



# GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF NEW JERSEY

## ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΝΕΑΣ ΙΕΡΣΕΗΣ

Great and Holy Pascha 2018

The Very Reverend and Reverend Clergy

Honorable Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Esteemed Members of the Metropolitan Council, Esteemed Members of the Parish Councils, Philoptochos Sisterhood 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

**“Shine, shine, O New Jerusalem! For the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.  
Rejoice and be glad, O Zion, and you, O Pure Theotokos, exalt in the  
Resurrection of Him who you bore”**

My Beloved in the Lord,

Χριστός Ανέστη! Christ is Risen!

Today, we have received new life as we receive the light of life. Today, all of creation rejoices as it is resplendently renewed by its Creator. Today, the darkness that came over Adam when he was exiled from Paradise is overcome by the Light of the New Adam. The darkness which had plagued a bewildered humanity is pierced with the Light of Christ which indeed dispels all darkness.

Our journey from the darkness of our exile to the Light of our Lord once again opens the door of Paradise to us. This journey, which started more than forty days ago on Clean Monday, found us sojourning the dark depths of our souls as we sought to prepare ourselves for this very moment of transformation in which the inner darkness of our banishment would turn into the radiant light of Christ's Resurrection leading us to the very source of Salvation. It was necessary to traverse this darkness since our fallen state necessitates us to actively seek the True Light in our pursuit of coming closer to our Lord, God, and Savior, Jesus Christ.

This traversing brings us to the precipice of today's feast which is the feast of feasts - Holy Pascha. The Holy Passion of our Lord and the physical Resurrection of Christ liberated both our bodies and our souls from the curse of death which had been upon us. Through His Passion

the human race is able to receive a transformed body at the end of times and through His Resurrection, humanity is enabled to have a bodily resurrection as well where the body and the soul are once again united in God’s everlasting Kingdom. Yet the restoration of our fallen image and distorted likeness would not have been possible without Christ’s Passion which finds its ultimate significance only in the context of the Resurrection. By rising from the dead on the third day, we are reminded of our own resurrection at the end of time when Christ will call us to Himself, the True Light of the world. Yet while we are still here on earth, we are given the Light as a reminder of our heavenly destiny.

It is this True Light that we receive from Christ and it now becomes our responsibility as Children of the Light to guard it and to share it with the world. Let us share this Light by proclaiming the Risen Christ to all we encounter. Let us share this Light by praising God at all times and in every hour. Let us share this Light by living a life not unto ourselves, but unto Christ. Let us share this Light by caring for the poor. Let us share this Light by defending the dejected and marginalized of our society. Let us share this Light so that through our love, through our faith, and through our devotion to God and man, people will come to know that we are Children of the Light. Upon hearing the words, *“Come receive the Light”*, may our souls be awakened so that in our utter humility we accept this call from our Lord, but in our unreserved and exuberant joy we may announce the good news of Christ’s Resurrection to the world.

It is my most fervent prayer and sincerest hope that as we celebrate the Holy Resurrection of Christ we endeavor to perpetually keep this Light within us so that, *“...having been united together in a death like His, we shall also certainly be united together in a Resurrection like His”* (Rom. 6:5). I pray that the Resurrection of our Lord brings to each one of you and your family members unfettered joy throughout this Paschal season and all the days of your lives. Χριστός Ανέστη! Christ is Risen!

With Paternal Love and Blessings in the Risen Lord,

† E V A N G E L O S  
Metropolitan of New Jersey