

BRIGHT MONDAY

April 20, 2020 • Second day of Paschaltide



CHRIST IS RISEN!

Canticle

Yesterday I was buried with Thee, O Christ, today I arise in Thy Resurrection. Yesterday I was crucified with Thee. O Saviour, glorify me with Thyself in Thy Kingdom.

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



AT MORNING PRAYER

from the Pentecostarion, at Orthros

Every breath and all creation glorifieth Thee, O Lord; for by the Cross didst Thou abolish Death, that Thou mightiest show forth unto the peoples Thy Resurrection from the dead, since Thou alone art the Friend of man.

Glory to Thy holy Resurrection, O Lord.

Let the Jews make answer: How did the soldiers lose the King Whom they were guarding? Why was it that the Stone did not retain the Rock of Life? Let them either give up Him that was buried, or worship Him that is risen, saying with us: Glory to the multitude of Thy compassions; O our Saviour, glory be to Thee.

Glory to Thy holy Resurrection, O Lord.

Before Thy conception, O Lord, an Angel brought greeting: Rejoice! to her that is full of grace. And, at Thy Resurrection, an Angel rolled away the stone of Thy glorious tomb. The one, instead of sorrow, announced the tokens of gladness. The other, instead of death, proclaimed the life-giving Master unto us. Wherefore, we cry unto Thee: O Benefactor of all, Lord, glory be to Thee.

AT EVENING PRAYER

from the Pentecostarion, at Vespers

By Thy Cross, O Christ our Saviour, the dominion of Death hath been destroyed, and the deception of the devil hath been abolished; and the race of man, having been saved by faith, doth daily offer praise to Thee.

Glory to Thy holy Resurrection, O Lord.

Iglorify the might of the Father and the Son, and the power of the Holy Spirit do I praise, even the indivisible, uncreated Godhead, the Trinity one in essence, reigning unto eternity forever.

Glory to Thy holy Resurrection, O Lord.

O Christ, Who by Thy Passion didst darken the sun, and Who by the light of Thy Resurrection didst make all things radiant with joy, accept our evening hymn, O Friend of man.



WISDOM OF THE HOLY FATHERS

EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN

†373

Deacon & Hymnographer

~ from a Paschal homily of his ~

DEATH TRAMPLED OUR LORD underfoot, but He in His turn treated death as a highroad for His own feet. He submitted to it, enduring it willingly, because by this means He would be able to destroy Death in spite of itself. Death had its own way when our Lord went out from Jerusalem carrying His Cross; but when, by a loud cry from that Cross, He summoned the dead from the underworld, Death was powerless to prevent it.

Death slew Him by means of the body which He had assumed, but that same body proved to be the weapon with which He conquered Death. Concealed beneath the cloak of His manhood, His godhead engaged Death in combat; but in slaying our Lord, Death itself was slain. It was able to kill natural human life but was itself killed by the Life that is above the nature of man.

Death could not devour our Lord unless He possessed a body, neither could hell swallow Him up unless He bore our flesh; and so, He came in search of a chariot in which to ride to the underworld. This chariot was the body which He received from the Virgin; in it He invaded Death's fortress, broke open its strong-room and scattered all its treasure.

At length He came upon Eve, the mother of all the living. She was that vineyard whose enclosure her own hands had enabled Death to violate, so that she could taste its fruit; thus, the Mother of all the living became the source of death for every living creature.

But in her stead Mary grew up, a new vine in place of the old. Christ, the new life, dwelt within her. When Death, with its customary impudence, came foraging for her mortal fruit, it encountered its own destruction in the hidden Life that fruit contained. All unsuspecting, it swallowed Him up, and in so doing released Life itself and set free a multitude of men.

He Who was also the carpenter's glorious Son set up His Cross above Death's all-consuming jaws and led the human race into the dwelling place of life. Since a tree had brought about the downfall of mankind, it was upon a Tree that mankind crossed over to the realm of Life. Bitter was the branch that had once been grafted upon that ancient tree, but sweet the young shoot that has now been grafted in, the shoot in which we are meant to recognize the Lord Whom no creature can resist.

We ascribe glory unto Thee, Lord, Who didst raise up Thy Cross to span the jaws of Death like a bridge by which souls might pass from the region of the dead to the land of the living. We give glory to Thee Who put on the body of a single mortal man and made it the source of life for every other mortal man. Thou art incontestably alive. Thy murderers sowed Thy living body in the earth as farmers sow grain, but it sprang up and yielded an abundant harvest of men raised from the dead.

Come then, my brothers and sisters, let us offer our Lord the great and all-embracing sacrifice of our love, pouring out our treasury of hymns and prayers before Him Who offered His Cross in sacrifice to God for the enrichment of us all. *Amen.*



MAXIMUS OF TURIN

†c.465

Bishop

~ from a Paschal homily of his ~

CHRIST IS RISEN! He has burst open the gates of hell and let the dead go free; He has renewed the earth through the members of His Church now born again in baptism, and has made it blossom afresh with men brought back to life. His Holy Spirit has unlocked the doors of heaven, which stand wide open to receive those who rise up from the earth.

Because of Christ's Resurrection, the thief ascends to paradise, the bodies of the blessed enter the holy city, and the dead are restored to the company of the living. There is an upward movement in the whole of creation, each element raising itself to something higher. We see hell restoring its victims to the upper regions, earth sending its buried dead to heaven, and heaven presenting the new arrivals to the Lord. In one and the same movement, our Savior's Passion raises men from the depths, lifts them up from the earth, and sets them in the heights.

Christ is risen! His rising brings life to the dead, forgiveness to sinners, and glory to the Saints. And so David the Prophet summons all creation to join in celebrating the Paschal festival: *This is the day which the Lord hath made, he cries, let us rejoice and be glad therein! (Psalm 117:24)*

The light of Christ is an endless day that knows no night. Christ is this day, says the Apostle; such is the meaning of his words: *Night is far gone; the day is at hand. (Romans 13:12)* He tells us that night is almost over, not that it is about to fall. By this we are meant to understand that the coming of Christ's light puts Satan's darkness to flight, leaving no place for any shadow of sin. His everlasting radiance dispels the dark clouds of the past and checks the hidden growth of vice. The Son is that day to Whom the Day, which is the Father, communicates the mystery of His divinity. He is the Day Who says through the mouth of Solomon: I have caused an unfailing light to rise in heaven. And as in heaven no night can follow day, so no sin can overshadow the justice of Christ. The celestial day is perpetually bright and shining with brilliant light; clouds can never darken its skies. In the same way, the light of Christ is eternally glowing with luminous radiance and can never be extinguished by the darkness of sin. This is why John the evangelist says: *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:5)*

And so, my brethren, each of us ought surely to rejoice on this holy day. Let no one, conscious of his sinfulness, withdraw from our common celebration, nor let anyone be kept away from our public prayer by the burden of his guilt. Sinner he may indeed be, but he must not despair of pardon on this day which is so highly privileged; for if a thief could receive the grace of paradise, how could a Christian be refused forgiveness? *Amen.*

