

PASCHA AT HOME: PASCHA ON SUNDAY MORNING

Families can begin Paschal prayer at home in a number of ways. They can process around their homes while singing “Your resurrection.” They can assemble outdoors and sing the opening Paschal hymn. Or, they can gather in a room together with candles lit, and sing:

Your resurrection o Christ our Savior, the angels in heaven sing; enable us on earth to glorify You in purity of heart. (Tone 6 – three times).

[READING 1] The reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark (16:1-8)

Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary *the mother* of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. ² Very early in the morning, on the first *day* of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. ³ And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” ⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. ⁵ And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.

⁶ But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. ⁷ But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.”

⁸ So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

All: Glory to You, o Lord, glory to You.

Leader: Through the Prayers of our Holy Fathers and mothers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us.

All: Amen.

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death! And upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (3x)

Leader: Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered; let those who hate Him flee from before His face.

All: Christ is risen from the dead... (1x, after each verse)

Leader: As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish; as wax melts before the fire.

All: Christ is risen from the dead...

Leader: So the sinners will perish before the face of God; but let the righteous be glad.

All: Christ is risen from the dead...

Leader: This is the day which the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

All: Christ is risen from the dead...

Leader: Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit:

All: Christ is risen from the dead...

Now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

All: Christ is risen from the dead...

Home Paschal prayer continues with song:

(In Tone 6):

Having beheld the Resurrection of Christ,
let us worship the holy Lord Jesus,
the only sinless One.
We venerate Your Cross, O Christ,
and Your holy Resurrection we praise and glorify,
for You are our God.
And we know no other than You.
We call on Your Name.
Come, all you faithful,
let us worship the holy Resurrection of Christ,
for behold, through the Cross joy has come into all the world.
Let us ever bless the Lord
praising His Resurrection,
for by enduring the Cross for us
He has destroyed death by death!

The singing continues:

Hypakoe (Tone 8):

Before the dawn, Mary and the women came and found the stone rolled away from the tomb. They heard the angelic voice: "Why do you seek among the dead as a man the one

who is everlasting light? Behold the clothes in the grave! Go and proclaim to the world: The Lord is Risen! He has slain death, as he is the son of God, saving the race of men.

Then the Kontakion (Tone 8):

You descended into the tomb O Immortal,
You destroyed the power of death!
In victory You arose, O Christ God, proclaiming "Rejoice" to the Myrrhbearing Women,
granting peace to Your Apostles,
and bestowing resurrection on the fallen.

In the tomb with the body and in hell with the soul, in paradise with the thief and on the throne with the Father and the Spirit, were You, o boundless Christ, filling all things.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

Bearing life and more fruitful than paradise, brighter than any royal chamber: Your tomb, o Christ, is the fountain of our resurrection.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Rejoice of Holy and divine abode of the most high! For through you, O Theotokos, joy is given to those who cry: Blessed are you among women, o all-undefiled Lady!

Leader: The Prokeimenon in the eighth tone: This is the Day that the Lord has made! Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

Verse: O give thanks to the Lord! For He is good, for his mercy endures forever.

[READING 2] The reading from the Book of Acts (1:1-8):

In the former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ²until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ³to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

⁴And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," *He said*, "you have heard from Me; ⁵for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ⁶Therefore, when they had come together, they asked

Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”⁷ And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

All: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

[READING 3] The reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God.³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.⁷ This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.⁸ He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.⁹ That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.¹¹ He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.’ ”

¹⁶And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The leader reads the sermon of St. John Chrysostom aloud:

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.

All sing together:

The Paschal Stichera

Let God arise; let His enemies be scattered!

Today a sacred Pascha is revealed to us. A new and holy Pascha. A mystical Pascha. A Pascha worthy of veneration. A Pascha which is Christ the Redeemer, a blameless Pascha. A great Pascha. A Pascha of the faithful. A Pascha which has opened for us the gates of Paradise. A Pascha which sanctifies all the faithful.

As smoke vanishes, let them vanish. As wax melts before the fire.

Come from that scene, O women bearers of glad tidings, and say to Sion: Receive from us the glad tidings of joy of Christ's Resurrection: Exult and be glad, and rejoice, O Jerusalem, seeing Christ the King who comes forth from the tomb like a Bridegroom in procession!

So the sinners will perish before the face of God; but let the righteous be glad!

The myrrh-bearing women at the break of dawn drew near to the tomb of the LifeGiver. There they found an angel sitting upon the stone, he greeted them with these words: Why do you seek the living among the dead? Why do you mourn the incorrupt amid corruption? Go: proclaim the glad tidings to His disciples.

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

Pascha of beauty! The Pascha of the Lord! Pascha! A Pascha worthy of all honor has dawned on us. Pascha! Let us embrace each other joyously! Pascha, ransom from affliction! For today as from a bridal chamber Christ has shown forth from the Tomb, and filled the women with joy saying: "Proclaim the glad tidings to the Apostles!"

Glory to the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

This is the day of Resurrection, let us be illumined by the Feast! Let us embrace each other! Let us call "Brethren!" even those that hate us and forgive all by the Resurrection, and so let us cry:

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life! (*3 times*)

All sing the Angel Cried from Ode 9:

The Angel Cried to the Lady full of grace: rejoice, o Pure Virgin. Again I say: Rejoice! Your Son is risen from his three days in the tomb. With Himself he has raised all the dead. Rejoice, all ye people.

Shine! Shine! O new Jerusalem! The glory of the Lord has shone on you. Exult now and be glad, o Zion. Be radiant, o Pure Theotokos, in the resurrection of your Son.

Leader: O Lord Almighty, we pray for our Metropolitan N., our Bishop N., for our civil authorities and armed forces. We pray for deliverance from the coronavirus, for the healing of those infected and of all who are sick, for the health and safety of all doctors, nurses, and medical workers, and for all your people.

All: Lord have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy!

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy. Lord, bless!

Leader: Through the prayers of our holy fathers and mothers, Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.

All: Amen. Christ is Risen (3x).

Blessing of baskets and Food:

The leader recites the prayer for the blessing of Paschal food – when the prayer concludes, the leader sprinkles holy water while all sing the Troparion, “Christ is risen...”

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ our God, look down upon this meat and cheese, which your servants have prepared for the celebration of Your great and most holy Pascha, and sanctify it as You sanctified the ram brought to You by faithful Abraham and the lamb offered to You by Abel as a whole-burnt offering; likewise also the fatted calf, which You commanded to be slain for Your prodigal son when he returned again to You, that just as he was counted worthy to delight in Your good things, we also might delight in those things that are sanctified and blessed by You for the nourishment of us all. For You are the true nourishment and the Giver of good things, and to You do we send up glory together with Your Father, Who is without beginning, and Your most holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

All: Amen.