



## HOLY ASCENSION RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

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### “Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered!”

Dearly beloved brothers and sisters,

The greatest event in the history of the world is the Resurrection of Christ.

This event distinguishes our Faith from every other creed in that other religions have mortal men as their heads, but we have the risen Christ.

Through the incarnate and resurrected, only-begotten Son and Word of God we enter into inexpressible union with God the Father, not with His essence, but as ones adopted by grace. And, it is essential to underline that this union leaves the one experiencing it speechless. Paradoxically, this ineffable union simultaneously answers every question in the heart of man.

Philosophers and theologians of the “intellectual bent” puzzle over and stretch their minds to answer many of life’s questions, questions concerning the nature of God, the purpose of man, the obtaining of happiness, the cause of natural disasters, the presence of evil, the resolution of cultural discord, the presence of death and its origin... And these treatises and debates are carried out at times with great erudition by scholars, highly educated men of letters. Yet, if the questions are “resolved” on paper, very often proposed suppositions and conclusions remain unresolved when applied to the daily reality of our lives. They fail to answer our questions adequately as each of us has bitterly experienced while living in this fallen world.

Brothers and sisters, this is as it should be, since the One Who created this world and life itself is so great that His wisdom is beyond the grasp of His creatures. His ways are an unfathomable abyss!

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught His disciples, and through them all followers of God, many things provoking thought during the last

hours of His earthly life. *“I go to prepare a place for you”* (Jn. 14:2). *“And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know”* (4). The Lord’s words evoked man’s natural inquiry and Thomas asks: *“Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?”* (5).

Our Lord answers, but not always the way we expect: *“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more; but ye see Me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me and I in you”* (18-20). Christ’s disciples’ relationship with God in Trinity cannot be comprehended with the intellect alone. What is required is participation, a standing in the presence of God.

*“Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth”* (Jn 16: 13). When this participation takes place in our souls it becomes an astonishing event: *“And in that day ye shall ask Me nothing”* (23).

At such a point man’s inquiry into all burning questions ceases and he stands in complete wonder before the awesome mystery and the magnitude of the greatness of our God, Who satisfies our mind and nourishes our appetites, Who draws our will like metal to magnet. The demonstration of this reality is the participant’s quiet joy and overwhelming peace.

“O great and most sacred Pasha, Christ! O Wisdom, and Word of God, and Power! Grant us more perfectly to partake of Thee, in the unwaning day of Thy Kingdom (ninth ode of the Paschal Canon).

Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

*Rector, Archpriest Paul Volmensky  
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