PASCHAL EPISTLE

of the Archbishop of Chicago and Mid-America Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia

CHRIST IS RISEN!

The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:17)

The words of the Gospel of St. John the Theologian resound in our all our churches on this bright Paschal night. Often these words are read in many languages by the clergy. We hear these words. We associate them joyously with the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. But we must ask ourselves: do we live as those enlightened by grace and truth?

As Christians we are called to be a humble example to all around us of striving for the Heavenly Kingdom – of living in the world but not being consumed by the world.

The present wars in Ukraine and Gaza present direct challenges to us in this regard. The world seeks to drag us down to itself, insisting that we use the darkness of partisan politics as our filter with which we understand the world. Metropolitan Antony (Khraphovitksy), the first First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia providentially warned us of this temptation in his collected writings. In English this is found in the book "Confession":

"With the development of parliamentary government and political parties and the corresponding fall of truthfulness, people now form their opinions about one another - both good and critical ones - not in accordance with their real impressions, but depending entirely on their political party's attitude to the other person's political party. Such injustice, such dishonesty of thought, must be recognized as a shameful phenomenon, and every Christian must keep himself from forming, at every temptation, a biased opinion of his neighbor based on envy or malice and not on the truth."

As Orthodox Christians our party is first and foremost the Risen Christ. We are people of the Resurrection and must strive to take the resurrectional reality into our hearts so that it shines forth brightly from us not only on this Paschal night, but always.

Our Church Abroad is an autonomous part of the greater Russian Church. We are independently chartered. Our primary concern is with the flock to which we minister abroad. We do not and cannot know every detail of the ongoing wars. Social and mainstream media are replete with propaganda. These wars effect us tangentially – they effect those in Russia, Ukraine, and the Holy Land directly. We can speak generally about the Church's approach to war and peace, but judgment of the Church's handling of the wars will take place at a future Council of Bishops of the greater Russian Orthodox Church.

We must redouble our prayerful efforts towards peace. That peace which we ask at every Divine Liturgy. Let us capture this prayer when we are in the Lord's temple and bring it with us into our lives outside the temple.

Dear fathers, brothers, and sisters in Christ, let us rise! Let us sing of the Risen Christ with zeal and love in our hearts! And let our rising be that "light of the world" – an example to all of lives dedicated to Christ and His Kingdom for our own salvation and the salvation of all!

INDEED HE IS RISEN!

PASCHA 2024 Chicago + Archbishop Peter

ПАСХАЛЬНОЕ ПОСЛАНІЕ

Архіепископа Чикагскаго и Среднеамериканского Русская Православная Церковь Заграницей

ХРИСТОСЪ ВОСКРЕСЕ!

Законъ Моисеомъ данъ бысть, благодать же и истина Іисусъ Христомъ бысть. (Ин. 1:17)

Слова Евангелія отъ Іоанна Богослова звучатъ во всѣхъ нашихъ храмахъ въ эту свѣтлую пасхальную ночь. Часто сіи слова читаются священнослужителями на многихъ языкахъ. Мы слышимъ сіи слова. Мы радостно ассоціируемъ ихъ съ Воскресеніемъ Господа нашего Іисуса Христа. Но мы должны спросить себя: живемъ ли мы какъ люди, просвѣщенные благодатью и истиной?

Какъ христіане мы призваны быть смиреннымъ примѣромъ для всѣхъ окружающихъ въ стремленіи къ Небесному Царству - жить въ мірѣ, но не быть поглощенными міромъ.

Нынѣшніе войны на Украинѣ и въ Газѣ бросаютъ намъ прямой вызовъ въ этомъ отношеніи. Міръ стремится затянуть насъ въ себя, настаивая на томъ, чтобы мы использовали тьму предвзятой политики въ качествѣ фильтра, съ помощью котораго мы понимаемъ міръ. Митрополитъ Антоній (Храповицкій), первый Первоіерархъ Русской Православной Церкви Заграницей, провидчески предупреждалъ насъ объ этомъ искушеніи въ своемъ собраніи сочиненій:

"Съ развитіемъ у насъ парламентаризма и партій и съ упадкомъ правдивости въ людяхъ, почти всѣ отзывы другъ о другѣ, и добрые и порицательные, люди даютъ не по дѣйствительнымъ впечатлѣніямъ, а по тому, какъ относится ихъ партія къ той, куда принадлежитъ ближній. Такая неправда, такая нечестность мысли должна быть признана явленіемъ постыднымъ, и всякій христіанинъ долженъ себя останавливать на любомъ искушеніи дать пристрастный отзывъ о ближнемъ по зависти или по злобѣ, а не по истинной правдѣ."

Какъ православные христіане, наша партія - это прежде всего Воскресшій Христосъ. Мы - люди Воскресенія и должны стремиться принять воскресшую реальность въ свое сердце, чтобы она ярко сіяла изъ насъ не только въ эту Пасхальную ночь, но и всегда.

Наша Зарубежная Церковь является автономной частью большой Русской Церкви. Мы имъемъ независимый уставъ. Наша главная забота - о паствъ, которой мы служимъ за рубежомъ. Мы не знаемъ и не можемъ знать всъхъ подробностей ведущихся войнъ. Соціальныя и основныя средства массовой информаціи изобилуютъ пропагандой. Насъ этъ войны касаются по касательной, а вотъ тъхъ, кто живетъ въ Россіи, Украинъ и на Святой Землъ, онъ касаются напрямую. Мы можемъ говорить въ цъломъ о подходъ Церкви къ войнъ и миру, но судить о томъ, какъ Церковь относится къ войнамъ, будетъ будущій Архіерейскій соборъ всей Русской Православной Церкви.

Мы должны удвоить наши молитвенныя усилія по достиженію мира. Того мира, о которомъ мы просимъ на каждой Божественной литургіи. Давайте сбережемъ эту молитву, пока мы находимся въ храмѣ Божьемъ, и перенесемъ ее въ нашу жизнь внѣ храма.

Дорогіе отцы, братья и сестры о Христѣ, встанемъ! Воспоемъ Воскресшаго Христа съ рвеніемъ и любовью въ нашихъ сердцахъ! И пусть нашъ восходъ будетъ тѣмъ самымъ "свѣтомъ міра" - примѣромъ для всѣхъ жизни, посвященной Христу и Его Царству ради нашего собственнаго спасенія и спасенія всѣхъ!

ВОИСТИНУ ВОСКРЕСЕ!

ПАСХА 2024 Чикаго + Архіепископъ Петръ