

Love Conquers All

A story is told of a man who, while he lived upon the earth, was unconcerned about the state of his soul, or spiritual growth, or eternity. When he died he found himself not enjoying eternal happiness but, rather, suffering eternal torment.

His friends and relatives went down to the gates of hell and tried to intercede for him, giving him a positive endorsement and a good character reference, but the gates of hell would not open to release him. Likewise, his parish priest tried to plead for him saying that he really wasn't all that bad. Still, the gates of hell remained closed. Finally, came his mother. She did not plead for him, she did not try to bargain for him, she did not make excuses for him. She simply said, "Let me in." The gates

of hell opened immediately because they could not withstand the force of love.

Our Father among the Saints, John Chrysostom writes: "Let no one fear death, for our Savior's death has set us free. He has destroyed death by enduring it. He has despoiled death by going down to its kingdom. O Death where is your sting, O Hades where is your victory? Christ is risen and you are abolished! Christ is risen and life is freed! Christ is risen and the tomb is emptied of the dead, for Christ has become the Leader and Reviver of those who had fallen asleep. To Him be glory and honor forever!" (*Paschal Sermon*)

Christ is Risen! Indeed He Risen!
Christos Voskrese! Voistinu Voskrese!

PASCHA - THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD



Icon of the Resurrection



Українська Греко-Католицька Церква Парафія Святих Йоакима і Анни
SAINTS JOACHIM AND ANNA UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

A Mission Parish of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Philadelphia. All are welcome!

1396 Linden St, Front Royal, VA 22630 • www.ssjoachimandanna.org • Facebook live-streams: fb.me/ssjoachimandanna
 ssjoachimandannauc@gmail.com • (540) 551-3591 • In case of emergency: (202) 262-5040

Fr Robert Hitchens, Administrator Fr Mykola Dziurakh, Parochial Vicar
 Subdeacon Kyle Hayes Subdeacon David Wallace

Christ is risen! Truly He is risen! Христос воскрес! Воістину воскрес!

Divine Liturgy in English, Sundays 10:30am
Holy Mystery of Repentance (Confession): Sundays, 9:45am

**APRIL 5, 2026 – PASCHA, THE GLORIOUS AND HOLY SUNDAY OF THE
 RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD, GOD, AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST**

GIVING REPORT – The in-pew collection for Wed, March 25 was \$129.25 and for Sunday, March 29 was \$1,272.35. E-giving through tithe.ly for the month of March was \$7,821.98. Thank you for your support!

PLEASE PRAY FOR: Nancy & Jon Anderson, Julie, Lisa Behnke, Alison Bernhoft, Yevhenia Borys, Robert Matthew, Carrie Chuff, Arthur Dhanagom, Elizabeth Deegan, Clara Anne Duda, Fr Michael Duesterhaus, Robert Dulaine, Pat Fagan, Danylo (Neyko) Fedoryka, Fr Mark Fesniak, Emma Flournoy, Katie Flynn, Lilian Garland, Jerry Gawron, CR Gaush, Samuel Gaush, Josie Hacker, Brigid and Marlena Hess, Ellen Hitchens, Janet Hitchens, Fr Robert Hitchens, Oksana Horszynska, Ihor Hulawyj, Walter Janaro, Sarah Kelt, Dixie Lane, Catherine Luckey, Destiny Makins, Michael Marshner & Family, Bridget McDonald, Laura McMahon, Vince McLaughlin, Thomas Pavick, Phillip Rexrode, Ivanna Richardson & Family, Chris Saboe, Betsy Sayre, Truman L Sayre, Jr, CJ & Theresa Sidrow, Amy Smith, Karena Tapsak, Fr George Worschak, and Éamonn Yockey.
Teresa Fedoryka is our prayer coordinator; please email bulletin prayer requests to ssjoachimandannauc@gmail.com

Upcoming Events:

<p>Monday, April 6 <i>Monday of Bright Week</i></p>	<p>6:00pm – Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom</p>
<p>Sunday, April 12 <i>Thomas Sunday</i></p>	<p>10:30am – Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom. Parish Paschal Sviachene and Children's Egg Hunt. Sign up: https://tinyurl.com/45kjysuj</p>



