18/04/2020

Patriarchate of Bulgaria issues Patriarchal And Synodal Paschal Epistle



The Patriarchate of Bulgaria has issued its Patriarchal And Synodal Paschal Epistle. Read the full text down below:

Beloved in the Lord children of our Holy Church,

CHRIST IS RISEN!

Unusual is the atmosphere in which, under God’s admission, this year we are celebrating the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is a trail for all of us to rejoice with the wondrous news about the Resurrection and about the defeat over death in days when around us there are so many untimely destroyed lives. Victims given in an unequal fight with the disastrous pandemic having spread all over the world, which hasn’t skipped us as well. And although our country is going

through all that is happening more easily and more painlessly in comparison to other countries that are close and far from us, the ubiquitous suffering and grief of so many people cannot but affect our sensitivity and cannot but place before any of us many questions that are hard to make sense of and to solve.

Meanwhile, however, it is namely us – the ones believing in Christ and confessing His holy name, who least of all should yield to despair and defeatism, because our faith is a faith in the Living God, Who sent into the world His Only-Begotten Son "to save what was lost" (Matt. 18:11). Because our God "is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:32), Who "desires all people to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:4).

That is why, beloved, although grieved from what has been happening with us and around us in the recent months, although mourning for the numerous victims of the infection mowing down our world, we don't leave our faith, neither do we mourn as those "have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:13), but namely today, on the bright day of the Resurrection, we again clearly declare before the world and confess the triumph of Life.

"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4) – in such a way the divine Gospel writer witnesses, such is the witnessing of the empty tomb, which the Myrrh-bearing Women first saw and they first of all heard: "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but he is risen!" (Luke 24:6). The life about which we read from the holy Gospel writer is a life springing from the Very divine Source of life and the light about which it witnesses, is shining and enlightening even today, when with faith and unshadowed hope we also give our witness about our Lord, Redeemer and Saviour Jesus Christ Who has risen from the dead.

On the day of the Resurrection we fatherly turn to all of you and all our society with a message for consolation in the grief and hope for eternal life, with commiseration to everyone who is sick and is suffering, as well as to everyone whom the pandemic has deprived of close and beloved to their heart relatives, friends or colleagues. The millennial experience of our holy Church of Christ teaches us that nothing in the God-created world cannot be done without God's consent, and encourages us in every event in our earthly life to see a sign of God's philanthropy, in everything to search for the kind and saving for the human beings providence of God.

Let us, together with the grief from the tragedy experienced by all, but also with strong faith and hope in the General Resurrection and in the eternal life, use what is happening as an occasion to turn inside to ourselves and to ask ourselves how we are living today – each of us, individually, and all together, as a society.

How are we managing today the endowed to us by the Heavenly Father earthly home, which He created and assigned for us at the dawn of the Creation, in order for us to inhabit it as good householders? Do we keep in our conscience the necessity to take care of this home in such a way in which He expects from us? Do we notice only the pain and tragedy of what is happening today, or do we see in it also the opportunity to slow down the frenetic course of our everyday life and to seek to straighten our ways?

Today, on the day of the ever-victorious Resurrection of Christ, but also of the spreading among us disaster, these and other similar questions are facing us as never before and are waiting for our response. Would we, together with the God-Man our Lord Jesus Christ and the whole Church, choose the side of life, collecting treasures for the eternal life, or would we store up our treasures “on the earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal” (Matt. 6:19)? Would we, as faithful children and co-workers of God, give the best of ourselves for the accomplishment of God’s economy for the world and the creation, or would we be negligent for God’s holy will?

On the day of the Resurrection our thoughts and our prayers are for all those who are not among us anymore – to be forgiven, shown mercy and admitted by our Heavenly Father, and to receive a share in the Kingdom of light and eternal life. We also pray for those who are fighting with this perfidious infection and especially for the doctors and medical workers, and for all who are taking the hardest blow in the battle of life.

Let the news of the Resurrection of Christ warm up the hearts of us all and the light that has shone from the empty tomb at dawn enlighten our minds and show us the right way to God and to the Kingdom prepared for us “since the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34)!

On the occasion of the Resurrection of Christ, we are greeting all faithful children of our Orthodox Church – those in our Motherland and those far

away from it!

May to all of us be the grace, peace and love from our Lord Jesus Christ Who has risen from the dead!

CHRIST IS RISEN!

HAPPY RESURRECTION OF CHRIST!

HEAD OF THE HOLY SYNOD

† NEOPHYTE

PATRIARCH OF BULGARIA

METROPOLITAN OF SOFIA

MEMBERS OF THE HOLY SYNOD:

† METROPOLITAN IOANIKIY OF SLIVEN

† METROPOLITAN YOSIF OF USA, CANADA AND AUSTRALIA

† METROPOLITAN GRIGORIY OF VELIKO TARNOVO

† METROPOLITAN IGNATIY OF PLEVEN

† METROPOLITAN GAVRIIL OF LOVECH

† METROPOLITAN NIKOLAY OF PLOVDIV

† METROPOLITAN AMVROSIY OF DOROSTOL

† METROPOLITAN ANTONIY OF WESTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE

† METROPOLITAN YOAN OF VARNA AND VELICKY PRESLAV

† METROPOLITAN SERAPHIM OF NEVROKOP

† METROPOLITAN NAUM OF ROUSSE

† METROPOLITAN CYPRIAN OF STARA ZAGORA

† METROPOLITAN GRIGORIY OF VRATSA

† METROPOLITAN DANIIL OF VIDIN

Note: Following a decision of the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox

Church – Bulgarian Patriarchete, this Epistle is meant to be read at the church pulpit on the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ, i.e. the Pascha of the Lord, on 19th April 2020.