to pre- order your cards. We need to sell A LOT of them! We encourage you to consider purchasing them for yourselves as gifts too.
 - ◆ **BE A STEWARD:** Have you ever wondered what more can you do to help our parish? Here are some suggestions: **Steward of property security**; **Steward of grounds cleaning**; **Steward of cleaning church**; **Steward of church linen**; **Steward of outreach**; **Steward of caring**; **Steward of prayer**; **Steward of service**. Quite often, our homebound or senior members, once active in their younger years, want to find purpose in their senior years. It’s not only about doing but
-
-

about “BEING” present to others. Contact Fr. Yuriy **OR** Darlene DeMerchant for more information. You will be amazed how “BEING” can make a difference.

◆**PARISH LIBRARY:** please visit our parish library and browse through the books on spirituality, church history, iconography, history of the Ukrainians in Canada, children's books and more... The library is located in the church vestibule. Please use a library book sign out form when borrowing a book.

◆**SUNDAY COFFEE VOLUNTEERS** act as hosts and serve light refreshments following the Sunday morning Divine Liturgy, providing an opportunity for the faithful to socialize with friends and visitors following their shared worship experience. We thank all of our parishioners who kind volunteer to serve refreshments. Whether you are new to the Parish, or are a long-time members, please join us for coffee.

◆**WE SHARE THE AIR:** Please keep it healthy and fragrant free. Someone in this area is scent-sitive. The chemicals used in scented products can make some people sick, especially those with fragrance sensitivities, asthma, allergies and other respiratory ailments. PLEASE DO NOT *wear perfume, cologne, lotion, aftershave and other fragrances; *USE unscented personal care products. Be Sensitive to Others. Thank you for your understanding. *St. Nicholas parish.*

◆**MARCH 25, SUNDAY DONATIONS:** Coffee: \$35.40; Vigil lights: \$20.75; Loose collection: \$69.00; Envelope collection: \$507.00; Needs of the Church in Ukraine: \$450.00; AED: \$500.00; Pre-authorized donations Mar 19 to Mar 25: \$120.00; Easter food fair net total: \$9,437.14

EASTER PASTORAL LETTER OF HIS BEATITUDE SVIATOSLAV



**Most Reverend Archbishops and Bishops,
Very Reverend and Reverend Fathers,
Venerable Brothers and Sisters in Monastic
and Religious Life,
Dearly Beloved Laity in Christ of the
Ukrainian Catholic Church**

CHRIST IS RISEN!

*David, ancestor of the Lord, danced and made music before the Ark, which was only a symbol.
As God's holy people let us witness the symbol fulfilled,
And rejoice in spirit, for Christ, being almighty, is risen.*
From Ode 4, Paschal Canon

Beloved in Christ!

Today in all of Ukraine and in our settlements abroad Christians are filled with an inexpressible joy. From the moment we first hear our traditional Easter greeting "Christ is risen!" in each one of us, from the youngest to the oldest, our soul undergoes a profound change. We feel how all life's problems and challenges disappear, how all cares and sorrows are washed away "as wax melts before the fire." This joy is the fruit of the Holy Spirit and a true sign, that the risen Lord is present in our hearts.

David, ancestor of the Lord, danced and made music before the Ark, which was only a symbol.

In the sixth chapter of the second book of Samuel, we read how King David at the beginning of his reign arranged for the transfer of the Ark of the Covenant to his capital, Jerusalem. In this relic were contained the tablets of Divine Law, received by Moses: they were the most precious possession of Israel. The Ark was a guaranty of invincibility for the people of the Old Testament, of strength for the king. For this reason, David greets it with great joy, with dance. This presence of God in the midst of His people and their sense of duty to live according to the Lord's commandments will later allow the Psalmist to say: "Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to His holy name!" (Ps. 97:11-12).

Our Paschal Matins see in the behavior of the king an image of our paschal joy today. And while the Ark-symbol was lost in the time of the Babylonian onslaught in the VI century B.C., the risen Lord is eternally present in our midst: "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Mt 28:20). This is no symbol or prediction of some unsure or unreachable future. Christ Himself, who rose from the dead, comes to us, His disciples, as a source of our strength and victory over evil. In the Resurrection, in the news of His victory over death is found the summit of our joy and the fulfillment of all prophecies and human aspirations.

To rejoice in God is to allow the victory of the risen Lord to penetrate my heart, to be fulfilled in my personal life. This is not merely some temporary feeling, but real participation and communion in Christ's Resurrection. Saint Paul wrote: "For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His" (Rom 6:5). To celebrate Pascha is to rise together with Christ, to triumph in Him and with Him. Thus, our joy in Him and with Him is no passing emotion, but the permanent state of one who lives in the faith of the risen Lord.

As God's holy people let us witness the symbol fulfilled...

