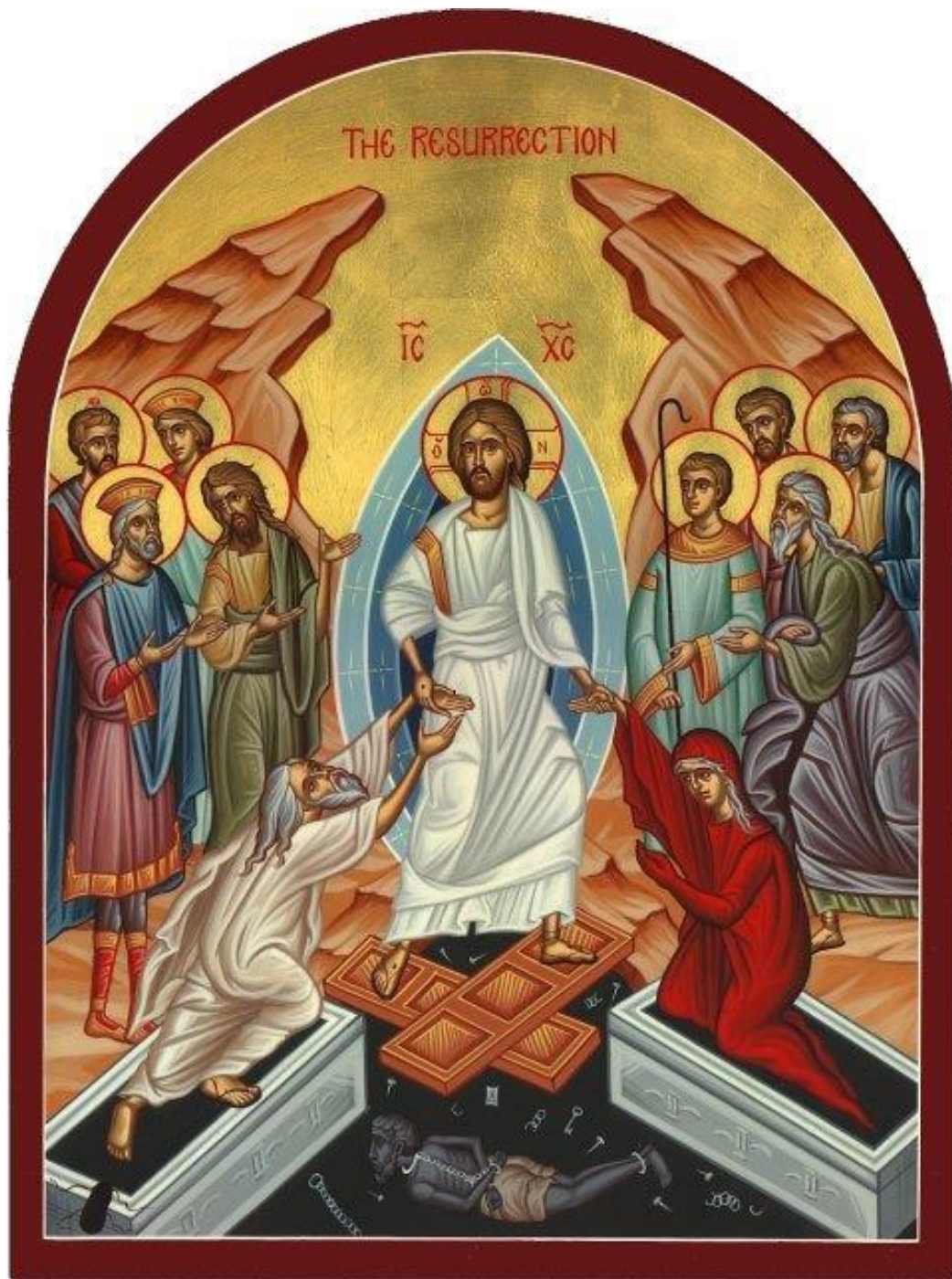


**St Ignatios of Antioch
Melkite Greek Catholic Church
1003 Merry Street
Augusta, Georgia 30904
706 364-6219**



**Great and Holy Pascha
April 9, 2023**

GREAT AND HOLY PASCHA



“I Am the Life of the Dead”

NO ONE SAW JESUS RISE from the dead. The Scriptures simply say that the tomb was found to be empty early on that Sunday morning. Later the risen Christ appeared to His disciples as we read in the Gospels, the Acts and the Epistles. This is why the Byzantine rules governing icons prohibit showing Christ rising from the dead. Instead they set forth two scenes for Paschal icons: the women at the empty tomb and the “harrowing of hell,” Christ’s descent into death.

