



# GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

## ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

PASCHA 2011

The Reverend Clergy

Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council, Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Societies, Faculty and Students of the Catechetical and Greek Afternoon Schools, Directors and Participants of all Youth Organizations, and all devout Orthodox Christians of the Greek Orthodox Communities of our Holy Metropolis of New Jersey

My Beloved in the Lord,

It is with the greatest joy that we sing praises to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ today, on the Feast of Feasts, the great and holy day of Pascha. We give thanks to Christ our True God for His mercy and love, for because of His Sacrifice, we have been redeemed. Indeed, as Greek Orthodox Christians, let us rejoice with all of our hearts and souls, because of His glorious Resurrection mankind again has been granted hope and salvation!

The whole of creation rejoices in the celebration today of Christ's Resurrection, and even more so, do we who are the Crown of Creation. Today, more than ever, our Christian heart and soul experience the truly infinite love that our Lord Jesus Christ has for all of His creation. Indeed, it is even for the most wretched soul that our Lord suffered on the Cross, submitted to death, and subsequently, through His glorious Resurrection, reopened the Gates of Paradise for all who would believe in His Name.

Christ our God, who is Life Himself, is at the very heart and foundation of our elation today. For it is Christ Who destroyed and conquered death, by death, and it is the uncreated Light of the Resurrection that trampled upon the powers of darkness. Moreover, today, my beloved spiritual sons and daughters we rejoice in the Lord Who has Risen from the dead, because the never-dawning and uncreated Divine Light continues to enlighten and illumine the footsteps of every pious individual, leading man to the boundless and everlasting glory of the Heavenly Kingdom of God.

*"This is the Day which the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."* This is the exhortation of the Resurrectional Canon, so that we may truly celebrate Pascha since Christ's Resurrection is the very source of our souls. Unequivocally, the Resurrection of Christ is the fundamental dogma of our Holy Orthodox Church, for without the Resurrection, Christianity has no meaning. St. Paul reminds us of this eternal truth in his letter to the Corinthians, *"And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty."* (1 Cor. 15:14)

My beloved, with these thoughts and pious reverence, let us enter unto the Communion with Him participating in His glorious Resurrection, receiving the uncreated Light so that we may be sanctified and redeemed. As he offered Himself unto sacrifice and death for the remission of our sins, let us also forgive those who may have offended, hurt us. Then the significance of His Resurrection will indeed be a personal one. May the infinite mercy, compassion and divine blessing of the RISEN CHRIST be with all of you, your families and all the people of the world. **CHRIST IS RISEN!**

Amen.

With Paternal Love and Blessings,

† EVANGELOS  
Metropolitan of New Jersey