In today's world people do not know how to rejoice—they find happiness in possessions, but largely cry over that which they would like to have but do not possess. Today there is an entire amusement industry that “sells joy,” suggests that you “buy happiness” in the form of empty and short-term distractions, compulsions, or narcotics, promises quick satisfaction without responsibility, seeks to entice through an escape into virtual realities or the acquisition of temporal riches.

A person seeks happiness but cannot find it in those things. For joy is not possible without God. Happiness without God is an illusion which quickly dissipates. It is a dependency that simultaneously enslaves and saps one of strength.

How often in today's society we find irresponsible politicians, newfound messiahs, in the role of “purveyors of joy.” With empty slogans they appeal to the lowest of human desires. At the price of the blood and tears of innocent victims, or even entire nations, they promise happiness “for the chosen” who belong to their “world” which they artificially designed, and count on the fact that in the face of their lawlessness, “in all tongues”—here we paraphrase our great Kobzar-Shevchenko, all will be silent. But such joy is built on the sand of idols, falsehood, and violence, and thus, sooner or later, it will collapse under its own weight.

We, on the other hand, are called to build our happiness and our joy as a community of children of God. It isn't easy to live in the joy of the Lord, especially in today's circumstances. We often ask ourselves: How can we rejoice today? Why are we suffering? Why is this happening to us? Is there any sense to our struggles, the blood and suffering, the deaths and devastation? Without the mystery of Christ's Pascha, these questions remain unanswered. For the risen Christ Himself opens up for us the meaning of human suffering—transforming it in our paschal journey into joy in the Lord. St. Maximus the Confessor wrote: “If God suffers in the flesh when He is made man, should we not rejoice when we suffer, for we have God to share our sufferings? This shared suffering confers the kingdom on us. For he spoke truly who said, 'If we suffer with Him, then we shall also be glorified with Him' (Rom. 8:17).” The suffering and risen Lord is present in each person who undergoes suffering till the end of the world—in each human hurt, in each spilt tear and drop of blood—and He draws us into His Resurrection, grant us joy therein. The one who suffers in the name of love of God and neighbor, that person knows how to be glad in God, how to rejoice with the authentic and eternal joy of the Risen One.

And rejoice in spirit, for Christ, being almighty, is risen.

Therefore, let us view our personal, family, community, and national sufferings in light of our paschal journey led by the risen Christ, in light of our transformation into joy, our movement towards hope on this lightsome day, made by the Almighty. The Lord's Pascha opens up for our people the truth that through our struggle we enter into His joy. Our love for the Fatherland, which calls us to self-sacrifice in the name of its freedom and independence is, indeed, a path to Resurrection. Our invincible spirit bears witness before the world that one need not be fearful before deadly falsehood and violence, for “Christ is risen, being almighty!”

Today the Lord Himself gladdens us, changing our sorrow into joy, as it was for the myrrh-bearing women. They went to the Lord's tomb crying and returned filled with authentic joy in God. They went in the darkness of hopelessness and received the light of the Risen One and proclaimed to the Apostles and the entire world that Christ was truly risen. May we be transformed by this "miracle above all miracles," and through us—our society and land, wherever we may live.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ! May the victory of Jesus Christ over death and evil dispel our doubts and renew hope and joy in our hearts. To all of you, in Ukraine and throughout the world, I send you my heartfelt greeting together with sincere prayers. To all the soldiers and their families, to all refugees, all who lament on the occupied territories and in the Crimea, all captives and prisoners for the sake of their conscience and love for Ukraine, to all the sick and suffering, to those who labor abroad, I wish all of you divine joy above all! I send you my sincere wishes for a blessed Easter feast, a tasty sharing of our traditional blessed egg, and a Paschal joy that is full of light.

The grace of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Christ is risen! – Truly, He is risen!

+ SVIATOSLAV

Given in Kyiv at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ, on March 25, 2018

READING THE CATECHISM "**CHRIST - OUR PASCHA**"



“He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, died, and was buried. On the third day he rose again in fulfilment of the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. (Symbol of Faith)

And when he had descended through the Cross into Hades, so that he might fill all things with himself, he loosed the pangs of death. And rising on the third day and making a way for all flesh to the resurrection of the dead ... He became the first fruit of those that sleep, the first-born of the dead, so that he might have pre-eminence in all things. And he ascended into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of your majesty on high. (Anaphora of the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great)

3. The Pascha (Passover) of Christ

#215 The word Pascha, derived from the Hebrew, Pesach, means to pass by, to pass through. The Pascha of Jesus Christ is his passing through suffering and death to his glorification in the Resurrection and Ascension. In the deepest sense, Christ himself is the Pascha (Passover) (see 1 Cor 5:6-8), for the passage from death to life takes place in him: “Pascha, Pascha of the Lord, for from death to life, and from earth to heaven Christ God has led us.” Without him, all the efforts of the human race to free itself from slavery to sin and death would be in vain.

