

EASTER MESSAGE 2013

“Pascha that sanctifies all believers”

My beloved Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

The Resurrection of Christ is the summary of the work of divine Economy by reopening the gates of Paradise to the fallen man. The Risen Lord, being the new Adam, “went down into the deepest abyss of the earth, and broke the indestructible chains” in order to meet the Old Adam, as a merciful God. This event is vividly depicted in the orthodox icon of the Resurrection.

Jesus Christ, Who is our Peace, through His Crucifixion and Resurrection “has broken down the middle wall of separation” (Eph. 2:14) and has reunited us with God. “Christ willingly sacrificed Himself so that He might bring down the *partition wall* and unite all heavenly dwellers with those of the earth and make all of us participants, though we once were enemies and adversaries” (John Chrysostom PG49:390). This was the sole reason why “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14), so that He might “redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons”(Gal. 4:5).

Ever since Christ’s Resurrection and until the end of times, the reconciliation and union of man with God is a palpable fact, while at the same time is a quest for each one of us. Our unity with God does not happen and it is not realized in a magical manner, neither is our salvation given to us without our own free consent and fighting effort. Certainly, the Risen Lord desires as a “mad lover” (John Climacus, The Ladder 30:1156), to be united with all people, because He desires “all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4). However, if man does not consent freely to his salvation, then God does not force it upon him; no true salvation can come through force; instead, it brings sure destruction to man.

For this reason, Christ’s Resurrection, which is the indisputable guarantee for our own resurrection, invites us all to make a spiritual effort to unite ourselves with God, that is, to become gods by grace, according to the ancient plan of the Triune God during the creation of man.

What the Crucified and Risen Lord asks of us, above anything else, is to love everyone without any exception and to “forgive all in the resurrection”. Only through love and forgiveness, as it was taught to us over the Cross by the God of love Himself, will we be able to defeat the father of all evil, the devil, and enjoy the full (John 17:13) and splendid joy of the Resurrection right from this life. And then, when the sound of wars and “rumors of wars” (Matt. 24:6) are heard all around us and various other problems besiege us, we will

not succumb to the heavy load; instead, we will stand upright drawing power from our Lord's Resurrection. "Therefore we have honorable hope in the Lord, Who is our Leader and Reviver". (John Chrysostom, PG 52:795).

On behalf of His Eminence Sotirios Metropolitan of Pissidia, the Clergy, Monks and Nuns and all our collaborators in the Lord, I wish to all of you and to your loved ones good health, a long life and every blessing from the Risen Lord.

My beloved: Christ is Risen!

With much love in the Risen Lord,
+Metropolitan Ambrosios of Korea