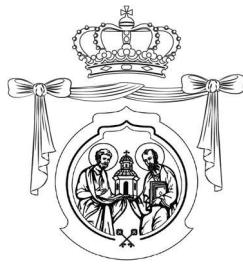


His Eminence
The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH

The Right Reverend
Bishop ANTHONY



Archbishop of New York and
Metropolitan of
All North America

Diocese of Toledo and
The Midwest

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA

Great and Holy Pascha ~ the Glorious Resurrection of our Lord
April 19, 2020

Beloved Clergy and Faithful of the Midwest Diocese,

Christ is Risen! *Indeed He is Risen!* المسيح قام! حقاً قام!

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ comes in three ranks or degrees.

Christ is Risen! Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man, is crucified on the Cross where He dies. He enters the place where death reigns, the dark kingdom of the Devil, the dungeon of Hades. Being God, who is Life: “*For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.*” (John 5:26) and life is stronger than death, Jesus Christ destroys death. The Resurrection is Christ’s victory.

Next, Christ’s victory becomes my triumph: I am resurrected. By baptism, I become a member of the Body of Christ in the Church, “*As many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*” (Galatians 3:27) “*You were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead*” and “*God made alive together with him*” (Colossians 2:12-13)

Finally, being baptized into Christ “*we are members one of another*” (Ephesians 4:25) The Resurrection of Christ is our resurrection. “*We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.*” (Romans 6:4)

Freed from the power of death, we must live a free life of love. Christ has taken care of me. My treasure is in heaven. A place is already reserved for me in His Kingdom. I don’t have to worry about self-preservation here! “*Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God ... for God is love.*” (1 John 4:7-8). I walk in the “*newness of life*”.

The Resurrection is Christ’s Resurrection. It is my resurrection. It is our resurrection. Glory to God.

May the Light of the Empty Tomb shine in our hearts forever!

Yours in Christ,

+ Bishop Anthony

+Bishop ANTHONY
Bishop of Toledo and the Midwest

“*The disciples were first called Christians in Antioch*” (Acts 11: 26)

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