In the description of St Peter’s first address to the people on Pentecost, we read that he applied the prophetic Psalm 16:8-11 to Christ, saying that the psalmist “...spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption” (Acts 2:31).

Christ’s time among the dead was described with some detail in the first universal epistle of St. Peter. We are told that Christ “went and made a proclamation to the

spirits in prison, who in former times did not obey, when God waited patiently in the days of Noah....” (1 Peter 3:19–20) and that “the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged as men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit” (1 Peter 4:6).

This concept of Christ enlightening those in the darkness of death was thought to be so central to our faith that it was included in early creeds. We still profess, when we say the (2nd century) Apostles’ Creed, that Christ “...descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead.” The English version translated as “hell” the Greek word *katotata* (the lowest region), the place of the dead.

Early Images in Our Liturgy

“The Descent of Christ to the Depths” is a third-century text incorporated in later writings such as the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus and the Acts of Pilate. This text – much abridged here – contains a dramatic scene involving Satan, Hades (the realm of death) and those held captive there.

“Behold, Satan, the prince and chief of death, said to Hades, ‘Prepare to receive Jesus, who boasts that He is the Son of God, and yet is a man afraid of death...’ “As they were speaking, suddenly there came a voice like thunder, crying ‘Remove your gates, you princes. Be lifted up, you everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.’ ...Then Hades said to his wicked ministers, ‘Shut firm the gates of brass and put on them bars of iron...’

When all the saints heard it, they answered, rebuking Hades, “Open the gates that the King of Glory may come in.”

“Stretching forth His hand, the Lord said, ‘Come to Me, all you holy ones who bear My image and likeness...’

“And the Lord, stretched forth His hand and made the sign of the cross over Adam and over all His saints. He took the right hand of Adam and went up out of hell, with all the saints following Him... and brought them all into the glory and beauty of paradise” (From The Descent of Christ to the Depths 4, 5, 8, 9).

This text is the earliest source we have for our icon of Pascha. It does not attempt to describe Christ’s physical resurrection but the spiritual reality of what His Death and Resurrection accomplished. The Lord Jesus, in radiant garments, is shown standing on the brazen gates of Hades (also called the “Doors of Death”), which are broken and have fallen in the form of a cross, illustrating the belief that by His death on the cross, Christ has trampled down death. At the bottom of the icon we see

Hades as a chasm of darkness, often with various pieces of broken locks and chains strewn about.

Our paschal icon contains a second image from The Descent of Christ to the Depths. Christ is shown pulling Adam and Eve up out of Hades, surrounded by other righteous figures from the Old Testament, “the saints” mentioned in The Descent. In many versions of this icon Christ is not shown holding them by the hands, but by their wrists, to stress that mankind could not attach himself to God because of his ancestral sin; rather it is Christ’s work alone which effects our recreation.

The Dialogue with Satan

This image of the brass gates in The Descent was taken in turn from Psalm 23, depicting a conqueror’s entry into the city. In The Descent this psalm is used to describe Christ, the true King of Glory, breaking down the gates of Hades and leading mankind from the prison of death to paradise.

In the Middle Eastern Patriarchates this psalm is recited as the Paschal procession stands in darkness before the doors of the church. The priest outside and a “Satan,” inside recreate this dialogue:

Priest: Lift up your gates, you princes; and be lifted up, you everlasting gates, and the King of Glory shall enter in.

Reader: Who is this King of Glory?

Priest: The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle. Lift up your gates, you princes; and be lifted up, you everlasting gates, and the King of Glory shall enter in.

Reader; Who is this King of Glory?