The Paschal Catechetical Sermon of St. John Chrysostom: If any man be devout and love God, let him enjoy this fair and radiant triumphal feast. If any man be a wise servant, let him rejoicing enter into the joy of his Lord. If any have labored long in fasting, let him now receive his recompense. If any have wrought from the first hour, let him today receive his just reward. If any have come at the third hour, let him with thankfulness keep the feast. If any have arrived at the sixth hour, let him have no misgivings; because he shall in nowise be deprived thereof. If any have delayed until the ninth hour, let him draw near, fearing nothing. If any have tarried even until the eleventh hour, let him, also, be not alarmed at his tardiness; for the Lord, who is jealous of his honor, will accept the last even as the first; He gives rest unto him who comes at the eleventh hour, even as unto him who has wrought from the first hour. And He shows mercy upon the last, and cares for the first; and to the one He gives, and upon the other He bestows gifts. And He both accepts the deeds, and welcomes the intention, and honors the acts and praises the offering. Wherefore, enter you all into the joy of your Lord; and receive your reward, both the first, and likewise the second. You rich and poor together, hold high festival. You sober and you heedless, honor the day. Rejoice today, both you who have fasted and you who have disregarded the fast. The table is full-laden; feast ye all sumptuously. The calf is fatted; let no one go hungry away. Enjoy ye all the feast of faith: Receive ye all the riches of loving-kindness. let no one bewail his poverty, for the universal kingdom has been revealed. Let no one weep for his iniquities, for pardon has shown forth from the grave. Let no one fear death, for the Savior's death has set us free. He that was held prisoner of it has annihilated it. By descending into Hell, He made Hell captive. He embittered it when it tasted of His flesh. And Isaiah, foretelling this, did cry: Hell, said he, was embittered, when it encountered Thee in the lower regions. It was embittered, for it was abolished. It was embittered, for it was mocked. It was embittered, for it was slain. It was embittered, for it was overthrown. It was embittered, for it was fettered 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. O Death, where is your sting? O Hell, where is your victory? Christ is risen, and you are overthrown. Christ is risen, and the demons are fallen. Christ is risen, and the angels rejoice. Christ is risen, and life reigns. Christ is risen, and not one dead remains in the grave. For Christ, being risen from the dead, is become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. To Him be glory and dominion unto ages of ages. Amen.

Fr. Robert and Fr. Mykola wish everyone a Blessed and Holy Pascha!
Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!
Христос воскрес! Воістину воскрес!



UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH
SVIATOSLAV SHEVCHUK
MAJOR ARCHBISHOP OF KYIV-HALYCH

Вих. ВА 26/121 ENG

Page 1 of 4

**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 Greek-Catholic Church**

*The godly-wise women hastened after you with myrrh
And sought You, as dead, with tears
But, rejoicing, they worshiped you as the living God,
and proclaimed to Your disciples, O Christ, the mystical Pascha!*
Ode 7, Paschal Canon

Christ is risen!

Beloved in Christ!

Today, when the sun rises with dawn and reveals its paschal light, the Church invites us to set out on a journey together with the myrrh-bearing women. They are heading to the tomb – to the place where they witnessed the burial of Jesus Christ: “It was the day of Preparation, and the Sabbath was beginning. The women who had come with him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid” (Luke 23:54-55).

In the Ode of Paschal Matins, the Church emphasizes a particular haste. Christ was hastily taken down from the cross, hastily buried without the proper honors that even an ordinary person is due: “Then they returned [home] and prepared spices and ointments. On the Sabbath they rested according to the commandment” (Luke 23:56).

And now the women hasten once again: “But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus” (Luke 24:1-3). The words of the canon of Matins confirm that they were hastening not so much to the tomb as to Christ.

The godly-wise women hastened after you with myrrh...

The women disciples followed their Teacher from the very beginning of His preaching in Galilee. Christ Himself leads them to where they never expected to arrive. They are motivated by love and mercy for the Scorned and Deceased One.

Those who followed Christ, listened attentively to His teaching, witnessed various signs – miracles and healings, now become godly-wise myrrh-bearers. This is also our path of Christian discipleship, which we have traveled in a particular way during Great Lent.

Although Christ warned His disciples about what was to happen – betrayal, arrest, unjust conviction, cruel mockery and death on the cross – the myrrh-bearing women were not prepared either for the horror of the passion, or for an encounter with the risen Lord. They come to the tomb with indescribable pain in their heart and their soul crying out.

...and sought You, as dead, with tears.

Like the myrrh-bearing women, our people have come to this paschal moment with sorrow in their hearts. We experience ever deeper pain and ever greater fatigue from this sacrilegious war.

Many women of Ukraine, setting out on their paschal journey to Christ, rush to the graves of our Heroes and innocent victims of enemy attacks. But this paschal longing for Christ especially cries out to the Lord through the mouths of the families of those missing-in-action and those who have not been able to bury their dead. One mother shared her grief with me: “My daughter has remained forever under the ruins of Azovstal in Mariupol. When will I be able to bury her?!”

With bitter sadness we search for the bodies of our dead. But we believe in the risen Savior! We believe that Christ, who today triumphantly emerges from the tomb, grants life and resurrection to all our departed. This truth is confirmed by the myrrh-bearing women, whom He leads to an encounter not with one who is dead, but with the living God. They become the first witnesses of the risen Lord Jesus. Only after hearing from the angel that He is risen, and having worshiped, rejoicing in the living God, will they be able to proclaim the mystical Pascha to Christ’s disciples (cf. Mt 28:5-8).

