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Holy Pasch

**Paschal greeting of the Administrator of the Archdiocese of Canada,
His Grace Irene, Bishop of Quebec City,
To the clergy and faithful of the Archdiocese of Canada, The Orthodox
Church in America**

CHRIST IS RISEN!

With the blessing of the Primate of The Orthodox Church in America and Locum Tenens of the Archdiocese of Canada, the Most Blessed Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of All America and Canada, I have the great privilege to greet you on the Feast of Feasts, Holy Pascha, the Resurrection of Our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

**“Christ is risen from the dead,
trampling down death by death,
and upon those in the tombs bestowing life.”**

Dear brothers and sisters, we hear these words of the Paschal troparion from this night on through the entire Paschal season. Today I would like to draw your attention to the fact that as we sing these words we are filled with hope, joy and love for and in our Saviour, Jesus Christ. As we continue to repeat them over and over again throughout the year and throughout our entire life, they fill us with strength. This Paschal troparion has such very great and deep meaning for every one of us personally and together as the Body of Christ, Christ’s Church here on earth.

Together with the Holy Apostles and the Myrrh-bearing Women who witnessed the



great mystery of the salvation of the world, we, too, also become witnesses and participants in this great mystery, and we therefore become participants in the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

The essence of our faith and the meaning of our earthly life are concentrated in this event. In his Epistle to the Romans (6:8-11) the Holy Apostle Paul writes: "We believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with Him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead, will never die again. Death has no power over Him any more. When He died, He died, once for all, to sin, so His life now is life in God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus."

St. Ambrose of Milan writes: "In Christ the world was resurrected along with mankind, in Him the Heavens were resurrected, in Him the earth was resurrected."

Today all creation is called to celebrate, "both you who have fasted and you who have disregarded the fast." We are all called to rejoice this day as being that of our own resurrection as "Christ is risen, and life reigns." We celebrate this event because without Christ's glorious Resurrection, we would have no hope for salvation and life eternal in His Heavenly Kingdom. St. John Chrysostom reminds us of this with the words of the Anaphora: "Remembering, therefore, this saving commandment, and all that came to pass for our sake - the Cross, the Tomb, the Resurrection on the Third Day, the Ascension into Heaven, the Enthronement at the Father's Right Hand, the Second and Glorious Coming."

Our Saviour gave us all that is necessary for our salvation; and only one thing is needed, and that is to have faith in Him. We have to take to heart the words of the Lord to Martha: "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41). We must place our hope in Him and love Him with all our hearts and His Love will be never taken away from us. Through Christ's Resurrection, we are saved. By the Grace of the Holy Spirit we have the opportunity to become gods by Grace (Psalm 81:6; John 10:34-36; Ephesians 1), to live in His love here on earth, and to inherit His Heavenly Kingdom.

His Resurrection strengthens our faith in our own future resurrection. We must remember that Golgotha was followed by the Resurrection. Every human being, every human organization, be it a small community or a large country, at least once during the course of its life or history experiences its own Golgotha and cross. But, as Christians we know that as long as we live in Christ and follow the teachings of God's commandments and strive to be Christ-like in bearing our own cross, there

will always be the light of resurrection and eternal life in the Heavenly Kingdom, for

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Irénée



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