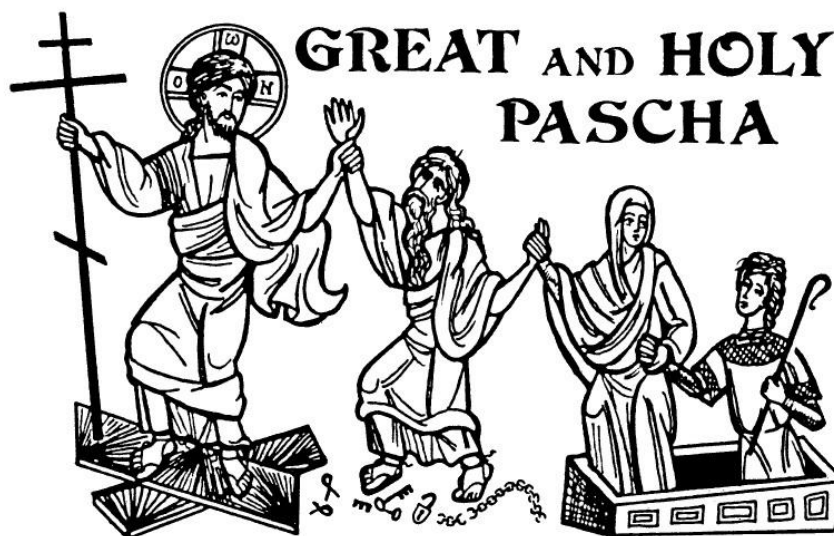
Priest: The Lord of hosts, He is the King of Glory.

The doors burst open and the congregation enters the brilliantly lit church, becoming themselves an icon of redeemed humanity.

Christ in Hades
St Epiphanius of Cyprus

Something strange is happening—there is a great silence on earth today, a great silence and stillness. The whole earth keeps silence because the King is asleep. It trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and He has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began. God has died in the flesh and Hell trembles with fear. He has gone to search for our first parent, as for a lost sheep. Greatly desiring to visit those who live in darkness and in the shadow of death, He has gone to free from sorrow the captives Adam and Eve, He who is both God and the Son of Eve. The Lord approached them bearing the Cross, the weapon that had won Him the victory. At the sight of Him Adam, the first man He had created, struck his breast in terror and cried out to everyone, ‘My Lord be with you all.’ Christ answered him: ‘And with your spirit.’ He took him by the hand and raised him up, saying: ‘Awake, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.

‘I am your God, who for your sake have become your son. Out of love for you and your descendants I now by my own authority command all who are held in bondage to come forth, all who are in darkness to be enlightened, all who are sleeping to arise. Sleeper, awake. I did not create you to be held a prisoner in Hades. Rise from the dead, for I am the life of the dead. Rise up, work of my hands, you who were created in my image. Rise, let us leave this place, for you are in Me and I in you; together we form one person and cannot be separated.



Sunday Collections

Attendance	Date	Collection
25	February 12, 2023	335.00
11	February 19, 2023	530.00
36	February 26, 2023	127.00
25	March 5, 2023	1,600.00
22	March 12, 2023	263.00
26	March 19, 2023	10,000.00
26	March 26, 2023	165.00
33	2 April 2023	1,060.00

Syrian Earthquake Relief \$ 775.00

Divine Liturgy Intentions: For the Living:

Bishop Francois, Fr. Eugene Mitchell, Fr. James Graham, Fr. John Azar, Daniel Offutt, David Mangelsdorf, Brian Frank, Maria Barklage, Nookid Graham, Ali de la Vega, Dn. Kent & Diana Plowman, A Special Parish Intention, Mandie, Stephanie, Nick Baiad, Medical Personnel and First Responders

For the Dead:

Announcements

We are live-streaming on our Facebook page at the following days & times:

Friday 6:00 PM Weekday Vespers

Saturday – 6:00PM Great Vespers

Sunday – 9:00AM Orthros & 10:00AM Divine Liturgy

PRAYER OPPORTUNITES AROUND TOWN –Most Holy Trinity parish will be hosting a Men's Holy Hour every Friday morning from 6-7am. There will also be a coffee hour and reflection time afterwards – Men from all parishes are invited to attend for whatever portion of the time they are available. For the Ladies – St. Joseph's will be hosting a Women's Holy Hour on the first Monday of each month at 7pm.

**National Association of Melkite Youth
NAMY Conference 2023**

Our Melkite Mission: Becoming Disciples, Making Disciples

Who: Melkite Youth throughout the US, ages 13-18

When: Monday July 10th- Friday July 14th, 2023

Where: St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire

Why: Faith, Fellowship, Fun

For more information:

Please contact Fr. Thomas & Pres. Rebekah Moses at namy@melkite.org



Festal Troparion

(Tone 5)



Christ is ri - sen from the dead and by His death



He has tram-pled u-pon Death, and has gi-ven life to those



who were in the tombs.



Al Ma-see-hu qa-ma min bayn il am-wat wa wa - ti al



maw-ta bil mawt, wa wa-hab al ha-yat li - la-dhee-na fil



qu - boor.