#216 In the Old Testament, the celebration of Passover commemorated the liberation of God’s People from the slavery of Egypt. When Pharaoh refused to let the people go, an angel of death took the lives of the Egyptian first-born. He passed by the Israelite homes, the door-posts of which by the directions of Moses had been anointed with the blood of a sacrificed lamb, so that no first-born Hebrew child would die (see Ex12:12-13). In the celebration of Passover, the Jews also commemorated the passing through the Red Sea, when the Lord God saved the people of Israel from Pharaoh’s army (see Ex 14).

#217 The Old Testament Passover was a prefiguration of Christ’s Passover (Pascha). It prepared the People of God for final liberation and salvation in the kingdom of God: Christ - the Lamb of God - by his Blood (see 1 Pt 1:19) leads the human race in an exodus from slavery to sin and the dominion of death, bringing us to resurrection and eternal life.

#218 Christ, our Pascha, takes upon himself the sin of the world, suffering, and death: “What suffering did he accept for our sake? This was the suffering of love. Love is long-suffering.” The Passover of Christ is the manifestation of God’s love: “Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end” (Jn 13:1). The Lord willingly accepts his death: “I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again” (Jn 10:17-18). Christ offers himself in sacrifice for us, “as the Priest and simultaneously as the Lamb of God, who takes the sin of the world.” Christ conquered death by his Resurrection, for God will not suffer his “holy one to see corruption” (Ps 15[16]:10). On account of the Resurrection, the death of Christ has become our passage to new life.

#219 “The last enemy—death” (see 1 Cor 15:26), against which the human race was powerless, is now destroyed by the Pascha of Christ. “We do indeed die, but we do not continue in it; which is not to die at all. For the tyranny of death, and death indeed, is when he who dies is never more allowed to return to life. But when after dying is living, and that a better life, this is not death, but sleep.” The Resurrection of Christ is a unique and unrepeatable historical event and the foundation of Christian faith: “If Christ has not been raised ... your faith has been in vain” (1 Cor 15:14). Faith in the Risen Christ is the beginning of our Pascha.

#220 Every year Christians prepare for the celebration of holy Pascha during the time of the Great Fast (Lent). The Fast lasts forty days as an image of the forty-year journey of the People of God into the Promised Land and the forty-day fast of Christ in the wilderness. By training the Christian to abstain from sin, the Fast leads to interior freedom and true joy. Throughout the Fast, the Church liturgically accompanies Christians with hymns from the Lenten Triodion that point to the deeper sense and purpose of the Fast - reconciliation with God and neighbour, service to God and others.

EASTER 2018 PASTORAL LETTER OF BISHOP KEN



Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ!

The famous Church Father, St. John Chrysostom (the “Golden-mouthed”), a great speaker and Archbishop of Constantinople (397-405), delivered an Easter homily which in the Byzantine Churches we customarily read on Easter morning.

This homily, an application of the Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Mt. 20:1-16), is filled with joy and hope. St. John announces “Let every pious and God-loving soul enjoy this splendid and luminous feast...” He invites all to celebrate Easter, those who kept the Lenten Fast from the very beginning, as well as those who for whatever reason or excuse hardly participated in the Fast at all: “Rejoice today, both you who have fasted and you who have disregarded the fast. The table is full-laden; feast you all sumptuously. The calf is fatted; let no one go hungry away.” He reminds us, Dear Friends, that God’s love for us is boundless, and that our Lord’s sacrifice on the Holy Cross is for everyone, not just a privileged few.

The great Saint continues and talks about the significance of the feast: “Let no one fear death, for the Saviour’s death has set us free. He that was held prisoner of it has annihilated it.” It is, indeed, for this reason that in the Byzantine Church we sing: “Christ is risen from the dead, trampling death by death.” Having encountered Christ, Hell is described as abolished, mocked, slain, overthrown, bound in chains: “It took a body, and met God face to face. It took earth, and encountered Heaven. It took that which was seen, and fell upon the unseen.”

1 April, 2018

And finally, quoting St. Paul, “O death, where is your victory. O death, where is your sting” (1 Cor 15:55), in a final crescendo, over and over, he repeats the customary Easter greeting “Christ is risen!”, explaining ever deeper the fullness of our salvation: “you [death] are overthrown... the demons are fallen... the angels rejoice... life reigns... and not one dead remains in the grave.”

Few have been able to capture the joy of Easter better than St. John Chrysostom. As we celebrate this Feast of all feasts, may our Risen Lord bless you with a renewed FAITH in the Resurrection, and above all with the great JOY that comes from LIFE in Him!

With prayerful best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely yours in the Risen Christ!
Ken (Nowakowski)
Bishop of New Westminster