... But, rejoicing, they worshiped you as the living God...

The paschal hate of the myrrh-bearers is now prompted not by the desire to complete the funeral ritual, but by the joy of having experienced an encounter with the living God! They bring news of the Resurrection of Christ, because they themselves had accompanied Christ from His crucifixion, death and burial – to His resurrection.

The true spiritual joy of Pascha does not flow from the fulfillment of an annual ritual. It is born from the personal experience that Christ is alive. He remains present in His Resurrection in the midst of His Church. Today, the Church hurries to convey to each of us the joy of meeting the Risen One, inviting us, together with all of God’s people, to worship in joy the living God, and to proclaim the mystical Pascha to all people. For Christ is risen!

We encounter the living God – our risen Savior – in the Holy Mysteries--Sacraments of Christ’s Church. Since the times of early Christianity, it was on the Easter vigil that the Church in the Sacrament of Baptism gave birth to new Christians.

We prepared for this encounter with the living God with a forty-day fast, and today we approach Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Savior, bringing to Him, like

fragrant myrrh, our Christian life and the daily witnessing of our faith, renewed by repentance, fasting, and prayer.

To be a Christian in our time means to believe in the resurrection, to share the joy of a personal encounter with Christ, to proclaim to everyone the mysterious Pascha of Christ. That is what it means to proclaim today to everyone we meet our Easter greeting: "Christ is risen!" – and to answer aloud and with conviction: "Truly, He is risen!"

And proclaimed to Your disciples, O Christ, the mystical Pascha!

Pascha is the moment of transformation! We hear how women, filled with pain, sought the Deceased One, but instead found the joy of the Risen One. Today, indeed, in this mystical encounter with the risen Lord in the community of the Church, through the power and action of the Holy Spirit, tears are transformed into joy.

It is important to note that Christ does not eliminate the weeping of the women, does not take away their tears, but transforms them. He transforms their sadness into a place of encounter, which becomes the source of a joy that no one can take away from us.

Christ announced this to the apostles at the Last Supper, saying: "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy... So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you" (John 16:20-22). This is the mystery of Christ's Pascha: this joy of the heart does not fade but is renewed from generation to generation for those who receive it and share it.

We celebrate Pascha, and therefore, we believe in the victory of life over death. We believe that our sadness will also turn into joy because "Christ is truly risen!" Even though deadly missiles and drones fly in "from the east" every day, we already see that the paschal sun shines above them with heavenly radiance, which carries within itself the pledge of victory and the basis of our hope for the complete liberation and revival of our people..

This light will become a source of strength and endurance for us: in the task of worthily honoring of our fallen Heroes; in the return of our captives to their homes; in the release of illegally detained, forcibly deported and kidnapped Ukrainian children; in finding the missing-in-action; and in healing our physical and spiritual wounds and traumas because "Christ is truly risen!"

With faith in the risen Christ and the power of His holy Resurrection, we will rebuild everything that has been destroyed, return to our native lands and unite the sons and daughters of Ukraine scattered throughout the world because "Christ is truly risen!"

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! Let me greet each of you on this bright day that the Lord made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it! Today, the victory of the living God is our victory because despite the evil days caused by the forces of darkness, God's love, life and joy remain invincible. We ourselves are witnesses to this.

First of all, I would like to address our soldiers and all those who defend Ukraine, as well as their loved ones. On behalf of our Church, I express my deep gratitude to you for showing steadfastness and indomitability of spirit. I wish you Easter's joy, victory and peace.

To the families of the dead and missing-in-action, I want to wipe away your tears and strengthen you with paschal faith and hope that the risen Lord embraces your loved ones with His love and rewards with eternal life every sacrifice made out of love for one's people and neighbor.

I greet all who are presently healing their wounds – physical or spiritual. I entrust you into the loving hands of the heavenly Healer – the risen Christ, who bears wounds on his body as a sign of boundless love, in which you also participate, dear brothers and sisters. I greet our doctors, nurses, rehabilitation specialists and chaplains. I accompany their efforts with daily prayer.

I share the paschal joy with all workers and volunteers of civil infrastructure: energy supply, transport, education, medicine. I greet our authorities and all who work tirelessly to preserve human life and human dignity, the country's independence and integrity.

I especially greet all our families – domestic Churches, so that in the family circle you may experience paschal joy and peace together: parents with children, youth and the elderly. May the risen Lord be at the center of your family life, so that, having worshiped the living God with joy, you may proclaim to others His faithful and all-conquering love.

I convey paschal greetings and thank those who in Ukraine and abroad continue to support their needy and suffering sisters and brothers materially and morally. I greet and bless our pastors, military, hospital and academic chaplains, as well as our monastic communities, especially in the frontline and combat zones.