Chris-tos a - nes - ti ek ne - kron tha-na - to



tha - na - ton ba - tee - sas, kai tees



en dees mni-ma - si zo - in kha-ri - sa - me-



- nos.

Kondakion of Pascha

(Tone 2)



Though You went down in the tomb, O im - mor - tal



One, You o-ver-threw the po-wer of Ha - des and



rose vic - to - ri - ous, O Christ God, You



gree - ted the oint - ment bear - ing wo - men, say -



- ing: Re-joice! You gave peace to Your a-pos - tles, and to



those who had fal-len, re-sur-rec - tion.

Hirmos of Pascha

(Tone 1)



The an-gel cried out to the one who is full of grace:



Hail, O im - ma-cu-late vir-gin! Hail! a - gain: for your



Son is ri - sen from the tomb on the third day.



Shine, shine, O new Je-ru-sa - lem! For the glo-ry of the



Lord has shone up - on You. Re-joice and



be glad, O Si-on, and you, O pure one, O Mo-ther of



God, ex - ult in the re-sur-rec-tion of your Son.

Prokimenon

Reader: This is the day the Lord has made: let us be glad and rejoice in it!

All: This is the day the Lord has made: let us be glad and rejoice in it!

Reader: Give praise to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever.

All: This is the day the Lord has made: let us be glad and rejoice in it!

Reader: This is the day the Lord has made:

All: Let us be glad and rejoice in it!

Readings for the Week:

Monday:	Acts 1:12-26	John 1:18-28
Tuesday:	Acts 2:14-21	Luke 24:12-35
Wed:	Acts 2:22-28	John 1:35-51
Thursday:	Acts 2:38-43	John 3:1-15
Friday:	Acts 3:1-9	John 2:12-22
Saturday:	Acts 3:9-17	John 20:19-31

Saints of the Week:

April 9: Holy and Great Pascha
April 10: Holy Martyrs Terence, Pompeius, Maximus and their companions
April 11: Holy Hieromartyr Antipas, Bishop of Pergamum
April 12: Holy Father Basil the Confessor, Bishop of Parium
April 13: Holy Father Martin the Confessor, Pope of Rome
April 14: Holy Disciples Aristarchos, Pudens and Trophimos, who were among the 70 Disciples
April 15: Holy Martyr Crescent
April 16: Holy Women Martyrs Agapia, Irene and Chionia

Word Search

E	B	K	Q	Y	O	T	R	E	M	B	L	I	N	G	X	W	Y
A	H	Y	X	X	C	F	Z	K	Z	E	N	T	E	R	I	N	G
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Amazed
Anoint
Disciples
Early
Entering
Fear
First
Fled
Galilee

James
Magdalene
Mary
Peter
Place
Risen
Roll
Sabbath
Salome

Spices
Stone
Sun
Terrified
Tomb
Trembling
White

Parish Information:

Rt. Rev. Michael Skrocki, JCD
Pastor

abounamike@aol.com

Knights of Columbus **JFK Council**

1st Wednesday of the month, 7pm.

Odd-numbered months at St. Ignatios

Even-numbered months here at Most Holy Trinity

4th Degree Assembly

2nd Wednesday of the month, 7pm

Odd-numbered months at Most Holy Trinity

Even-numbered months here at St. Ignatios

Publicans Prayer Group

Postponed until Further Notice

New Parishioners:

Please register with Fr. Michael.

Mystery of Holy Confession

Please contact Fr. Michael to set up a convenient time.

Mystery of Christian Initiation

Expectant parents should notify Fr. Michael prior to the birth of the child. Adult converts should contact Fr. Michael so arrangements may be made for any necessary instruction and sacraments.

Mystery of Holy Crowning

Those planning to marry should notify the Fr. Michael at least six months prior to the desired Wedding date.

Mystery of Holy Anointing

Please notify Fr. Michael when you or a family member is in need of anointing.

To report sexual abuse by clergy, parish personnel or volunteers of the Eparchy of Newton, please call the **Victim Assistance Coordinator** at 1-800-479-5910.

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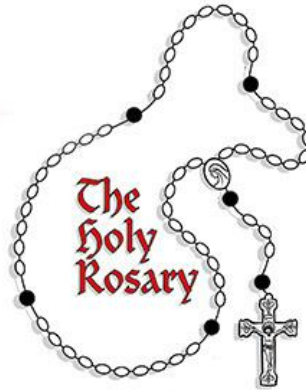
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