



Holy Ascension Russian Orthodox Church

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Christ is Risen!

*“Having kept the seals intact, O Christ, Thou didst rise from the tomb,
O Thou Who didst not break the seal of the Virgin by Thy birth
and Thou hast opened for us the doors of Paradise (from the Paschal Canon).”*

Our Resurrected Lord Jesus Christ has said: “I am the Door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture” (John 10: 9). Truly, the Only-Begotten Son came into the world through His Incarnation and went out again by His death and Resurrection and by His Ascension into the Heavens on the fortieth day, finding peace by His Session at the right hand of the Father.

Just as our Lord was born of a Virgin, not breaking the seal of Her Virginity, so He rose from the dead not violating the seal on the stone of the tomb.

The Divine Angels could not comprehend the mystery of how the Word assumed human flesh and the soldiers placed to guard the tomb did not perceive Christ’s arising. Both mysteries are hidden from them that test them; however, they are revealed to those who worship Christ with faith.

We born of the earth have entered into this world and we will go out as well. But will we reach the pasture, the place of rest, the radiant Resurrection? Yes, if we have acquired Christ, if we come in and go out through Christ, Who is the Door.

The acquisition of Christ is our triple immersion in the waters of Baptism, signifying Christ’s three day burial. Our arising from the baptismal font makes us participants of His resurrection.

The acquisition of Christ is also our participation in Holy Communion: “Who so eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, hath

eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6: 54).

This mystery is hidden from our examination for it is written of us and about our relationship to Christ: “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53: 3-5).

By the Grace of God He tasted of death for all (Hebrews 2: 9).

Dear brothers and sisters, with faith let us worship Him Who was Incarnate of a Virgin, Crucified for our sake and Resurrected from the dead – Him, Who is the Light of the world, Who sanctifies us with His Uncreated Light. For He Who sanctifies and he who is sanctified are all of One (Hebrews 2: 11), for which cause the King of Glory is not ashamed to call us brethren.

“Let us purify our senses, and we shall behold Christ, radiant with the unapproachable Light of the Resurrection (from the Paschal Canon).

*Archpriest Paul Volmensky
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