

April 19/6, 2020

To the beloved clergy, monastics and faithful of the Russian True Orthodox Church-- Moscow Metropolia—mercy, peace, and love be yours.

CHRIST IS RISEN!

INDEED HE IS RISEN

Today, the road upon which we have walked these past several weeks has led us to our desired destination. Today, light shines in the darkness and brightens the hearts of all who have journeyed along the path to salvation. Today, Christ conquers death, and the world is forever changed.

I doubt that any of us, when we entered upon the days of Great Lent, could have imagined what was to come, both at home and throughout the world. Not only did we enter upon a path of personal trial, self-examination, and growth, but we unexpectedly entered a path of challenge, isolation, fear, and uncertainty that none of us have ever experienced in our lifetime.

At a time when the Divine Services and attendance is usually increased, we found ourselves with churches closed. The things that we take for granted, such as visiting with friends and family, gathering together for meals or going out came to a grinding halt. Even the little things we do every day like shopping have been changed. Without question, this Lenten season has been one which we will always remember, and one who's struggles and fears we will hopefully never have to live through again.

Amid all the negatives, however, there have come positives that we might have not appreciated. Yes, the church doors have been closed, but through the wonders of technology we have been able to pray with others around the world. I know that my spirits have been lifted by being able to watch the Divine Services celebrated throughout the world, especially by friends with whom I would not ordinarily be able to share these moments due to distance and circumstance, I've been able to watch services from parishes of my youth and reconnect with people from my past. This is hopefully an experience that has been shared by many. Beyond this, I think families have been able to grow a deeper appreciation of each other and just how much each one means to us. People from every walk of life have come together as one to help each other. The things that we once took for granted now have a new meaning to us.

Today, we celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord in a new way, but it doesn't change the meaning or importance of it one bit. In fact, it simply drives home the fact that Christ can conquer anything.

Like the apostles and disciples during those days between the Crucifixion and Resurrection, the current situation may have caused us to be sad and wonder what will happen to us now. But also like them, we know that today death and destruction have met their match, because Christ is Risen and will bring each and every one of us to newness of life.

Fear not, for today victory shines forth from the grave, and it is a victory that belongs to each and every one us.

With the bestowal of my Archiepiscopal blessing upon all of you, the people for whom Christ died and rose, I remain

Sincerely in Christ,

+ALEXY

First Hierarch of the Russian True Orthodox Church--MM
Metropolitan of Moscow and all Russia
Archbishop of North America & the Diaspor