I embrace you all – those who celebrate at home and those who are far from their homes. I wish you a joyful and blessed Easter feast, a sincere sharing of the Easter basket, of a tasty blessed egg and lushly colored eggs. May our traditional hayivka dances fill your hearts with joy and a sense of God's peace.

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!



Given in Kyiv,

at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ,
on the Feast of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Theotokos
and on the day of the Blessed priest-martyr Omelyan Kovch,
March 25, 2026 A.D.



METROPOLITAN ARCHEPARCHY OF PHILADELPHIA
Ukrainian Catholic Church

810 North Franklin Street
Philadelphia, PA, 19123-2005
Tel (215) 627-0143
ukrmet@ukrcatholic.org

EASTER PASTORAL LETTER
OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC HIERARCHS IN THE USA
TO THE PRIESTS, MONKS, BROTHERS, SISTERS, SEMINARIANS, AND DEAR FAITHFUL

CHRIST IS RISEN! TRULY HE IS RISEN!

As we enter the holy days of our Lord's Passion, Death and Resurrection, the Church invites us to contemplate the mystery that begins with Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Our Lord entered the Holy City welcomed by crowds filled with joy. Children sang, "Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel." The people of Jerusalem, together with the disciples, rejoiced as they welcomed Christ.

Yet each of them carried their own hopes and expectations. The people longed for a king who would transform their reality and free them from the oppression of Roman authority. Many expected a political liberator, a ruler who would restore earthly power and justice.

But Christ our Savior entered Jerusalem for another purpose: for His Passion, His Crucifixion, and His Resurrection.

Those who welcomed Him with palm branches would soon turn against Him and cry out for His crucifixion. The disciples who walked beside Him with joy would soon scatter in fear and abandon their Teacher.

When we reflect on this Gospel in the light of our own time, we see how deeply it speaks to our world today. Our world trembles under instability and suffering. Powerful forces promise a better tomorrow while seeking to conquer others in the name of justice or security. Political tensions at home and abroad, social divisions, violence, uncertainty, and moral confusion surround us. At the same time, Ukraine now enters yet another Holy Week of suffering, enduring devastation and fear, as if sharing in the wounds of Christ Himself. The nation continues to endure the illegal invasion of a brutal foreign regime that seeks not only to conquer territory but also to extinguish hope and life itself. In the midst of suffering and sacrifice, the people carry their own cross with courage and faith.

Yet the question remains: what changed the lives of the disciples after the darkness of Good Friday? What transformed their fear into courage, their uncertainty into hope?

The turning point came through their encounter with the Risen Lord.

The joy of the Resurrection always begins with a personal encounter with Christ. What caused the tears of Mary Magdalene to give way to the joy of Easter morning? Nothing less than meeting the risen Christ Himself. When the Lord called her by name, her grief was transformed into faith and

joy. And after encountering the risen Savior, Mary Magdalene faithfully obeyed His command to go and proclaim the Good News of the Resurrection to the disciples.

The risen Christ desires that each of us experience this same joy of encountering Him. He calls us to live not for ourselves, but for Him—to be liberated from the sins that trap us in self-centeredness and to discover the blessing of Christ’s self-giving love. No matter what may be happening in our lives, we can still experience spiritual joy through the love of God and by living as God created us to live: in self-giving love.

The Easter Gospel is not only about new life in general, but about new life that comes to each of us personally. It is not only that Christ was raised from the dead, but that the risen Christ meets us and calls us by name. Easter is an encounter, a call, and a mission. “Go and tell what you have seen and heard.”

Christ is alive. And more than that—He has sought us out and called us by name.

Whatever our doubts and fears, whatever our failures and betrayals, whatever wounds we carry and try to protect—today is a new day. We are called to become witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus. We are called to bring the light of the Resurrection into every human situation: into joyful moments, making them even more beautiful, and into times of sorrow, bringing serenity and hope. Let us therefore experience the joy of Easter morning and radiate this joy through our lives. Let the mercy of Christ shine in our words and in our deeds. Just as Christ’s Resurrection brought hope and new life to His followers, so we too must hold fast to hope and work for a future of peace, knowing that Christ is always with us.

Our fervent prayer is that our Resurrected and Living Lord may bestow His peace and grace upon you and your loved ones, and upon all our brothers and sisters scattered throughout the world.

**Christ is Risen!
Indeed He is Risen!**

+Borys Gudziak

Archbishop of Philadelphia
Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in the United States

+Paul Chomnycky, OSBM

Eparch of Stamford Eparchy

+Benedict Aleksiychuk

Eparch of St. Nicholas Eparchy in Chicago

+Bohdan J. Danylo (author)

Eparch of St. Josaphat Eparchy in Parma

Easter 2026