

## **Archbishop of America, Demetrios' Archiepiscopal Encyclical for Holy Pascha 2019**



April 28, 2019

Holy Pascha

The Feast of Feasts

To the Most Reverend Hierarchs, the Reverend Priests and Deacons, the Monks and Nuns, the Presidents and Members of the Parish Councils of the Greek Orthodox Communities, the Distinguished Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Day, Afternoon, and Church Schools, the Philoptochos Sisterhoods, the Youth, the Hellenic Organizations, and the entire Greek Orthodox Family in America

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Χριστός Ἀνέστη! Christ is Risen!

On this glorious Feast of Feasts, we hear in the Gospel of those who came to see the tomb of our Lord. The myrrh-bearing woman came early in the morning of this day to anoint His body, to show their commitment to Christ through an act of love and care. They expressed concern regarding the large stone covering the door of the tomb, but as they approached there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone.... (Matthew 28:2)

The angel said to the women, Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who

was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. (Matthew 28:7) These are the words that filled their hearts with joy. These are the words they took to the disciples with rejoicing. These are the words, He is risen, that we proclaim today in our joyful celebration of Holy Pascha and the Resurrection of Christ.

We sing with abundant gladness in our hearts, He is risen! We sing these words because through His glorious Resurrection, He has revealed God's power to bestow abundant and eternal life. Christ has defeated death. He has broken the bonds of Hades. He has shown to those in the graves the life that awaits them. Our Risen Lord has won the ultimate victory so that we can be free to enter the everlasting light and life of His glory.

Today, we proclaim He is risen! because the power revealed in His Resurrection is not a temporal power. It is eternal. The power of the Resurrection is not confined to one day or one event. It is an ever-present power that fills our celebration. It fills our hearts and our minds. In the presence of the One who holds and offers this power, the power of grace and life, we are both comforted and challenged. In our worship, we experience awe. In our joy we have an eagerness to go out rejoicing so that all the world may know, He is risen!

As the women who came to the tomb that morning heard the words of the angel, He is risen, we must also hear these words. We must hear them deeply. We must experience the transforming power through our faith in what He has done. We must believe that He is risen and our Risen Lord is in our midst, filling our hearts with an everlasting joy. But as we hear these words, we must also affirm that they should be shared. Today, our exclamation is universal. On this day our hearts are united in the joy of Pascha, and together with voices loud and clear we proclaim to all, He is risen! Go and tell your family and friends. Go and share the good news in your communities. Go into all the world and proclaim, "It is the day of Resurrection! He is risen!"

Christ is risen! He truly is risen!

With paternal love in the Risen Lord,

† D E M E T R I O S

Archbishop of America

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— Source: [Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America](#)