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Protocol no. γ-1906

Paschal Encyclical

Year of Salvation: 2014

To the entire Church

"Today the whole creation is glad and doth rejoice, for Christ is risen, and Hades hath been despoiled"

"This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad therein."

Beloved Children in the Lord,

During today's holy, brilliant, and light-bearing feast the joy and rejoicing of our Lord's Resurrection fill the hearts of all Orthodox Christians, so that they join their hymns of glory with those of the Holy Angels in heaven, and with all creation in unceasing hymnody, and ineffable thanksgiving.

The despoiling of Hades and the victory of life over death in the Resurrected Christ Jesus our Saviour is the prelude to the chosen and holy day, the queen and lady: the Feast of feasts and Festival of festivals, Pascha, the Lord's Pascha!

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However, what precedes this Grace? The Mystery of the Cross: "For behold, through the Cross joy hath come to the whole world!"

Our Lord hastened to fulfill the work of our salvation, having often foretold His Divine Passion, the Cross, and His glorious Resurrection. To His Passion he went voluntarily, drinking the "cup" of death in obedience, in order to redeem all mankind from sin, the devil, and death. He truly gave up the ghost [died] on the Cross, and encountered the "corruption" of death, in that His Soul, united hypostatically with His Divinity, was parted from His Body, also hypostatically united with His Divinity, thus taking up His abode, "in hope," in the God-receiving Tomb.

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Wherefore His Soul was not abandoned in Hades, neither did His Soul see corruption. The Body of the Master rested for a short while in the tomb without suffering corruption and decay, and His Soul was translated to Hades to free those who had been held there from ages past.

The enlivening of His Body after three days through the return of His immaculate Soul, namely, His Resurrection, did not occur as a personal accomplishment, but in order that this good be sent “to the entire nature of man.” (St. Cyril of Alexandria)

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Wherefore, the common jubilation of the Divine Persons of the Holy Trinity at the accomplishment of our salvation is also the common jubilation of the Church of Christ, which is transmitted to each of its honorable members.

All those of the Church of Christ with leaps of joy praise the only blessed and most glorious God of our Fathers, for He is the cause of the death of death, the destruction of Hades, and the beginning of another life, namely, an eternal one.

The birth-pangs of death are loosed, death does not separate us from Christ, we no longer depart into dark Hades, but into heavenly and brilliant mansions, to dwell there eternally full of every good!

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However, do we experience all these things from now as the promise of an eternal inheritance? Do we believe in an Orthodox manner, without innovation, and do we keep the holy commandments so that we may be deemed worthy of the Resurrectional gifts?

The Lord our God encourages each of us, as He encouraged His friend, the righteous Abraham: “be well-pleasing before me, and be blameless.” And St. James the Brother of the Lord tells every faithful person: “to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

The joy of the Resurrection and the experience of Resurrectional hope constitutes the union of our upright faith, that is, Orthodoxy, and its visible proof and verification in our life, that is, Orthopraxis. Proportionate to our repentance, the victory over the passions, the cleansing from sin, the liberation from the bonds of the evil one, the worthy and continuous partaking of the Immaculate Mysteries, we receive the grace and joy of the victory of the Resurrection in hope of life eternal.

From the empty grave there always springs forth peace, reconciliation, unity in truth and love, communion of life, a foretasting of the eternal.

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Much beloved children in the Resurrected Lord,

Recently our Lord has deemed us worthy to taste a first resurrection through the gift of unity in our Genuine Orthodox Church of brethren who until now have been separated, from near and far, for the reinforcement of the bonds of truth and love, in hope of shaming the ecumenistic heresy and apostasy in our apocalyptic days. May this Resurrectional experience be blessed and may it expand even more, no one should remain a prisoner in the Hades of the hatred of this world of corruption, division, isolation, and decay.

May our Resurrectional hope illuminate our Church and guide all our steps to the safe harbor of sanctification and salvation. To the Glory of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

Holy Pascha 2014

THE HOLY SYNOD

The Archbishop

† KALLINIKOS of Athens

The Members

† AKAKIOS of Attica and Diauleia

† MAXIMOS of Thessalonica and Demetrias

† ATHANASIOS of Larisa and Platamon

† JUSTIN of Euripus and Euboea

† GERONTIOS of Piraeus and Salamina

† CHRYSOSTOMOS of Attica and Boeotia

† MOSES of Toronto

† DEMETRIUS of America

† CHRYSOSTOMOS of Etna

† CYPRIAN of Oropos and Phyle

† GREGORY of Christianoupolis

† PHOTIOS of Marathon

† SERGIOS of Portland

† AMBROSE of Philippi

† AMBROSE of Methone

† MICHAEL of Nora

† SILVANO of Luni

† CLEMENT of Gardikion

† THEODOSIOS of Bresthena

† CHRISTODOULOS of Theoupolis

† AUXENTIOS of Photike