

**CHRIST IS RISEN!**



**INDEED HE IS RISEN!**

Paschal Letter 2019

## Permanent Conference of Ukrainian Orthodox Bishops Beyond the Borders of Ukraine

*“Yesterday I was crucified with Him . . . Yesterday I was crucified with Him; today I am glorified with Him . . . Yesterday I died with Him; today I am made alive with Him . . . Yesterday I was buried with Him; today I am raised up with Him . . . Let us offer to Him Who suffered and rose again for us our complete selves – the possession most precious to God and most proper . . . Let us become like Christ, since Christ became like us . . . Let us become Divine for His sake, since for us He became Man . . . He assumed the worse that He might give us the better. He became poor that by His poverty we might become rich. He accepted the form of a servant that we might win back our freedom . . . He came down that we might be lifted up. He was tempted that through Him we might conquer . . . He was dishonored that He might glorify us. He died that He might save us. He ascended that He might draw to Himself us, who were thrown down through the fall of sin . . . Let us give all, offer all, to Him who gave Himself a Ransom and Reconciliation for us . . . We needed an incarnate God, a God put to death, that we might live. We were put to death together with Him that we might be cleansed. We rose again with Him because we were put to death with Him. We were glorified with Him because we rose again with Him . . . A few drops of Blood recreate the whole of creation!”*

- St. Gregory the Theologian, Paschal Orations

### CHRIST IS RISEN! INDEED HE IS RISEN!

With these powerful words of St. Gregory the Theologian from his Paschal Orations we greet each and every one of you, dear Brother Clergy, Monastics and our beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ in the nations of the world beyond the borders of Ukraine – in the United States of America, Canada, Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Great Britain, Germany, France, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand and all our faithful in other nations! We also especially greet our Brother Hierarchs, Clergy, Monastics and Faithful of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine – the Autocephalous Church of the Ukrainian nation, which God has blessed by the Holy Spirit guided and thus, wise decision of His All-Holiness, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople and New Rome, Bartholomew I and the Holy Synod of Constantinople!

We pray the joy of our celebration amongst all of you, our spiritual children, is even more powerful today than ever before because of this powerful accomplishment – returning to the fold of Christ’s Body – the Holy Orthodox Church – millions of faithful Orthodox Christians who had been roaming in a spiritual wilderness through no fault of their own. Today they must feel the words of St. Gregory above: *“We rose again with Him because we were put to death with Him,”* for they had experienced what felt like spiritual death for so many decades!

*“Let us give all, offer all, to Him who gave Himself a Ransom and Reconciliation for us . . . We needed an incarnate God, a God put to death, that we might live. We were put to death together with Him that we might be cleansed. We rose again with Him because we were put to death with Him. We were glorified with Him because we rose again with Him.”* Each of us experienced this “death with Him” during our Baptism, descending in the waters of the Sacrament and rising up therefrom into NEW LIFE with Him in His Body, our Holy Church. It is almost impossible to explain in simple human words, the depth of meaning behind all that God in the Holy Trinity has

done for in order that we might have hope, refuge and protection throughout our lives – “The Father is my Hope, the Son is my Refuge, the Holy Spirit is my protection” – enabling us to survive ANYTHING utilized against us by the fallen angel to tempt us away from the Body.

Once again at this Great and Holy Feast of PASCHA – THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD – our true life is confirmed. Death is annihilated, the power of Satan has been trampled down by the One, Who could NOT be held captive to death, Who would be the ‘firstborn from the dead” (Rev. 1:5) and first in the new creation! We are meant to be heirs of the Resurrection, heirs of all things in heaven and on earth. Let us rejoice in that Resurrection! Let us live with a certainty that our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ has accomplished all for our salvation!

We assure you all, dearly beloved, of our prayers for you at this PASCHA and every single day of life that follows. We will pray that we, together, may co-create with our Risen Lord a new world that comprehends the sanctity of life, not only of our own species, but of all species made in God’s Wisdom. We will pray that we, sooner rather than later, seek to ensure to the best of our individual and communal ability, to preserve the welfare of God’s creation. We beseech you to join us in these prayers so that we all, together, may stand before our Risen Lord with hope, faith and charity filling our lives – for the world around us and all its inhabitants.

**Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen!**

- + **YURIJ** – *Metropolitan, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada*  
+ **ANTONY** – *Metropolitan, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, South America and the Diaspora*  
+ **JEREMIAH** – *Archbishop, Ukrainian Orthodox Eparchy of South America*  
+ **DANIEL** – *Archbishop, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and Diaspora*  
+ **ILARION** – *Bishop, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada – Western Eparchy*  
+ **ANDRIY** – *Bishop, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada – Eastern Eparchy*

